

Lausanne, March 10, 2021

**CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 623**

To: ISU Members  
Copy: ISU Office Holders

**Cancellation ISU Congress - Phuket/Thailand – May 31-June 4, 2021**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and - despite the ongoing vaccination campaigns - the continued critical developments world-wide and the travel and entry restrictions and quarantine requirements for Thailand and other countries, the ISU Council has concluded that maintaining the 2021 ISU Congress on the planned dates of May 31-June 4, 2021 is no longer an option. The same applies to a short-term postponement until later in the summer of 2021 since the ISU Council cannot reasonably count on a sufficient improvement of the COVID-19 situation by then and it would also involve many logistical challenges such as hotel rebooking etc. Finally, the ISU Council agreed that holding an ISU Congress during an ongoing season (September – April) with many potential delegates being busy at events does not seem feasible and it would be difficult to implement rule changes during an ongoing season.

In this regard, the ISU Council considered Article 10, paragraph 3 of the ISU Constitution which reads as follows:

*“3. Cancellation or Postponement*

*If for any reason the holding of an Ordinary Congress cannot be carried out, the Council shall so inform all ISU Members and a postponement or cancellation of such Congress may be made by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the ISU Members.”*

The ISU Council agreed that in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the above-mentioned provision cannot be interpreted to mean that the ISU Members shall decide on whether the ISU Congress as planned can or cannot take place. If the pandemic and related risks, plus governmental travel and/or meeting restrictions, prevent people from going to the place where the ISU Congress is supposed to be held, this is a fact and an objective reason for a cancellation or postponement of the ISU Congress which cannot reasonably be voted upon. In the view of the ISU Council, Article 10 must be understood to mean that if it is impossible to hold the ISU Congress as planned, the decision of the ISU Members is limited to the two alternatives: cancellation or postponement. However, since in this case a regular ordinary ISU Congress is already scheduled to be held in June 2022, contrary to the situation in 2020, a postponement can also not be considered.

The ISU Council has therefore decided to make use of its powers under Article 17, paragraph 1. r) of the ISU Constitution (Interpretation of the ISU Statutes) and inform ISU Members that Article 10, paragraph 3 did not envisage a situation like the one that has occurred for the 2021 Congress due to the continuing pandemic conditions and that therefore no vote by the ISU Members is possible and that the 2021 ISU Congress must be cancelled.

The ISU Council also considered holding the 2021 ISU Congress virtually/online. However, the ISU Council acknowledged that the ISU Constitution, in particular Article 10, paragraphs 3-5, does not include such a provision. Furthermore, also taking into account the reported experiences of virtual Congresses held by other international organizations, the ISU Council noted that only a very limited number of agenda items (generally fewer than 10) could be debated and decided during such on-line Congresses, that the interventions of participating delegates were very limited and that the level of the debates was not at all comparable with an on-site Congress. The Council also considered that due to global time differences, the window for conducting a virtual ISU Congress involving ISU Members from Oceania to the American Pacific west coast is limited to only a few hours per day and that consequently conducting the ISU Congress including over 300 motions would last for more than one week. The ISU Council therefore concluded that a virtual ISU Congress shall not be pursued.

Since the 2021 ISU Congress will not take place as scheduled, the ISU Council, in line with Article 10, paragraph 4 of the ISU Constitution, shall ask ISU Members for a mail vote on the motions on the Agenda that "*the ISU Council considers urgent and essential for the correct administration of the ISU*". After the cancellation of the 2020 ISU Congress only the Minutes of the previous Congress, the Financial Statements and the Budget were considered as urgent and essential. However, the situation has evolved and now the pandemic development will lead to a four-year interval between full Congresses. This means that a number of urgent and essential as well as drafting/clarification motions have accumulated. The ISU Council therefore decided that besides the 2020 Financial Statements and the 2021-2022 Budget, some motions from ISU Members, the Technical Committees and the Council will also be submitted to a mail vote by ISU Members.

In order to prepare for such a process, as per Article 30, paragraph 2.a) and 30.2.b) of the ISU Constitution, ISU Members and Technical Committees may submit to the ISU Secretariat by **March 30, 2021 amendments to their own previous proposals** as included in the Provisory Congress Agenda of January 29, 2021.

Again making use of its powers under Article 17, paragraph 1.r) of the ISU Constitution (interpretation of the ISU Statutes), the Council sees no possibility to allow for submission of Urgent Matter Proposals, because the legal requirements set by Article 30, paragraph 5 of the ISU Constitution cannot be properly implemented.

The ISU Council will subsequently review all motions received and select those considered as "*urgent and essential for the correct administration of the ISU*". The ISU Council will also select those motions which are considered as "Drafting Matter" or "Clarification" and which shall also be subject to a mail vote by ISU Members. When publishing the **updated version of the Congress Agenda on April 30, 2021** (Art. 30, paragraph 2.a), **each motion will include an indication of either "*urgent & essential*" or "*drafting*" or "*clarification*" or "*to be postponed to the 2022 Congress*".** For the indicated urgent & essential as well as drafting/clarification motions from ISU Members and the Technical Committees, the April 30 version of the Congress Agenda will also include the Council's recommendation. For those motions proposed to be postponed to the 2022 Congress, the April 30 version of the Agenda will include the reason for such proposed postponement.

Subsequently, **between April 30 and May 15, 2021**, ISU Members and Technical Committees will have the **possibility to submit comments on the Council selection of motions to be debated as well as to put questions to the Council relating to the agenda items and to the Council recommendations. ISU Members will furthermore have the possibility to submit objections to the proposed Technical Rule changes.** All ISU Member comments, questions and objections to proposed Technical Rule changes, as well as the ISU **Council responses, will be posted on the ISU**

**Extranet by May 24, 2021.** This procedure will ensure an adequate level of transparent debate among the ISU Members, ISU Technical Committees and the ISU Council.

Taking into account the comments, questions and objections received, the ISU Council will decide upon and **publish by June 15, 2021 the Agenda with the final motions to be voted upon by ISU Members through a mail vote.** The voting procedures (voting forms, e-mail addresses etc.) will be communicated to ISU Members at the same time as the Agenda. ISU Members will have one week to submit their mail votes and the **deadline will be June 22, 2021.**

The **results** of the mail vote will be published by the ISU **by June 30, 2021.**

The applicable majorities for alterations of the Regulations remain in accordance with Article 11, paragraph 2 of the ISU Constitution.

Regardless of the above-mentioned procedure, it is understood that if during the time until the next ISU Congress exceptional circumstances related to the correct administration of the ISU should require urgent and essential Rule changes, Rule suspensions or exceptions to Rule requirements, then the ISU Council may also make use of the extraordinary powers granted to the ISU Council under Article 17, paragraph 1.q) of the ISU Constitution.

As the world struggles to fight the acute phase of the coronavirus crisis and mourns its victims, and as many health care workers provide care to those suffering from COVID-19 at the risk of their own lives, the ISU Council reiterates that the consequences and challenges related to the ISU Congress cancellation are insignificant compared to the dramatic situation the pandemic has created around the globe. The ISU Council asks for the ISU Members' understanding and cooperation during these difficult times.

As indicated in ISU Communication No. 2380, point 7, since the 2021 Congress will not be held as planned and in order to mitigate the potential loss of hotel and travel reservation deposits, the Council decided to hold the 2022 ISU Congress in Phuket/Thailand instead of Las Vegas/USA as previously announced. The dates of the 2022 ISU Congress remain unchanged, namely June 6-10, 2022. The ISU Congress hotel in Phuket has confirmed that all ISU and ISU Member deposits made for the 2020 respectively 2021 Congress remain valid for a 2022 edition of the Congress.

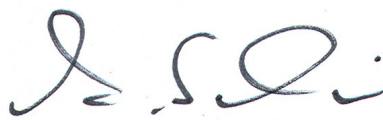
Special thanks go to the Figure and Speed Skating Association of Thailand for their professional cooperation and flexibility in the ISU Congress re-scheduling and preparations. We also thank the United States Figure Skating Association for their preparations for the 2022 Congress and for their understanding of the ISU Council decision.

We hope and wish that you, your members, families and friends will stay healthy and that the ongoing vaccination campaigns will soon put an end to the pandemic.

With kind regards,



Jan Dijkema  
President



Fredi Schmid  
Director General