

**Nyon, 31 March 2020**

**TO ECA MEMBER CLUBS**  
**For the attention of the main contact person(s)**

**ECA Circular Letter 2020 No. 2**

**Ref: ECA Organisational model changes**

Dear ECA Members, Dear friends,

Following the Executive Board video conference meeting of 30 March, I write to inform you of a number of developments relating to the evolution of ECA's organizational model and the structures we have developed within ECA to manage the current crisis.

### **ECA reorganisation**

At the Executive Board meeting on 13 February, in agreement with the ECA Chairman I announced my departure from ECA in my capacity of ECA General Secretary. This decision was not taken lightly and was motivated by the sentiment of personal accomplishment and the need to allow for new operational leadership to drive the next phase of our association.

During the meeting, the Executive Board also agreed to restructure ECA's Administration with a view to developing a more corporate and business-oriented model. To this effect, the decision was taken to replace the role of General Secretary with a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to head the administration. In addition, it was agreed that a new position of Independent Executive Board member would be created overseeing specific tasks based around unique knowledge and expertise to offer added value in helping the Board in shaping key decisions. The Independent Board Member position would not carry a vote within the Executive Board.

As a result of this change, and subject to the necessary statutory amendments being approved (as further detailed below), the Board decided to appoint me as the first Independent Executive Board member, a position I feel privileged to serve. Specifically, the Executive Board's view is that, in this new role, I would focus on fostering ECA relations with UEFA and FIFA and overseeing a number of key sporting developments (Club World Cup, the club competition formats and calendar post '24), until the end of 2020. During this period, as part of my duties, I would also support and facilitate the transition to the new administrative structure.

Alongside the creation of this position, Charlie Marshall was appointed as CEO to lead the ECA administration in line with the above stated objective. I value Charlie highly and believe he is well suited to take up this position and I'm sure he will receive the same respect, support and friendship I was afforded throughout my time at ECA. I know he will want to reach out to you in the near future to explain more about what this means for ECA, and for you all, going forwards.

The reorganisation concept, including the required statutory changes, were planned to be formalised at the General Assembly scheduled for 30-31 March. Subject to approval, the changes would have taken effect on 1 April 2020. Given the dramatic escalation around the COVID 19 crisis we were forced to postpone the General Assembly given public health concerns and focus on immediate priorities.

In view of these exceptional circumstances, at its meeting of 30 March, and in the interest of clarity in the working methods and effectiveness, that is of greater relevance given the current crisis, the Executive Board agreed to provisionally proceed with the implementation of the reorganisation plan as of 01 April. In order to respect due process and our statutes, we will of course submit the necessary statutory changes approval and ratification at the next General Assembly.

### **Shaping an ECA model to manage the crisis**

The crisis we are all confronted with has required ECA to rapidly develop a streamlined operating model to allow for efficient and flexible decision-making at all levels.

At political level, the Executive Board is engaged in regular video conferences when required to take key decisions in shaping ECA's response to the crisis. A Steering Committee made up of a limited but a representative number of Board members engages in discussions even more regularly to steer ECA's day-to-day response with special focus on shaping ECA's engagement with FIFA and UEFA.

As you are aware, UEFA has established two working groups, which include representatives from the ECA Administration, to manage European football's coordinated response to the crisis. As a reminder, the first Working Group is focused on drawing up consensual proposals aimed at ensuring the completion of club competitions both at domestic and European football as well as assessing the financial risks in case of partial or total cancellation. The second Working Group is focusing its efforts around assessment of the financial and legal regulatory framework and how this can be adapted in light of the challenges clubs are faced with.

At FIFA level, ECA is actively engaged in a specially established Task Force assessing the regulatory regime around the transfer system and player contracts and evaluating any changes that might be brought about to soften the impact of the current crisis on clubs.

Please be assured that you will be informed immediately of any key decisions reached that impact on club operations to provide you will all the necessary guidance and legal certainty to navigate through these challenging times.

As a member-driven organisation we value very much the two-way engagement between the Administration and our clubs. This is of special relevance in times of crisis. It is with this in mind that Charlie will be reaching out to you in the coming days to provide details of the systems and structures being put in place to ensure efficient lines of communications to provide relevant information in supporting efforts to navigate our way out of this crisis.

I would like to wish you all much strength and call on you to stay safe in these difficult times. Most importantly I wish you good health - the single most important priority.

Yours sincerely,



**Michele Centenaro**  
**ECA General-Secretary**