



TAS / CAS

TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DU SPORT
COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT
TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DEL DEPORTE

CAS 2025/A/11499 Jihad Salameh & Lebanese Fencing Federation v. Dr. Boutros Jalkh et al. & Lebanese Olympic Committee

ARBITRAL AWARD

delivered by the

COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

sitting in the following composition:

President: Mr. Jacques Radoux, Legal Secretary at the Court of Justice of the European Union, Luxembourg

Arbitrators: Prof. Luigi Fumagalli, Professor and Attorney-at-law in Milano, Italy

Mr. Benoît Pasquier, Attorney-at-law in Zurich, Switzerland

in the arbitration between

Jihad Salameh, Lebanon

- **First Appellant** -

Lebanese Fencing Federation, Ain Saade, Lebanon

- **Second Appellant** -

Both represented by Mr. Toni Garcia, Attorney-at-law, Landaberea & Abogados, Barcelona, Spain

and

Dr. Boutros Jalkh, Lebanon

Mr. Mazen Ramadam, Lebanon

Mr. Jack Tamer, Lebanon

Mr. Sami Kiblawi, Lebanon

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Mr. Tanios Hnein, Lebanon

Mr. Hassan Rustom, Lebanon

Mr. Khoder Moukaled, Lebanon

Mr. Roukoz Zgheib, Lebanon

Mr. Pierre Hani, Lebanon

Mr. Mazen Kobeissi, Lebanon

Mr. Wassim Ismail, Lebanon

Mr. Zafer Kabbara, Lebanon

Mr. Bachir Bechara, Lebanon

Mr. Fadi Bou Nader, Lebanon

and

Lebanese Olympic Committee, Rihanieh, Lebanon

All represented by Mr. Emanuel Cortada and Mr. Jonáš Gürtler, Attorneys-at-law, Bär & Karrer AG, Zurich, Switzerland

- Respondents -

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I. THE PARTIES

1. Mr. Jihad Salameh (the “First Appellant”) is the President of the Lebanese Fencing Federation and member of the Lebanese Olympic Committee.
2. The Lebanese Fencing Federation (the “LFF” or the “Second Appellant”) is the national governing body for the sport of fencing in Lebanon. It is affiliated to and recognised by both the *Fédération Internationale d’Escrime* (FIE) and the Lebanese Olympic Committee.
3. Dr. Boutros Jalkh, Mr. Mazen Ramadam, Mr. Jack Tamer, Mr. Sami Kiblawi, Mr. Tanios Hnein, Mr. Hassan Rustom, Mr. Khoder Moukaled, Mr. Roukoz Zgheib, Mr. Pierre Hani, Mr. Mazen Kobeissi, Mr. Wassim Ismail, Mr. Zafer Kabbara, Mr. Bachir Bechara and Mr. Fadi Bou Nader were elected as members of the Executive Committee (the “EC”) of the Lebanese Olympic Committee (the “Members of the EC”) on 16 May 2025. The Lebanese Olympic Committee (the “LOC”) is the National Olympic Committee representing Lebanon within the Olympic Movement and is recognized as such by the Olympic Council of Asia (the “OCA”) and the International Olympic Committee (the “IOC”). It has its headquarters in Rihanieh, Lebanon. The Members of the EC and the LOC are referred to as the “Respondents”.
4. The First Appellant and the Second Appellant are referred to as the “Appellants”. The Appellants and the Respondents are collectively referred to as the “Parties”.

II. THE FACTUAL BACKGROUND

5. Below is a summary of the main relevant facts and allegations based on the Parties’ written submissions, pleadings and the evidence adduced in this procedure. Additional facts and allegations found in the Parties’ written submissions, pleadings and evidence may be set out, where relevant, in connection with the legal discussion that follows. While the Panel has carefully considered all the facts, allegations, legal arguments and evidence submitted by the Parties in the present proceedings, it refers in this Award only to the submissions and evidence it considers necessary to explain its reasoning.
6. On 10 October 2024, the EC met and decided to restructure the Urgent Matters Committee of the LOC (the “UMC”).
7. On 11 February 2025, the Executive Committee of the LOC held an extraordinary meeting. However, due to the lack of quorum no decision could be taken during that meeting, and the meeting was closed.
8. On the same day, Dr. Boutros Jalkh, in his function as President of the LOC, convened a meeting of the UMC to discuss the most important items that had been on the agenda of the EC meeting of that same day. Four of the five members of the UMC attended that meeting, during which some issues raised in letters from the National Cycling Federation and the Muay Thai Federation concerning the Lebanese Sports Arbitration Center (the “LSAC”) were discussed. The UMC decided to summon the President of

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the LSAC “*to tell him about these matters and initiate amendments to the Center’s statutes to align with international arbitration standards. If not addressed, the Center’s activities are to be temporarily suspended until necessary reforms are done and present the amendments to the General Assembly of the Lebanese Olympic Committee*”.

9. On 21 February 2025, several member federations of the LOC submitted a joint request to convene two Extraordinary General Assemblies. The request included several agenda items, among which was the proposal to admit four new federations during the first of the requested extraordinary general assemblies. Further, it was requested that the second extraordinary general assembly be held for the purpose of electing a new EC for the LOC.
10. On 24 February 2025, the UMC held a meeting to discuss, *inter alia*, the steps to be taken in response to the letter dated 21 February 2025 and decided to convene one Extraordinary General Assembly on 22 April 2025 and another Extraordinary General Assembly on 16 May 2025. Further, at that meeting it was decided “*to reaffirm the previous decision to suspend the operations of the [Lebanese] Sports Arbitration Center until its issues are resolved*”.
11. On 2 April 2025, the LOC issued the convocations for these two Extraordinary General Assemblies. The agenda for the Extraordinary General Assemblies to be held on 22 April 2025 included, *inter alia*, the admission of four federations as new members of the LOC. The agenda for the 16 May Extraordinary General Assembly included the elections to the EC of the LOC.
12. On 14 April 2025, the LFF filed a request for arbitration with the LSAC seeking (i) the suspension, on an urgent and precautionary basis, of the convocations to the two Extraordinary General Assemblies of the LOC and (ii) eventually, the invalidation of these convocations.
13. On 16 April 2025, the Sole Arbitrator of the LSAC in charge of the matter rendered an interim award and decided, *inter alia*, to “*SUSPEND the effect of the convocation issued by the [LOC] to hold a general assembly on April 22, 2025, pending a decision on the merits of the arbitration case, and GRANT the Respondent in arbitration, the [LOC], a delay of maximum one week from the date of notification of this decision to submit its response to the arbitration request*”.
14. On 22 April 2025, the LOC held an Extraordinary General Assembly and accepted the Lebanese Skating Federation, the Lebanese Modern Pentathlon Federation, the Lebanese Surfing Federation and the Lebanese Climbing Federation as new member federations (the “four new member federations”). According to the minutes of that Extraordinary General Assembly, the Vice-President of the LOC requested to add a discussion about the LSAC on the agenda, and this request was unanimously accepted by the member federations present. Still according to these minutes, the “*president of the [LOC] Boutros JALKH exposed that the [LSAC] was suspended until resolution of its matters in the summary hearing of February 24, 2025. The problems and gaps of which suffer the parties of the arbitration and the absolutely unfair trial they faced were exposed. The decision of the urgent matters committee was endorsed unanimously and approved*”.

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15. On 23 April 2025, thirteen (13) member federations of the LOC convened an Extraordinary General Assembly of the LOC to be held on 14 May 2025 with the purpose of electing a new EC of the LOC.
16. On 9 May 2025, the Sole Arbitrator of the LSAC rendered a final arbitration award in which he decided, *inter alia*, to (i) “*invalidate the effects of the general assembly held on April 22, 2025, for violating the arbitration award issued on April 16, 2025, and deem it as null and void*”; (ii) “*invalidate the convocation issued by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the [LOC], Mr. Boutros JALKH, to hold two extraordinary general assemblies on April 22, 2025 and May 16, 2025, and deem it null and void for violating the law and for all the reasons mentioned above*”; (iii) “*notify the Lebanese Ministry of Youth & Sports, the [LOC], the [IOC], and the Claimant of arbitration of this award*”.
17. On 14 May 2025, an Extraordinary General Assembly of the LOC was held in Dbayeh, Lebanon, based on the invitation sent by the 13 federations on 23 April 2025. During this Extraordinary General Assembly, a new EC of the LOC was elected for the period 2025–2029. According to the Appellants, this Extraordinary General Assembly as well as the elections were held in compliance with the applicable statutes and regulations and are thus valid. Following these elections, the members elected to the EC of the LOC convened a meeting to formally allocate internal positions within the EC. During this meeting, Mr. Jihad Salameh was appointed as President of the EC.
18. On 16 May 2025, the Extraordinary General Assembly convened by letter of 2 April 2025 was held in Baabda, Lebanon. This Extraordinary General Assembly was chaired by Dr. Boutros Jalkh as acting President. That Extraordinary General Assembly led to the election of the Members of the EC.
19. On 26 May 2025, the LFF submitted a request, entitled “*appeal*”, before the LSAC “*against the convening of the General Assembly of the [LOC] on May 16, 2025, and a request to freeze and invalidate its effects*”. The relevant parts of this request read as follows:

“We therefore formally submit this appeal to challenge the validity of the general assembly held on May 16, 2025, and request your honorable Center to cancel this assembly and all its decisions as its proceedings and resolutions, including the election of the executive committee and the nomination of its members and any subsequent decisions as if they never existed. This is due to blatant violations of the legal regulations and procedures, and final binding arbitration award.

We also request urgent measures to stop immediately the effects of this assembly until a decision is rendered in this appeal, to prevent any legal or administrative consequences difficult to rectify later on.

If your center cannot review this appeal for any reason, such as the arbitrators' inability to carry out their duties, we request a written confirmation from your end to appeal before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). We enclose therewith what confirms that we can benefit from all the internal means”.

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III. PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

20. On 6 June 2025, the Appellants filed a Statement of Appeal with the Court of Arbitration for Sport (the “CAS”), in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with Article 8 of the LOC Statutes and Article R47 of the Code of Sports-related Arbitration (the “Code”) (2023 edition), against “*the inaction and refusal of the LSAC to adjudicate a formal request filed by the Appellants on the basis of Art. 8-3 of the LOC Statutes*”. The Appellants directed their Appeal against the Respondents. In their Statement of Appeal, the Appellants appointed Prof. Luigi Fumagalli, Professor of Law and Attorney-at-law in Milano, Italy, as arbitrator, and requested that provisional measures be issued by CAS.
21. On 10 June 2025, the CAS Court Office initiated the present appeals arbitration procedure and notified the Statement of Appeal to the Respondents and invited them, *inter alia*, (i) to answer the Appellants’ request for provisional measures, (ii) to state whether they agreed to the Appellants’ request to have the time limit to file their Appeal Brief set out in Article R51 of the Code extended and (iii) to jointly appoint an arbitrator by 20 June 2025.
22. On 12 June 2025, the Respondents informed the CAS Court Office that they agreed, *inter alia*, to the additional 10-day extension of the Appellants’ deadline to file their Appeal Brief.
23. On 19 June 2025, the Respondents requested an extension of seven (7) days to nominate an arbitrator.
24. On 20 June 2025, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties that, in absence of an opposition by the Appellants, the requested extension would be granted.
25. On the same day, the Respondents informed the CAS Court Office that they did not intend to pay their share of the advance of costs.
26. On 24 June 2025, the Respondents filed their answer to the Appellants’ request for provisional measures.
27. On 27 June 2025, the Respondents appointed Mr. Diego Ferrari as arbitrator in the present proceedings.
28. On 1 July 2025, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties, *inter alia*, that the Deputy Division President had not confirmed the appointment of Mr. Diego Ferrari as arbitrator in the present matter and invited the Respondents to nominate another arbitrator from the CAS list by 11 July 2025.
29. On 5 July 2025, the Appellants filed their Appeal Brief.
30. On 7 July 2025, the CAS Court Office acknowledged receipt of the Appeal Brief and invited the Respondents to submit their Answer within the deadline set out in Article R55 of the Code, highlighting that if they failed to do so, the Panel might nevertheless proceed with the arbitration and deliver an award.

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31. On 9 July 2025, the Respondents informed the CAS Court Office that they nominated Mr. Benoît Pasquier, Attorney-at-Law in Zurich, Switzerland, as arbitrator in the present proceedings.
32. On 21 July 2025, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties that the Panel appointed to resolve this dispute was constituted as follows:

President: Mr Jacques Radoux, Legal Secretary in Luxembourg, Luxembourg,

Arbitrators: Prof. Luigi Fumagalli, Professor and Attorney-at-law and Professor in Milano, Italy, and

Mr. Benoît Pasquier, Attorney-at-law in Zurich, Switzerland.
33. On 31 July 2025, the CAS Court Office acknowledged that the Appellants had agreed to a further extension of the Respondents' time limit to file their Answer until 27 August 2025.
34. On 13 August 2025, the CAS Court Office notified an Order on Request for Provisional Measures by which the Panel dismissed the provisional measures sought by the Appellants.
35. On 22 August 2025, the Respondents requested an extension of ten (10) days to file their Answer.
36. On 25 August 2025, the Appellants informed the CAS Court Office that they agreed to the additional 10-day extension of the Respondents' deadline to file their Answer.
37. On 8 September 2025, the Respondents filed their Answer, raising a jurisdictional objection.
38. On 10 September 2025, the CAS Court Office acknowledged receipt of the Answer and, pursuant to Article R55 of the Code, invited the Appellants to present their comments on the jurisdictional objection raised by the Respondents.
39. On 22 September 2025, the Appellants filed their comments on the Respondents' jurisdictional objection.
40. On 25 September 2025, the CAS Court Office acknowledged receipt of these comments and informed the Parties that, unless they agreed or the President of the Panel ordered otherwise on the basis of exceptional circumstances, Article R56 para.1 of the CAS Code provides that the Parties shall not be authorized to supplement or amend their requests or their argument, to produce new exhibits, or to specify further evidence on which they intend to rely after the submission of the Appeal Brief and of the Answer. The Parties were also invited to state, by 2 October 2025, whether they preferred a hearing to be held in the present matter and whether they requested a case management conference ("CMC") with the Panel.

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41. On 2 October 2025, the Appellants informed the CAS Court Office that they considered a hearing to be necessary and that they did not request a CMC. The Respondents, for their part, considered neither a hearing nor a CMC to be necessary in the present matter.
42. On 10 October 2025, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties that the Panel had decided to hold a hearing by videoconference.
43. On 20 October 2025, the CAS Court Office notified an Order of Procedure to the Parties.
44. On the same day, the Appellants submitted a request to file three (3) additional documents.
45. On 24 October 2025, the Respondents objected to the admission of the three (3) additional documents to the case file.
46. On 27 October 2025, the Appellants and Respondents signed and returned the Order of Procedure. The Respondents emphasized in the signed Order of Procedure that they contested the jurisdiction of the CAS.
47. On the same day, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties that the Panel had decided to reject the Appellants' request to have the three (3) additional documents admitted to the case file.
48. On 5 November 2025, a hearing took place via videoconference. The Panel was assisted by Ms. Lia Yokomizo, counsel to the CAS, and joined by the following participants:

For the Appellants:

Mr. Jihad Salameh, appellant, acting on his own behalf and on behalf of the Lebanese Fencing Federation;

Mr. Toni Garcia, counsel,

Mr. Freddy Keyrouz, witness;

Mr. Jassem Kanso, witness;

Mr. Ibrahim Menassa, witness;

Dr. Pierrot Khoueiry, witness,

Ms. Lara Nicolas, interpreter.

For the Respondents:

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Dr Boutros Jalkh, President of the Lebanese Olympic Committee;

Mr. Toni Honein, Vice-President of the Lebanese Olympic Committee;

Mr. Jonáš Gürtler, counsel

Mr. Emanuel Cortada, counsel

Mr. Asaad Yazbeck, witness;

Mr. Bassam Cheiban, witness;

Mr. Farez Jezini, interpreter.

49. At the outset of the hearing, the Parties confirmed that they had no objection as to the constitution of the Panel.
50. During the hearing, the Panel heard evidence from the above-mentioned witnesses. Before taking their evidence, the President of the Panel informed the interpreters and the witnesses of their duty to tell the truth, subject to sanctions of perjury under Swiss law. The Parties and the Panel had the opportunity to examine and cross-examine the different witnesses. Finally, Mr. Salameh made a brief statement.
51. The Parties were given full opportunity to present their case, submit their arguments and answer the questions from the Panel. At the end of the hearing, the Parties confirmed that their right to be heard and their right to a fair trial had been fully respected and that they had no objections as to the manner in which the proceedings had been conducted.
52. After the closing of the hearing, the CAS Court Office, on behalf of the Panel, requested the Respondents to submit two emails from World Boxing that were mentioned during the hearing but that were not yet on file.
53. On 7 November 2025, the Respondent filed these two emails, and the Appellants were invited to provide their comments thereon by 14 November 2025, which they timely did.
54. On 8 December 2025, acting on behalf of the President of the Panel, the CAS Court Office notified the Parties of the closing of the evidentiary proceedings.

IV. THE PARTIES' SUBMISSIONS

55. The following summary of the Parties' positions and submissions is illustrative only and does not necessarily include each and every contention put forward by the Parties. However, the Panel has thoroughly considered in its deliberation all of the evidence and

arguments submitted by the Parties, even if no specific or detailed reference to this evidence or these arguments is made in what immediately follows.

A. On the jurisdiction of the CAS

The Respondents' Submissions on Jurisdiction

56. In their Answer, the Respondents claim that the CAS has no jurisdiction to hear the present matter pursuant to Article R47 of the Code. They argue, first, that the Appellants failed to exhaust the internal legal remedies available under the LOC Statutes, and second, that it is undisputed that there is no appealed decision. In fact, an appeal lodged by the Appellants before the LSAC on 26 May 2025 is currently pending and unresolved and the Appellants have not demonstrated that the LSAC has refused to adjudicate their appeal or that a denial of justice has occurred. The fact that the LSAC's activities are currently "suspended" while it is reformed by the LOC does not mean that a denial of justice has been committed. The reforms of the LSAC will be finalized soon, probably within the two to three months after the hearing before the CAS, and after that the pending proceedings at the LSAC will resume and decisions will be rendered. The mere absence of a decision within a very limited timeframe, in the present matter the Appellants only waited 11 days after filing their appeal with the LSAC before filing their appeal with the CAS, does not constitute a denial of justice, particularly in light of the complexity of the dispute and the procedural history. Indeed, according to well-established CAS jurisprudence, a denial of justice may exist only in exceptional circumstances – specifically, where a competent judicial body fails to render a decision within a reasonable period of time. Where a judicial body has failed to act for more than two years, without any indication that a decision is forthcoming, the delay is unreasonable (CAS 2024/A/10874). However, a party that invokes a denial of justice must provide evidence that it actively sought information from the judicial body regarding the status of the proceedings and the issuance of a decision and, in the absence of such proof, the party cannot legitimately claim that a situation of denial justice arose (CAS 2015/A/4195). None of these conditions is fulfilled in the present matter: the time that has passed since the initial filing of the appeal before the LSAC and the filing of the appeal before the CAS is very short and the Appellants have not provided any proof that they contacted the LSAC to enquire about the status of their appeal. This conclusion would be in line with the jurisprudence of the Swiss Federal Tribunal (SFT).
57. Thus, in absence of a final decision from the LSAC and absent any proof that the LSAC has refused to adjudicate the appeal filed on 26 May 2025, the Appellants' appeal before the CAS is premature and the latter lacks jurisdiction to hear the matter at the present stage.
58. On a subsidiary basis, the Respondents argue that the Appellants' requests regarding the decisions taken by the General Assemblies held on 22 April 2025 and on 14 May 2025 [requests for relief (iv) and (v)] fall outside of CAS' jurisdiction in the present appeal. Indeed, the scope of the present appeal is limited to the alleged inaction of the LSAC in relation to the appeal filed by the Appellants on 26 May 2025, which exclusively concerned the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025.

The Appellants' Submissions on Jurisdiction

59. Regarding the Respondents' argument that the Appellants have not exhausted the internal remedies available under the LOC Statutes as their appeal filed before the LSAC on 26 May 2025 is still pending, the latter recall that, according to constant CAS jurisprudence, Article R47 of the Code requires the exhaustion of internal remedies only where such remedies are available and effective, knowing that an appellant is not required to pursue remedies that are illusory or that cannot, in practice, provide timely and effective relief (CAS 2003/O/466, CAS 2007/A/1373, CAS 2013/A/3052). In the case at hand, the LSAC has been rendered inoperative due to the purported "suspension" by the UMC, who had no power do so. This deliberate and self-serving suspension renders the expectation that the LSAC might issue a decision on the Appellants' claim of 26 May 2025 manifestly illusory. The Appellants have received no communication by the LSAC and, even until the date of the hearing before the CAS, the LSAC has remained *de facto* non-operational. A reform process "in progress" cannot compensate for the unlawful suspension of the LSAC, nor can it provide the Appellants with any effective remedy in the present matter. The fact would be that, as long as the planned reform is not implemented, the LSAC is unable to act. In a situation like the one at hand, the requirement of exhaustion of legal remedies set out in Article R47 CAS Code is satisfied as the Appellants have duly seized the LSAC, but the latter has refused or is unable to act.
60. The Appellants argue that the allegation of *lis pendens* has also to be dismissed, given that *lis pendens* presupposes the existence of ongoing, functioning proceedings before another competent tribunal. In the present matter, no such proceedings exist in practice. Hence, the assertion of parallel proceedings is purely formal and devoid of substance.
61. As regards the alleged absence of an appealed decision, the Appellants argue that the LSAC's failure to adjudicate on their appeal filed on 26 May 2025 must be treated as a constructive dismissal of that appeal, *i.e.* a presumed rejection of the Appellants' claim seeking the annulment of the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly and all decisions flowing from it. That constructive denial of justice is an appealable act and provides sufficient jurisdictional basis for CAS review.
62. Finally, as to the scope of the CAS' jurisdiction regarding the Appellants' different requests for relief, the Appellants confirm that the direct object of the present appeal is the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025, and the decisions taken therein. However, they argue that the LSAC's awards of 16 April and 9 May 2025 have not been appealed by the Respondents before the CAS and are therefore final and binding, with full *res judicata* effect. These awards are therefore inseparable from the assessment of the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025. As a result, both the convocation and the decisions of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025 are definitively annulled and cannot be resurrected in these proceedings. The Respondents argument according to which the Appellants have failed to challenge the outcome of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025 must therefore fail. The requests for relief (i) and (iv), concerning the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025, do not amount to re-litigating that General Assembly but pursue the recognition, by the Panel, of the *res judicata* effects of the LSAC's awards

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from 16 April and 9 May 2025. Likewise, the request for relief (v), concerning the Extraordinary General Assembly of 14 May 2025, is the natural corollary of the framework within which the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 must be assessed. If the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 is declared null and void, the only legitimate EC remaining is the one elected on 14 May 2025. Far from expanding the scope of the present appeal, this simply reflects the legal consequences flowing from an annulment of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025. Hence, the Respondents' objection regarding the scope of the appeal should also be dismissed, given that it is clear that the CAS has full jurisdiction to consider the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 together with its essential antecedents.

B. On the Merits

The Appellants' Submissions and Request for Relief

63. As a preliminary point, the Appellants emphasize that the present appeal is not about the First Appellant's individual status, nor is it about any actual political disputes or personal rivalries within the LOC. Rather, it concerns a matter of fundamental institutional principle regarding the binding nature of arbitral decisions adopted by a recognised internal dispute resolution body, and the obligation of all members of a sports organisation to respect and comply with such decisions.
64. In support of their requests for relief, the Appellants raise, in essence, the following arguments:
- the Respondents deliberately disregarded the interim award of the LSAC dated 16 April 2025, by which the Extraordinary General Assembly scheduled for 22 April 2025 was provisionally suspended. However, despite the binding nature of that award – it has not been challenged by the Respondents before the CAS – the Respondents held that Extraordinary General Assembly and (i) admitted the four new member federations to the LOC although they lacked prior recognition by the Ministry of Youth and Sports; (ii) approved the financial and administrative statements for 2022-2024, despite irregularities and absence of required signatures, and (iii) confirmed the convocation of the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly. This violation of the interim award constitutes a serious breach of the principles of legal certainty and institutional integrity and undermines the rule of law within the organization justifying the annulment of the acts and decisions that resulted from the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025.
 - by holding the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly, the Respondents deliberately disregarded the final and binding arbitral award rendered by the LSAC on 9 May 2025, which expressly annulled the convocations to the Extraordinary General Assemblies of 22 April and 16 May 2025 and declared null and void the decisions adopted during the 22 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly. This would be a direct attack on the rule of law and the internal regulatory framework of the LOC, knowing that, according to Article 23 of the LSAC Procedural Rules, the "*arbitration award, as of its issue, shall have the effect of res judicata with regards to the settled dispute*". As the Respondents did not challenge that award, it became final and binding. Hence, the acts and decisions adopted at the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General

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Assembly have been adopted in breach of the final and binding award of 9 May 2025 and must be declared null and void in their entirety.

- the LSAC's arbitral awards of 16 April and 9 May 2025 are *res judicata* and must be fully upheld entailing that the legal consequences of the 22 April and 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assemblies are conclusively settled, and that all decisions adopted during these General Assemblies must be declared null and void. Indeed, as follows from the CAS jurisprudence (CAS 20187A/5888, with a reference to SFT 127 III 279), pursuant to the principle of *res judicata*, the Panel lacks jurisdiction to re-examine the legality of the 22 April and 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assemblies. In the present case, the so-called “triple-identity test”, used to verify if the principle of *res judicata* applies, which requires the cumulative presence of: (i) the same parties, (ii) the same subject matter (*petitum*), and (iii) the same legal grounds, is fulfilled. The “*only issue open to assessment by this Panel concerns the legitimacy of the [Extraordinary] General Assembly held on 14 May 2025, as the Appeal Brief expressly requests the recognition of the [EC] elected during that Assembly as the only validly constituted body within the LOC*”.
- the Extraordinary General Assembly of 14 May 2025 was validly convened and held, both procedurally and substantively, in accordance with the LOC's governing framework. The legitimacy of the EC elected on that date should thus be fully upheld by this Panel. First, the convocation of the 14 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly was lawfully initiated pursuant to Article 6.3. of the LOC Statutes given that one third of the General Assembly members requested the holding of an extraordinary session. On 23 April 2025, 13 out of 26 voting members of the LOC submitted a joint written request to convene an Extraordinary General Assembly. Second, that Extraordinary General Assembly was held in compliance with Article 6.8 of the LOC Statutes, which stipulates that “*the meeting of the General Assembly is considered legitimate if the majority of the members who have right to vote attend the meeting*”. Indeed, fourteen (14) out of the twenty-six (26) Olympic-recognized federations attended said Extraordinary General Assembly. Third, the election process conducted during the Extraordinary General Assembly was carried out in accordance with the agenda circulated to all members and followed all procedural safeguards required under the LOC Statutes. No procedural objections or challenges were raised by any of the participating federations. Fourth, the provisional suspension imposed on Jihad Salameh by the OCA had no impact on these elections as this suspension only affected OCA-related activities.
- in the unlikely event that the Panel would not recognise a *res judicata* effect to the LSAC awards of 22 April and 9 May 2025, the Extraordinary General Assemblies of 22 April and 16 May 2025 must still be annulled due to multiple statutory breaches. Indeed, first, the necessary quorum (one third of the voting members) for a valid convocation of those Assemblies was not met, given that only eight (8) federations out of the alleged 28 members validly signed the request on 24 February 2025. Second, the UMC's intervention was unlawful as it had not been constituted in accordance with Article 10.4 of the LOC Statutes, *i.e.* at the beginning of the calendar year. The convocation to the 22 April 2025 and the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assemblies issued by the UMC on 2 April 2025 thus lacked both legal basis and institutional legitimacy. Third,

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these convocations are contrary to Article 7.12.3 of the LOC Statutes as they lacked the mandatory co-signature of the LOC Secretary General. Fourth, the four new member federations, that had been unlawfully admitted as members of the LOC during the 22 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly, participated in and voted at the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025, rendering all decision adopted therein null and void. Moreover, these four (4) federations lacked official recognition by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports which equally affects the validity of any decision adopted during that Assembly. Fifth, according to Article 7.12.3 of the LOC Statutes, the Secretary General has a series of exclusive responsibilities, including preparation of the draft budget for the fiscal year and the budget for the following year, in conjunction with the Treasurer and the Accountant. Further, the Secretary General is responsible for preparing the draft annual administrative report on the EC's work. These functions are not merely formalities but essential procedural steps that safeguard transparency and accountability in the financial and administrative management of the LOC. In the present case, neither the Secretary General, nor the Treasurer, nor the Accountant participated in the preparation or prior approval of any administrative or financial documentation presented in the Extraordinary General Assemblies of 22 April and 16 May 2025 and the statutory violations following therefrom invalidate the procedural legitimacy of those assemblies.

65. In light of all the above arguments, the Appellants request the following reliefs from the Panel:

- “(i) *Setting aside the decision of the Lebanese Sports Arbitration Center —acting as the arbitral tribunal of the Lebanese Olympic Committee— resulting from its failure to adjudicate the appeal filed on 26 May 2025 against the decisions adopted during the General Assembly held on 22 April and 16 May 2025;*
- (ii) *Declaring that the General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 and all decisions taken therein —including the purported election of a new purported Executive Committee— are null and void;*
- (iii) *Declaring that any official act accomplished by the purported Executive Committee purportedly elected on 16 May 2025 is null and void;*
- (iv) *Declaring that the General Assembly held on 22 April 2025 and all decisions taken therein are null and void;*
- (v) *Declaring that the only legitimate Executive Committee of the Lebanese Olympic Committee is the one elected on 14 May 2025;*
- (vi) *Ordering the Respondents to bear all the arbitration costs; and*
- (vii) *Ordering the Respondents to pay a substantial contribution of no less than CHF 10,000. towards the Appellants' arbitration related costs”.*

The Respondents' Submissions and Request for Relief

66. As a preliminary point, the Respondents note that the First Appellant was not a party in the proceedings before the LSAC, given that the appeal filed before the LSAC on 26 May 2025 was only filed by the LFF. Hence, the First Appellant would not have standing to appeal in the present matter.
67. The Respondents further consider that the Appellants' request for relief (iii) is inadmissible as it amounts to a declaratory request which requires, according to constant CAS jurisprudence, a special legal interest, *i.e.* a sufficient interest for a declaration. In the present matter, the Appellants have neither explained which special interest would justify a declaratory judgement nor established that there are exceptional circumstances rendering such a declaratory judgement necessary. Moreover, the Appellants did not substantiate why any declaratory relief would be necessary in addition to their request of annulment of the decisions taken by the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025.
68. Regarding the Appellants claim that the UMC had no legitimate powers to adopt the decisions it did in February, March and April 2025, the Respondents argue that the UMC had been restructured by the EC on 10 October 2024 and that it therefore was formally constituted in accordance with Article 10-4 of the LOC Statutes. With regard to the absence of the Secretary General's signature on some of the correspondence, *inter alia*, the convocations to the Extraordinary General Assemblies of 22 April and 16 May 2025, the Respondents maintain that, on or around 11 February 2025, the Secretary General had declared that from that day forward, he would not attend any meeting in which President Boutros Jalkh is present, regardless of time or location and was thus boycotting the meetings. Further, the Secretary General did not react to the request, sent on 20 March 2025, to fulfil his duties and, hence, the absence of the Secretary General's signature on some documents cannot be held against the LOC.
69. The Respondent's further explain that, following the requests from the IOC, for example in its email dated 10 February 2025, the LOC had "*to include all national federations affiliated to the IFs governing sports included in the programme of the Olympic Games*" to comply with the Olympic Charter. The EC having not being fully operational at the time for the reasons mentioned above, the UMC had to step in.
70. On 21 February 2025, nine member federations of the LOC, *i.e.* one-third of the twenty-seven federations affiliated to the LOC, requested the convocation of an Elective General Assembly to elect a new EC. This request was thus made in accordance with Article 6-3 of the LOC Statutes. Following this request, and given the urgency for the Lebanese sport to act in compliance with the IOC requirements and the fact that the mandate of the EC was about to expire, the UMC, pursuant to Article 10-4 of the LOC Statutes, was under a duty to call for elections of a new EC.
71. The Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 was held in accordance with Article 6-8-1 of the LOC Statutes, according to which the "*meeting of the General Assembly is considered legitimate if the majority of the members who have the right to vote attend the meeting*". This quorum was reached as eighteen out of thirty-two member federations attended that Extraordinary General Assembly. The Respondents

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note that the four new member federations admitted during the 22 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly, the Stabilization Committee of the Lebanese Swimming Federation – put in place by World Aquatics, and the Lebanese Boxing Federation which had become a full member of World Boxing at the time, were present at the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025. This Assembly was held in strict accordance with the agenda duly circulated in advance and the elections for a new EC were conducted in an orderly and transparent manner. This would be confirmed by the fact that the election process had been attended and closely monitored by an IOC/OCA delegate and that a public notary was present to formally oversee that election process. The new EC was elected unanimously, and not just by simple majority as required in Article 6-8-2 of the LOC Statutes. The Respondents therefore consider that the new EC was elected in full compliance with the LOC Statutes and that the decisions of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 are valid, binding, and beyond legal dispute.

72. The Respondents further argue that the Appellants act in manifest violation of the Olympic Charter, as repeatedly confirmed by the IOC and OCA. In this regard, the Respondents maintain that the Appellants, contrary to Article 27.5 and 27.6 of the Olympic Charter, were seeking cooperation with governmental bodies to destabilize the LOC. Moreover, the Appellants, in violation of Article 28.1.2 of the Olympic Charter, were not willing to include all national federations affiliated to the IFs governing sports in the programme of the Olympic Games. By their actions, the Appellants attempt to create a parallel structure of selected national federations willing to act contrary to the interests of the Olympic Movement and Lebanese athletes, in pursuit of their own interests and gain, while excluding all other national federations duly united under the umbrella of the LOC. As a result, they undermine the representative nature of the LOC and violate the principle of universality that underpins Rule 28.1.2 of the Olympic Charter. Such behaviour could not be sustained by the CAS.
73. The Respondents add that they not only acted in full compliance with LOC Statutes, but also in line with the Olympic Charter and the directives the IOC and OCA. Indeed, on various occasions, for example on 10 February 2025, 26 March 2025 and 14 April 2025, the IOC issued clear directives to the LOC asking it to (i) continue its operations until the scheduled elections, (ii) hold the scheduled General Assemblies, and (iii) include all national federations governing Olympic sports in the process. In adherence to these instructions, the LOC, under the leadership of Dr. Boutros Jalkh, continued its operations, resisted all external pressures, conducted the scheduled elections without excluding any national federations and continued to operate as the umbrella organization for all Lebanese national federations and athletes.
74. Finally, as regards some of the Appellants' other arguments, the Respondents argue:
- that the LSAC awards of 16 April and 9 May 2025 are irrelevant for the present proceedings and are, in any event, null and void. Indeed, first, these proceedings concern exclusively the alleged denial of justice by the LSAC in relation to the decisions adopted at the Extraordinary General Assembly on 16 May 2025. The LSAC awards fall entirely outside the scope of this appeal. Second, the request for arbitration filed with the LSAC only dealt with the convocations of the 22 April 2025 and the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assemblies. Consequently, the invalidation of the decisions

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adopted at the 22 April 2025 General Assembly fell entirely outside the jurisdiction of the LSAC and the fact that the LSAC nonetheless ruled on those decisions underscores the political and biased nature of the LSAC awards. Third, the LSAC Awards cannot be enforced through CAS as they are null and void. They are tainted, in particular, by the unlawful shortening of response period given to the President of the LOC and the highly irregular, unlawful and premature appointment of the arbitrator. For these reasons, the LOC requested the Court of Appeal in Baabda, Lebanon, the competent court under Lebanese law, to annul the LSAC Awards. Furthermore, the noted procedural defects are in grave contradiction to the standards set for the enforceability of arbitral awards in CAS jurisprudence in accordance with Swiss procedural public policy (CAS 2011/A/2426). Fourth, the principle of *res judicata* is manifestly inapplicable in the present case as neither the identity of the parties, nor the identity of the subject matter, nor the identity of the legal grounds is satisfied. Hence, the legality of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 has never been adjudicated.

- that the parallel meeting held on 14 May 2025 is not only irrelevant to these proceedings but was also illegal as it was held (i) in violation of the LOC Statutes, as the convocation to such meeting was not sent to all member federations, (ii) in violation of the Olympic Charter, and (iii) in contradiction against the clear directives of the IOC and OCA.
- that the allegations raised by the Appellants in relation to the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 are false. Indeed, first, that Assembly was convened (i) based on a request of nine (9) national federations (*i.e.* in accordance with Article 6-3 para. 1 of the LOC Statutes), and (ii) by a decision of the UMC. Second, the intervention of the UMC was not only appropriate but necessary given the circumstances. Third, the signature of the former Secretary General of the LOC on the convocation of the Extraordinary General Assembly was not necessary according to Articles 6-5 of the LOC Statutes. The Appellants' reliance on Article 7-12-3 of the LOC Statutes is of no avail to them. Fourth, no national federation participated in the Elective General Assembly which was not duly admitted as a member of the LOC. The alleged lack of recognition of the four new member federations by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports in no way alters the fact that they were duly admitted as members of the LOC. Equally, the decision rendered by the LSAC on 9 May 2024 concerning the resolutions of the 22 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly has no legal consequence as it was adopted in a manifest and clear excess of jurisdiction. Fifth, the Appellants' reliance on Article 7-12-3 of the LOC Statutes, concerning the former Secretary General's lack of involvement in the preparation of budgetary and administrative documents is wholly without merit. The former Secretary General's refusal to exercise his duties and to make the necessary arrangements for the General Assembly constituted a breach of duty and had been formally notified to him by the LOC on 20 March 2025.

75. In light of the above arguments, the Respondents request the CAS:

- “(i) *To declare that it has no jurisdiction to hear the appeal of Appellants in the proceedings CAS 2025/A/11499 Jihad Salameh and Lebanese Fencing Federation v. Lebanese Olympic Committee and Dr Boutros et al.; and/or*

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- (ii) *To dismiss the appeal of Appellants in the proceedings CAS 2025/A/11499 Jihad Salameh and Lebanese Fencing Federation v. Lebanese Olympic Committee and Dr Boutros Jalkh et al. in full.*
- (iii) *In any event, to order Appellants to pay all costs of the arbitration, including the costs of CAS, and to pay an amount of at least CHF 30'000 contribution to the costs and expenses incurred by the Lebanese Olympic Committee and Dr Boutros Jalkh et al.”.*

V. THE HEARING

- 76. At the hearing, the Panel heard evidence by Mr. Jassem Kanso, Mr. Ibrahim Menassa, Mr. Freddy Keyrouz, Mr. Pierrot Khoueiriy as well as Mr. Bassam Cheiban and Mr. Assad Yazbeck.
- 77. The evidence may, in its relevant parts, be summarized as follows:
- 78. Mr. Kanso is a former basketball player and now president of a basketball club. He is the president of the Lebanese Badminton Federation and involved in badminton in Asia, amongst others as treasurer, and was a former member of the EC of the LOC at the time the LSAC was created. He stated that the creation of the LSAC was kind of a “revolution” and a good step forward for the growth of the sports institutions in Lebanon. According to him, the LSAC was created as an independent structure but still attached to the LOC. In case of disagreement with the decision, there was a final appeal foreseen before the CAS. He stated that he did not have any specific knowledge about the suspension of the LSAC by the UMC and testified that he cannot recall that any such suspension had ever occurred before. To his knowledge, the UMC does not have the power to suspend the LSAC. In response to questions from the Respondents, he confirmed that, between April and May 2025, he had received the letter from the IOC and OCA forwarded by the LOC to the Badminton Federation. He acknowledged that there was no letter from the IOC or the OCA recognising the meeting of 14 May 2025. He stated that Mr. Paul Rukus is the secretary general of the Badminton Federation and that Mr. Rukus represented that Federation in the 14 May 2025 meeting. He confirmed that the Badminton Federation did not attend the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly of the LOC. He also confirmed that Mr. Shadi Makzoum has been elected as member of the leadership group appointed in the parallel meeting held on 14 May 2025. According to his opinion, the IOC was maybe not fully aware of the situation in Lebanon when it was giving its recommendations regarding the elective process for the LOC in May 2025 and that he did not understand why there were not more enquiries from the IOC’s part around what happened in Lebanon.
- 79. Mr. Menassa is a former Secretary General of the Lebanese Athletics Federation and a former member of the EC of the LOC. In the years 2000 to 2006 he oversaw the cabinet of the minister in charge of building the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Lebanon. He has been involved in sports in Lebanon since 1964. He stated that according to Lebanese law, a federation is only validly constituted if it has been recognised (“*attestation*”) by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Without recognition and authorization of that Ministry, the clubs and federations have no legal status or entity. In order for a delegate

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of a federation to be able to vote at the General Assembly of the LOC, that delegate has, according to the by-laws of the LOC, to present the attestation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. He stated that, although he did not attend the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025, according to his knowledge, the Boxing Federation and the Pentathlon Federation did not fulfil the relevant criteria to be recognised or counted as members of the LOC. The same would be true for the Table Tennis Federation, as the authorization from the Ministry of Youth and Sports to this Federation was, according to his knowledge, posterior to the holding of the General Assembly of April 2025. As regards the Swimming Federation, he stated that there was no such authorization as the Stabilization Committee put in place by World Aquatics was not a federation but just a “committee”. In response to questions from the Respondents, Mr. Menassa testified that he is not an advisory to the Minister of Youth and Sports anymore. He further stated that he is aware that the “Armenian ministers” in the Lebanese government are elected by the “Tashnag” political party. He acknowledged having given a television interview on OTV in which he stated that, during the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025, some federations could not participate. He added that, in the same interview, he criticised the Minister of Youth and Sports and that in former elections he supported Mr. Jalkh against the likes of Mr. Salameh. He finally did not contest being a board member of the basketball club of “Champville” and stated that the president of the Lebanese Basketball federation is Mr. Akram Halabi.

80. Mr. Keyrouz is the President of the Lebanese Ski Federation since 2020 and is a former member of the EC of the LOC (2014 – 2016). He stated that, to his knowledge, before April 2025, the LSAC had never been suspended. According to him, he became aware of that suspension through a press release on 22 April 2025. His Federation considered the invitation to the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025 as being invalid as some of the documents attached to it were not signed in accordance with the LOC Statutes. He stated that his Federation received an email from the LOC General Secretary about the LSAC interim award suspending the convocation to the 22 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly. He acknowledged having received an email from the IOC and the OCA regarding the mandatory admission of the four new federations to the LOC. However, he considers that, according to the applicable LOC Statutes, neither the IOC nor the OCA can give instructions to the LOC to accept (or reject) federations as members. He considers that the acceptance of the four new member federations had a huge impact as their admission changes the calculation of the quorum and the majorities required during General Assemblies. In response to questions from the Respondents, Mr. Keyrouz confirmed that he attended the parallel meeting held on 14 May 2025. He acknowledged that his Federation received the communications from the IOC and the OCA from April and May 2025, but emphasised that the communication had been forwarded from the private email of Mr. Jalkh. He also acknowledged that there is no communication from the IOC and/or the OCA recognizing the parallel meeting of 14 May 2025. He stated that, given the LSAC award of 9 May 2025, according to which the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 was not legal, his Federation decided not to attend that Extraordinary General Assembly. He further confirmed that Mr. Raymond Succar is the treasurer of the Lebanese Ski Federation and has been elected as member of the leadership group appointed in the parallel meeting held on 14 May 2025.

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81. Mr. Khoueiriy is the administrator of the LSAC. He stated that the LSAC's independence has been under assault by the body it is supposed to oversee, *i.e.* the LOC, as the latter has, in practice, paralyzed the operation of the LSAC. He stated that the personnel were denied access to the premises of the LSAC, and that they could not open new files or access their emails anymore. According to Mr. Khoueiriy, the UMC had no competence to suspend the LSAC and no valid decision concerning this suspension was ever adopted in accordance with the LOC Statutes or the Lebanese Sports Arbitration Rules. The only body to have the power to suspend the LSAC would be the General Assembly of the LSAC and no such resolution was ever passed. He stated that he became aware of the suspension of the LSAC through the press and never received any official information or communication by the LOC. He testified having asked Mr. Jalkh several times some information about what was going on but he never received any answer. In response to questions from the Respondents, Mr. Khoueiriy confirmed that he is a member of the Free Patriotic Movement, that he is a member of different bodies affiliated to that Movement and that he is the president of the Lebanese Wushu Federation. In response to a question from the Panel, Mr. Khoueiriy stated that the LSAC interim award dated 16 April 2025 and the LSAC final award dated 9 May 2025 were rendered in one single case. He also stated that, in the award dated 9 May 2025, the decisions adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025 were declared null and void by the arbitrator in charge of the case. He finally testified (i) that the LSAC had not been informed that, in February 2025, the UMC had decided to suspend the LSAC; (ii) that he was in contact with Mr. Jalkh for the last time on 14 April 2025; and (iii) that it was from that date onwards that the people working for the LSAC had no access to the premises of the LSAC and could not access their emails anymore.
82. Mr. Cheiban is a Grand Master in Taekwondo, an international referee in Taekwondo, a former executive board member of the Lebanese Taekwondo Federation, the treasurer of the Modern Pentathlon Federation and a chairman in his own club. He stated that he knows the First Appellant because the latter is also a chairman of a club and they meet at the General Assembly of the Federation. Mr. Cheiban stated that Mr. Salameh is the Secretary of the Lebanese Patriotic Party, which is one of the biggest political parties of the country, and uses this political influence, in particular that over the Minister of Youth and Sports – who is a member of the same political party – during the General Assemblies. He testified that he was present at the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 as he accompanied the President of the Modern Pentathlon Federation, that the elections held during that Assembly were legally correct and that no one was influenced by the First Appellant. The OCA representative had no objections either regarding the legality of the elections. He stated that his Federation had been validly invited to that the Extraordinary General Assembly. He testified that the First Appellant tried to influence the clubs in charge of Modern Pentathlon, *inter alia* by filing lawsuits against them arguing that Modern Pentathlon is in conflict with the activities of the fencing clubs. In response to questions from the Appellants, he confirmed that the Modern Pentathlon Federation was admitted to the LOC during the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025. He stated that they were not notified of the LSAC interim award of 16 April 2025 and only became aware of that award later, through social media. They discussed this award within the Federation and, given that they had not been legally notified of the award, they decided not to take any action against it. He stated that he participated in an arbitration procedure before the LSAC in

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2022, but that that was another composition of the “board of arbitration”. He also stated that he has heard that the list (roster) of arbitrators is not the same anymore. He stated that he was not aware of any statutory amendments to the LSAC’s powers. He finally stated that he was not involved in legal proceedings before a court against the First Appellant given that an issue deriving from a misinterpreted interview he had given had been solved before he became aware that the First Appellant had filed a lawsuit.

83. Mr. Yazbeck is the president of the Lebanese Skate Federation, practices as an independent attorney-at-law and has his own law firm. He acts, amongst others, for the LOC before the courts in Lebanon. He attended the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 in his function as president of the Lebanese Skate Federation. He stated that there were no irregularities during that Extraordinary General Assembly and that his federation had been notified in due time of that Assembly. He testified that the Minister of Youth and Sports had threatened to dissolve his federation in case it would continue to acknowledge the legitimate LOC president Mr. Jalkh and the Minister’s decision to dissolve the federation was adopted on the day the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025 was held. In response to questions from the Appellants, Mr. Yazbeck confirmed that, before the Lebanese courts, he acts as attorney-at-law for the LOC and Mr. Jalkh in his function as president of the LOC. He however pointed out that he was testifying in front of the CAS in his function as president of the Lebanese Skating Federation. He acknowledged that this federation was amongst the four federations that were admitted as members of the LOC during the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025. He stated that they became aware of the LSAC awards before the “May meeting” (*i.e.* the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025) but that the LSAC had been suspended on 22 April 2025.

VI. JURISDICTION OF THE CAS

84. In accordance with Article 186 of the Swiss Private International Law Act (the “PILA”), the CAS has the power to decide upon its own jurisdiction.
85. Article R47 para. 1 of the Code provides – in its relevant parts:
- “An appeal against the decision of a federation, association or sports-related body may be filed with CAS if the statutes or regulations of the said body so provide or if the parties have concluded a specific arbitration agreement and if the Appellant has exhausted the legal remedies available to it prior to the appeal, in accordance with the statutes or regulations of that body.”*
86. The Appellants rely on Article 8-3 of the LOC Statutes, which reads as follows:
- “The arbitration decision can be appealed before the Court of Arbitration for sports in Switzerland (Court of Arbitration of Sport – CAS) within 21 days as of the date of servicing of award upon litigants”.*
87. Further, pursuant to Article 23 of the Statutes and Procedural Rules of the LSAC:

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“The arbitration award, as of its issue, shall have the effect of res judicata with regards to the settled dispute. It is possible to object the arbitration award before the ‘Court of Arbitration of Sport – CAS’ in Switzerland within 21 days as of the date of servicing of award upon litigants; in the event of non-objection, the decision becomes final, binding and absolute as per the provisions provided for in the Statutes of the CAS”.

88. In the present matter, it is undisputed that, on the date the present appeal was filed with the CAS, *i.e.* 6 June 2025, the LSAC had not rendered a decision with regard to a request filed on 26 May 2025 by the Second Appellant. According to the Appellants, their Appeal is thus directed against the *“inaction and refusal of the LSAC to adjudicate a formal request filed by the Appellants”* and seeking *“the annulment of all decision adopted at the Extraordinary Assembly held on 16 May 2025”*. They interpret the inaction of the LSAC as *“a rejection of [their] request”*.
89. The Respondents, *inter alia*, dispute that the CAS has jurisdiction to hear the present Appeal. They argue that the Appellants’ have failed to exhaust the internal remedies given that the request filed on 26 May 2025 before the LSAC is still pending and that there is no appealed decision.
90. The Panel notes, first, that it is clear from Article 8-3 of the LOC Statutes and Article 23 of the Statutes and Procedural Rules of the LSAC that the CAS has, in principle, jurisdiction to hear appeals against decisions adopted by the LSAC.
91. The Panel observes, second, that the Respondents’ arguments concerning the lack of jurisdiction of the CAS in the present matter mainly relate to the exhaustion of the internal legal remedies available to the Appellants. The question whether the exhaustion of the internal legal remedies is a question of jurisdiction or a question of admissibility has been widely discussed in the relevant literature and in the CAS jurisprudence (Rigozzi/Hasler, N37 ad article R47, in: Arroyo (Ed.), *Arbitration in Switzerland*, Vol. II, 2018, p. 1583; Mavromati/Reeb, *The Code of the Court of Arbitration for Sport*, 2025, 2nd ed., N32 ad article R47, p. 436; CAS 2019/A/6298; CAS 2021/A/7908). According to Rigozzi/Hasler, *“although the ‘exhaustion of internal remedies rule’ constitutes a mere admissibility requirement, it is treated as a precondition for CAS jurisdiction in the context of actions to set aside CAS awards based on Art. 190(2)(b) PILS, meaning that the issue can be reviewed with unfettered powers by the Swiss Supreme Court”* (Rigozzi/Hasler, N40 ad article R47, in: Arroyo (Ed.), *Arbitration in Switzerland*, Vol. II, 2018, p. 1584).
92. The Panel considers that this issue is to be analyzed as a question of admissibility of the appeal. In this regard, the Panel refers to the reasoning followed by the Panel in CAS 2019/A/6298, which also considered the issue as an admissibility requirement and held that *“[f]irst, this is in line with the Parties’ written and oral submissions that considered it to be an issue of admissibility. Second, because the requirement does not serve to distinguish the Panel’s mandate from the Parties’ access to justice before state courts. By submitting to CAS jurisdiction, the Parties wanted to exclude any kind of recourse to state courts. In particular, they did not want to enable a party to file an appeal before state courts in all matters, in which a CAS panel finds that the requirements for a ‘decision’ within the meaning of Article R47 CAS Code are not*

fulfilled. Consequently, the issue whether or not a decision is appealable (within the meaning of Article R47 of the CAS Code) is not aimed at limiting the CAS jurisdiction vis-à-vis state courts. Instead, it is an admissibility issue, since – at the end of the day – the response to the question at stake is dictated by procedural principles such as procedural efficiency. This Panel finds itself comforted in its view by a comparison with the procedural rules regulating appeals before state courts. In such context whether or not a (preliminary) decision from a previous instance is appealable or not to a higher instance is a procedural matter of admissibility”.

93. In the present matter, although the Parties have not pleaded that the exhaustion of the internal remedies is a question of admissibility, it must be noted that Article 8-2 of the LOC Statutes provides that “[a]ny sport dispute shall be settled by arbitration through the recourse to the [LASC]. The parties to the dispute cannot resort to any other judicial authority to resolve the dispute. In case of violation of this rule and resorting to any other judicial authority to resolve the dispute, the violator shall be punished by the Executive Committee of the Lebanese Olympic Committee in accordance with Article 5-1 of the present Statutes”. The Panel considers that it follows from this provision, read in conjunction with Article 8-3 of the LOC Statutes and Article 23 of the Statutes and Procedural Rules of the LSAC, that the Parties excluded any kind of recourse to state courts to solve a dispute like the one at hand. Furthermore, it is uncontested that if the LSAC had rendered its decision regarding the request filed on 26 May 2025, the CAS would have been competent to adjudicate the appeal filed against that decision pursuant to the above-mentioned provisions. Hence, the question of whether or not the Appellants have exhausted all internal remedies [or if a decision is appealable pursuant to article R47 of the Code] is not aimed at limiting the CAS jurisdiction. It will thus be examined in the chapter concerning the “admissibility”.
94. Moreover, as regards the question of whether or not there has been a denial of justice, the Panel recalls that, in accordance with the jurisprudence of the SFT, applicable when determining the jurisdiction of the CAS given that the CAS has its seat in Switzerland, this question pertains to the substance/merits of the case and does not affect the jurisdiction of the court seized (ATF 4A_314/2017, cons. 2.4.2.1).
95. In light of the above considerations, the Panel considers that it has jurisdiction to adjudicate the present Appeal.

VII. ADMISSIBILITY

96. Article R49 of the Code provides as follows:

“In the absence of a time limit set in the statutes or regulations of the federation, association or sports-related body concerned, or in a previous agreement, the time limit for appeal shall be twenty-one days from the receipt of the decision appealed against. [...]”

97. As already mentioned, Article 8-3 of the LOC Statutes and Article 23 Statutes and Procedural Rules of the LSAC provide that the deadline to file an appeal against a decision from the LSAC is “21 days as of the date of servicing of award upon litigants”.

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98. In the present matter, the request before the LSAC was filed on 26 May 2025 and the Statement of Appeal was filed with the CAS on 6 June 2025. Hence, the Appellants manifestly respected the 21-day period set out in Article 8-3 of the LOC Statutes and the Appeal may thus be considered as having been filed in a timely manner.
99. However, it is uncontested that the LSAC has not rendered an award in relation to the request filed on 26 May 2025 by the Second Appellant. The Appellants argue that this is a case of denial of justice. The Respondents dispute that the present case amounts to a denial of justice and argue that the Appellants have not exhausted the internal legal remedies as the LSAC has not yet rendered an appealable decision.
100. As mentioned in the previous chapter on jurisdiction, the Panel considers that the exhaustion of legal remedies is a question of admissibility. The Panel further notes that, in the present matter, the issue relating to the exhaustion of the internal remedies and that concerning the alleged denial of justice are clearly interlinked and need to be addressed together.
101. According to long-standing CAS jurisprudence, there are exceptions to the obligation to exhaust all internal legal remedies before filing an appeal with the CAS in case of a formal or material denial of justice. According to the CAS, “[i]f a body refuses without reasons to issue a decision or delays the issuance of a decision beyond a reasonable period of time, there can be a denial of justice, opening the way for an appeal against the absence of a decision” (CAS 2005/A/899; CAS 2005/A/944; CAS 2017/A/4195; CAS 2017/A/5086; TAS 2024/A/10386).
102. As explained by the panel in TAS 2024/A/10386, “[d]e manière générale, une autorité commet un déni de justice lorsqu’elle omet totalement ou partiellement de trancher sur un litige, alors même qu’elle en a l’obligation en vertu de la procédure applicable en la matière. En s’abstenant de la sorte, cette autorité ferme alors indûment l’accès à la justice à une partie, qui y aurait normalement droit. L’interdiction du déni de justice est un droit pour le justiciable à ce que les règles d’organisation et de procédure régissant l’entrée en matière, le traitement et le jugement d’une cause soient appliquées correctement, ou sans arbitraire. Il y a donc déni de justice chaque fois que, en violation de la procédure applicable, une autorité n’accomplit pas toutes les opérations nécessaires au traitement d’une cause introduite ou poursuivie dans les formes et les délais prescrits avec pour conséquence que le droit de fond n’est pas appliqué. Cette autorité refuse alors totalement ou partiellement de statuer, de manière explicite ou implicite (Jacques Dubey, *Droits fondamentaux*, volume II : *Libertés, garanties de l’Etat de droit, droits sociaux et politiques*, 2018, N° 4046, p. 806 ; CAS 2013/A/3148).

*La violation du principe de célérité est une forme particulière de déni de justice dans la mesure où tarder à statuer équivaut à refuser de statuer. Toute partie a le droit à ce que sa cause soit traitée « dans un délai raisonnable ». En l’absence d’un délai fixé par la réglementation applicable, le caractère raisonnable ou adéquat du délai à respecter s’apprécie dans chaque cas d’espèce selon une évaluation globale, au vu de la nature de la procédure et de la spécificité de l’affaire (DUBEY J., *ibidem*, N° 4042, p. 805; CAS 2017/A/5197 ; CAS 2013/A/3148, CAS 2004/A/659; CAS 2005/A/899; CAS 2004/A/748).*

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[Free translation :

Generally, an authority commits a denial of justice when it wholly or partially fails to decide a dispute, even though it is obliged to do so under the applicable procedural rules. By abstaining in this way, this authority improperly denies a party access to justice to which it would normally be entitled. The prohibition of denial of justice is a right for the parties to have the organizational and procedural rules governing the initiation, processing, and adjudication of a case applied correctly and without arbitrariness. A denial of justice thus occurs each time when, in violation of the applicable procedure, an authority fails to perform all necessary actions to process a case that has been initiated or pursued according to the prescribed forms and deadlines having as a consequence that the law applicable to the merits is not being applied. This authority then refuses, either explicitly or implicitly, to issue a ruling, in whole or in part (Dubey J., Droits fondamentaux, volume II: Libertés, garanties de l'État de droit, droits sociaux et politiques, 2018, No. 4046, p. 806; CAS 2013/A/3148; CAS 2024/A/10386, para 105).

The violation of the principle of celerity (promptness) is a particular form of denial of justice, in that delaying to render a decision is equivalent to refusing to take one. Every party has the right to have their case handled 'within a reasonable time'. In the absence of a time limit set by the applicable regulations, the reasonable or adequate character of the time limit to respect is assessed on a case-by-case basis according to an overall evaluation, taking into account the nature of the procedure and the specificities of the case (Dubey J., *ibid.*, No. 4042, p. 805; (DUBEY J., *ibidem*, N° 4042, p. 805; CAS 2017/A/5197 ; CAS 2013/A/3148, CAS 2004/A/659; CAS 2005/A/899; CAS 2004/A/748).]

103. In the present matter, the Panel finds that while it is true that the Appellants, contrary to what has been requested by some CAS panels (CAS 2015/A/4195), have not formally requested or reminded the LSAC to render a formal decision on the request filed by the Second Appellant on 26 May 2025, it is also true that the Respondents have admitted that the LSAC has, at least *de facto*, been suspended since February 2025 and that it will only be able to resume its functions after the end of the reform process launched by the LOC.
104. However, the Panel notes that, according to CAS jurisprudence, in order to act as condition to the appeal, the internal remedies set out in the applicable rules must give the appellant the possibility of effectively challenging the decision under appeal, giving access to a legal procedure where the appellant can defend his case and the "*the internal remedy must be readily and effectively available to the aggrieved party and it must grant access to a definite procedure*" (see CAS 2013/A/3052, para. 140 and cited jurisprudence).
105. Considering the situation at hand, in particular the fact that the Respondents argued that the LSAC has been suspended by decision of the UMC dated 24 February 2025, confirmed by the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025, and is actually under reform, the Panel considers that the internal remedy available to challenge, amongst others, the decision adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025, has not been "*readily and effectively available*" to the Appellants within the above meaning and that the Appellants were deprived of an access to a

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“*definite procedure*”. Hence, in the Panel’s view, it would amount to excessive formalism to request from the Appellants to send some formal notices to the LSAC inviting the latter to render a decision on the request filed on 26 May 2025 by the Second Appellant in order to be admissible to file an appeal before the CAS. Given the particular circumstances of the present case, the Panel finds that the Appellants have not failed to exhaust any legal remedies and concludes that the appeal filed on 6 June 2025 is, as such, admissible.

VIII. APPLICABLE LAW

106. Article R58 of the CAS Code provides as follows:

“The Panel shall decide the dispute according to the applicable regulations and, subsidiarily, to the rules of law chosen by the parties or, in the absence of such a choice, according to the law of the country in which the federation, association or sports-related body which has issued the challenged decision is domiciled or according to the rules of law that the Panel deems appropriate. In the latter case, the Panel shall give reasons for its decision”.

107. In the present matter, and although there is no appealed decision, it is clear from the factual elements described above that the “*applicable regulations*” within the meaning of article R58 of the Code are the rules and regulations of the LOC, particularly the LOC Statutes.

108. According to Article 10-2 of these Statutes in “*all cases that are not stated in these Statutes or if there is a need to make an interpretation of these Statutes, the Executive Committee has the right to take decisions it sees fit, which are of no contradiction with the Olympic Charter and the relevant local regulations abided by, subject to final determination by the General Assembly if there is any objection against the decision taken by the Executive Committee*”.

109. In light of this provision, the Panel considers that, besides of the LOC Statutes, it shall, in case of need, apply the Olympic Charter and, subsidiarily, Lebanese law. The Panel further notes that there is no dispute between the Parties as to the applicable law.

IX. PROCEDURAL ISSUES

110. On 20 October 2025, the Appellants filed a request to submit three (3) additional documents. The Respondents objected to the admission of these additional documents.

111. On 27 October 2025, the CAS Court Office informed the Parties that the Panel had decided to reject the Appellants’ request to have the three (3) additional documents admitted to the case file.

112. In this regard, the Panel recalls that, pursuant to article R56 of the Code, “[*u*]nless the parties agree otherwise or the President of the Panel orders otherwise on the basis of exceptional circumstances, the parties shall not be authorized to supplement or amend

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their requests or their argument, to produce new exhibits, or to specify further evidence on which they intend to rely after the submission of the appeal brief and of the answer”.

113. The Appellants provided the following explanations in support of the late filing of the three (3) additional documents: the first document “*was not immediately available within the Appellants’ records at the time the Appeal Brief was submitted due to the multiplicity of ongoing proceedings involving the same parties. It was only recently located and identified as relevant for demonstrating the Respondents’ contradictory positions*”; the second document “*was inadvertently omitted from the initial submissions, as it was contained in the extensive documentation of parallel domestic proceedings*”, and the third document “*only came to the Appellants’ attention recently, following a review of correspondence from the Ministry of Youth and Sports in October 2025*”.
114. The Panel considers that none of the circumstances brought forward by the Appellants to justify the late filing of the three (3) additional documents amount to “*exceptional circumstances*” within the meaning of article R56 of the Code. Indeed, it appears that all of these documents were available to the Appellants at the time of the filing of the Appeal Brief but were, for reasons entirely imputable to the Appellants, only discovered or considered relevant for the present proceedings after that filing.
115. On 5 November 2025, *i.e.* after the closing of the hearing, the Panel requested the Respondents to submit two emails, mentioned during that hearing, that were, allegedly, sent from World Boxing to the Lebanese Boxing Federation in relation with the latter’s affiliation to World Boxing. On 7 November 2025, the Respondents submitted these two emails and on 14 November 2025, *i.e.* within the deadline provided to them by the CAS Court Office, the Appellants submitted their comments on these emails. The Respondents did not object to the admission of these emails to the file as they considered that these emails did “*not establish that the Lebanese Boxing Federation had been admitted as a member of World Boxing at any time prior to 22 May 2025*” and that it was thus clear that the Lebanese Boxing Federation had “*participated in the Assemblies of 22 April and 16 May 2025 without having been confirmed as a member [of World Boxing], not even provisionally*”.
116. These two emails, as well as the Appellants comments on them were admitted to the file according to article R56 of the Code.

X. SCOPE OF THE APPEAL

117. According to Article R57 of the Code, the Panel has full power to review the facts and the law. However, this power is limited to the scope of the dispute before the previous instance. In other words, if, according to Article R57 para. 1 of the Code, the present Panel has full power to review the facts and the law, it is clear from constant CAS case law that these powers are limited to the matter in dispute before it and cannot go further than what was at dispute before the previous instance (CAS 2010/A/2090 and CAS 2019/A/6483). Hence, if a claim was not part of the proceedings before the previous instances, or if it was not addressed in any way in the challenged decision, the panel

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does not have the authority to rule on it and the claim falls outside the scope of the appeal.

118. In the present matter, the request filed by the Second Appellant before the LSAC on 26 May 2025 was directed “*against the convening of the General Assembly of the [LOC] on May 16, 2025*” and contained a “*request to freeze and invalidate its effects*”. The Second Appellant stated that the object of its request was “*to challenge the validity of the general assembly held on May 16, 2025, and request [the LSAC] to cancel this assembly and all its decisions as its proceedings and resolutions, including the election of the executive committee and the nomination of its members and any subsequent decisions as if they never existed*”.
119. Thus, it is manifest that the scope of the dispute before the LSAC was limited to the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 as well as the decisions adopted during that assembly and did neither cover the convocation of – or the decisions adopted during – the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025 [Appellants’ requests for relief (i) and (iv)], nor extend to a declaration that the Executive Committee elected during the General Assembly held on 14 May 2025 is the sole legitimate governing body of the LOC [Appellants’ request for relief (v)].
120. In light of these considerations, the Panel finds that the Appellants requests for reliefs (i), (iv) and (v) fall outside of the scope of the present appeal insofar as they concern the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025 and the meeting held on 14 May 2025 and are thus inadmissible.

XI. MERITS

121. As a liminary point, and based on the Parties submissions, the Panel has to address the question whether the First Appellant has a standing to sue before turning to the substance of the Appellant’s requests for relief (ii) and (iii).

The First Appellant’s standing to sue

122. According to the SFT, both “standing to sue” and “standing to be sued” are related to the merits of the case (Mavromati/Reeb, The Code of the Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2025, 2nd ed, article R48, para. 21). The absence of “standing to sue” leads to the dismissal of the appeal and not to its inadmissibility (SFT 126 III 59; SFT 125 III 82; SFT 114 II 345).
123. Pursuant to constant CAS jurisprudence (CAS 2016/A/4924; CAS 2017/A/4943; CAS 2018/A/5888, an appellant has standing to sue, if she/he has an interest worthy of protection. In other words, in principle, a request is inadmissible, if it lacks the legal interest (“Rechtsschutzinteresse”). This condition of admissibility is explicitly provided for in Article 59 para. 2 lit. a of the Swiss Code of Civil Procedure (“CCP”). Thus, a reasonable legal interest is a condition for access to justice. A court shall only have to decide the merits of a request, if the applicant has a sufficient legal interest in the outcome of the decision. If, on the contrary, the request is not helpful in pursuing the applicant’s final goals, the judicial resources shall not be wasted on such matter.

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124. This condition of sufficient legal interest serves mainly and foremost public interests, *i.e.*, to restrict the caseload of the courts by striking “purposeless” claims from the court’s registry. Such aspects of public interest before state courts are not easily transferable *mutatis mutandis* to arbitration proceedings (see GIRSBERGER/VOSER, *International Arbitration*, 4th ed. 2021, no. 1194).
125. In the present matter, it is uncontested that the request before the LSAC filed on 26 May 2025 was exclusively filed in the name of the Second Appellant and directed against the LOC, “headed by Mr. Boutros Jalkh”. Hence, the only parties directly involved in the dispute before the LSAC were the Second Appellant and the LOC. The First Appellant was not involved in that dispute and has, for the sake of evaluating his standing to sue, to be considered as a “third party” to the dispute.
126. As follows from constant CAS jurisprudence, “*third parties generally have standing before the CAS in two cases. First, when a regulation explicitly confers it. Secondly, when an association’s measure affects not only the right of the addressee, but also and directly those of a third party, that third party is considered directly affected*” and thus enjoys standing to sue” (CAS 2008/A/1583 & 1584, CAS 2015/A/4343, CAS 2020/A/7590). This is consistent with the general definition of standing that parties, who are sufficiently affected by a decision, and who have a tangible interest of a financial or sporting nature at stake may bring a claim, even if they are not addressees of the measure being challenged.
127. As mentioned by the panel in CAS 2020/A/7590, there is a category of third-party applicants who, in principle, do not have standing, namely those deemed “indirectly affected” by a measure and the differentiation of directly affected parties from indirectly affected parties can be explained as follows: “*Where the third party is affected because he is a competitor of the addressee of the measure/decision taken by the association, - unless otherwise provided by the association’s rules and regulations - the third party does not have a right of appeal. Effects that ensue only from competition are only indirect consequences of the association’s decision/measure. If, however, the association disposes in its measure/decision not only of the rights of the addressee, but also of those of the third party, the latter is directly affected with the consequence that the third party then also has a right of appeal*”.
128. In the present matter, the First Appellant could not convincingly explain what his alleged legitimate interest in the present Appeal would be. Given the object of the request filed by the Second Appellant before the LSAC on 26 May 2025, the Panel considers that it is manifest that the decision that the LSAC was supposed to render – and which is the object of the present appeal – could not have validly affected or disposed of any right of the First Appellant. Thus, the latter may, at best, be considered as indirectly affected by that decision (or its absence) and cannot be considered as having standing to appeal. Moreover, the First Appellant has not referred to any provision in the LOC rules and regulations or the LSAC Statutes and Procedural Rules conferring him a right to sue against the decision the LSAC failed to render on the request filed on 26 May 2025.

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129. In light of the above considerations, the Panel concludes that the First Appellant lacks standing to appeal against the Respondents in relation to the LSAC's failure to adjudicate the request filed on 26 May 2025 by the Second Appellant.

The validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025

130. In order to address the different legal issues raised by the Second Appellant's request for relief (ii), which aims, as already mentioned above, to have the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 and all the decision taken therein declared "*null and void*", the Panel considers that it is necessary to examine the facts leading up to that Extraordinary General Assembly in a chronological order and assess the legal consequences they entail.
131. A first question that needs to be examined is whether or not the UMC could validly convoke the Extraordinary General Assemblies held on 22 April 2025 and 16 May 2025, the Second Appellant arguing that the UMC was not validly constituted. In this regard, the Panel notes that, according to the minutes of the EC meeting held on 10 October 2024, it was decided during that meeting that the UMC would be composed of Mr. Boutros Jalkh (President), Mr. Mazen Ramadan (Vice-President); Mr. Jacques Tamer (Vice President), Mr. Jawdat Shaker (Secretary General) and Mr. Khodr Moukalled (Treasurer). Although, according to Article 10-4 of the LOC Statutes, the EC of the LOC "*shall, at the beginning of each year, establish a committee for urgent matters composed of the President, the Secretary General, three members and the International Member (if applicable)*", the fact remains that there is no provision in the LOC Statutes that forbids the EC to establish the composition of the UMC already at the end of the precedent year. Further, and in any event, there is no evidence on file showing that the decision on the composition of the "new" UMC adopted by the EC on 10 October 2024 has been contested at any point in time. The Panel thus considers that the UMC has been validly appointed.
132. Moreover, according to Article 10.4 of the LOC Statutes, the UMC "*shall have the powers of the [EC] in relation to all urgent matters which Chapter require an immediate decision between two sessions in addition to the matters entrusted to it by [EC] of the [LOC]. The decisions taken by the [UMC] shall be submitted to the first session of the [EC] for approval and, in case of non-approval, the [UMC] shall bear the moral and material responsibility*".
133. In the present matter, it is clear from the written and oral submissions as well as from the evidence on file that, as of 11 February 2025, the EC meetings could not be held due to a lack of the necessary quorum. The Panel considers that, in such a situation, the UMC was a valid option to continue the discussions that were supposed to be held within the EC and take the decisions that needed to be adopted by the EC.
134. The Panel finds that a first decision of interest for the present matter is the UMC's decision, adopted on 11 February 2025, to summon the President of the LSAC "*to tell him about these matters and initiate amendments to the [LSAC]'s statutes to align with international arbitration standards. If not addressed, the [LSAC]'s activities are to be temporarily suspended until necessary reforms are done and present the amendments to the General Assembly of the [LOC]*".

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135. A second decision of interest is the one adopted by the UMC in its meeting of 24 February 2025 and which, according to the minutes of this meeting, consisted in reaffirming “*the previous decision to suspend the operation of the [LSAC] until its issues are resolved*”.
136. The Panel observes that none of these two decisions have been challenged and that the reason why these decisions, contrary to what is set out in Article 10.4 of the LOC Statutes, were not submitted to the approval of a following EC meeting is due to the fact that no such meetings could be validly held given that the EC lacked the necessary quorum. Fact is however, that the UMC’s decision to suspend the LSAC was ultimately confirmed by the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025.
137. As regards this Extraordinary General Assembly, it is uncontested that its holding had been decided by the UMC during its meeting of 24 February 2025. Pursuant to the minutes of this UMC meeting, the President “*indicated that he had received an official letter recorded in the Committee’s registry, signed by one-third of the federations’ representatives, requesting the convening of two extraordinary general assemblies of the Lebanese Olympic Committee in accordance with Article 6-3 of the Committee’s bylaws*” and “*further stated that it is the Committee’s duty, especially as its current term nears its end, to call for these assemblies*”.
138. The Extraordinary General Assemblies of 22 April 2025 and 16 May 2025 have been convoked on 2 April 2025. The convocation, signed by the President of the LOC, was based on the “*request of one-third of the members of the General Assembly sent to the [LOC] on [24 February 2025] [...] and on the decision of the [UMC] dated [24 February 2025]*”.
139. In relation to this convocation, it must be observed that, contrary to what the Second Appellant argues, Article 7-12-3 of the LOC Statutes does not stipulate that the Secretary General must sign the convocations for the General Assemblies or Extraordinary General Assemblies. Indeed, pursuant to that provision the Secretary General “*prepares the convocations and makes the necessary arrangements for the meetings of the General Assembly [...]*”. The Panel thus finds that the absence of the General Secretary’s signature has no impact on its validity. This finding is not impacted by the fact that, according to paragraph 3 of Article 7-12-1 of the LOC Statutes, the President of the LOC “*signs, along with the Secretary General, [...] all internal and external correspondences*” given that, when it comes to the convocation of a General Assembly, paragraph 4 of that same article appears to not request the signature of the Secretary General as it stipulates that the President “*[c]onvokes the General Assembly and the [EC] to hold meetings*”. In any event, it must be emphasized that it is undisputed that, at the time the abovementioned convocation was sent to the members of the LOC, the Secretary General of the LOC did not carry out his duties anymore and was not participating in the EC and/or UMC meetings. In light of the above considerations, the Panel considers that the absence of the General Secretary’s signature on the convocation dated 2 April 2025 does not invalidate this convocation.
140. As regards the Second Appellant’s argument that the convocation dated 2 April 2025 was invalid as the “one third” quota required by Article 6-3 of the LOC Statutes was not

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fulfilled, the Panel considers that, in the present matter, it is irrelevant whether or not this quota was actually fulfilled. Indeed, pursuant to Article 6-3 of the LOC Statutes the Extraordinary General Assembly meets “1. [a]t the submission of a request signed by one third of the members of the General Assembly” or “2. [w]hen necessary by virtue of a decision issued by the [EC]”. Given that the convocation in question was not only based on the alleged request by one third of the members of the LOC but also on the decision adopted by the UMC on 24 February 2024 and that, as mentioned above, the UMC was competent and also considered it “*its duty*” to convene the Extraordinary General Assemblies due to the fact that “*its current term nears its end*” the Panel finds that the conditions set out in Article 6-3, para. 2 of the LOC Statutes were met and that the convocation at hand was thus conform to that provision.

141. The Panel notes that while it is true that, on 14 April 2025, the Second Appellant filed a request for arbitration before the LSAC against the LOC regarding the “*suspension of the effects and consequently the cancellation of the convocation to hold two extraordinary general assemblies on April 22, 2025 and on May 16, 2025*”, it is clear from the above findings that, on that date, the LSAC had already been suspended by the UMC and could not validly rule on the request for arbitration filed by the Second Appellant. Hence, the LSAC could not validly suspend the convocation to neither of these two Extraordinary General Assemblies.
142. Further, and in any event, even if the LSAC had not been suspended and could have rendered a decision on the Second Appellant’s request for arbitration filed on 14 April 2025, it could not, contrary to what it ruled in its award of 9 May 2025, “*invalidate the effects of the general assembly held April 22, 2025 [...] and deem it as null and void*”. Indeed, the Second Appellant’s request for arbitration was limited to the “*suspension of the effects and consequently the cancellation of the convocation*” of, *inter alia*, the Extraordinary General Assembly of 22 April 2025. That ruling was thus rendered in manifest violation of the principle *ne ultra petita*.
143. In light of the chronology of the above facts, the Panel concludes that the Second Appellant’s argument according to which the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025 “*was illegitimately convened, expressly suspended by the LSAC’s interim award of 14 April 2025, and subsequently annulled in its entirety by the LSAC’s final award of 9 May 2025*” with the result that the “*decisions adopted therein, including the admission of new members, are [...] devoid of legal effect and cannot serve as a basis for determining the composition or voting rights of the [Extraordinary] General Assembly at the 16 May session*” is ill conceived and must be dismissed. The Extraordinary General Assembly held on 22 April 2025 has not been effectively challenged before the LSAC or the CAS and the decisions adopted therein are, therefore, final.
144. This conclusion is not affected by the Second Appellant’s argument that the four new member federation admitted to the LOC during the 2 April 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly lacked “*official recognition by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports*” and that their participation in the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 “*undermines the legality of*” that Extraordinary General Assembly and the “*validity of any decision adopted therein*”.

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145. While it could be argued that Article 4-3 of the LOC Statutes, which enumerates the documents that have to be submitted by an applicant requesting its affiliation to the LOC and requests, *inter alia*, the production of “*b. [t]wo Copies of the Federation Statutes legalized by the official authorities*”, an “*c. [a]n attestation including the names of the administrative board members issued by the relevant official authorities*”, and “*d. [a]n authenticated Copy of the official papers of registration given to the Federation*”, may be understood in such a way that it implicitly requires the applicants to be “officially recognised” by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the fact remains that none of the provisions of the LOC Statutes makes the membership of a national sports federation to the LOC explicitly dependent on the official recognition, of that federation, by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports.
146. Indeed, first, pursuant to Article 4-4 of the LOC Statutes, which sets out the conditions to be a member of the LOC, “*[i]n order for a Federation to be a member of the [LOC], it shall exercise a real, specific and on-going sport, shall be affiliated to the International Federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee and shall be governed by any comply in all aspects with both the Olympic Charter and the rules of its IF*”. This provision manifestly does not require the members of the LOC to be officially recognised by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports in order to be a valid member.
147. Second, according to Article 6-1 (a) 2. of the LOC Statutes, the members who are entitled to vote in the General Assembly are “*National sports Federations affiliated to the International sports Federations whose sports are listed within the summer and winter Olympic Games, provided that these Federations practice their sport effectively on the National and International levels*”. This provision, contrary to what Mr. Menassa stated during his testimony, clearly does not require an official recognition by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports for a member of the LOC to have a right to vote during a General Assembly.
148. Third, pursuant to Article 4-1 of the LOC Statutes, entitled “*Obligations of the Members*”, the members of the LOC have to comply with the following obligations:
- a. Compliance with the Statutes of the International Olympic, the [LOC] and the decisions and directives issued by both committees.*
- b. Compliance with the decisions of the [CAS] and the decisions of the [LSAC].*
- c. Participation in the International and Continental Olympic Games.*
- d. Settlement of the membership subscription fees.*
- e. Ensure that the members comply with the Statutes, Laws, Instructions and Decisions issued by the [LOC].*
- f. Compliance with all the other obligations deriving from these Statutes.*
- g. Respect of the Olympic Charter and ensure its respect by its members.*

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h. Ensure the election of the administrative boards.

i. Adoption of a statutory clause specifying that any sport dispute shall be under the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Center for Sports Disputes which is established by the LOC, whether it is related to the Member or to any of its members. The recourse to the ordinary courts is prohibited.

j. Notification of the Olympic Committee of any amendment that may occur to its Statutes.

k. Not maintaining any sports relations with unrecognized bodies or with members who have been suspended or expelled.

Any Violation of the above mentioned obligations by any of the members may lead to the application of sanctions against the violating member by the Executive Committee.”

149. It is thus clear that the absence or the withdrawal of an official recognition by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports does not, in and by itself, affect the status of a member of the LOC or its right to attend and vote at a General Assembly. Hence, in the particular circumstances of the present case, the question whether, on 16 May 2025, the four new member federations were or not “officially recognised” by the Ministry of Youth and Sports has no impact on their participation in the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025, the calculation of the necessary quorum at that General Assembly or the validity of the decisions adopted therein.
150. Still in relation to the necessary quorum during the 16 May 2025 Extraordinary General Assembly, the Panel notes first, that, in its email dated 29 March 2025, World Aquatics informed, *inter alia*, the IOC and the President of the LOC that it had put a “Stabilization Committee” in place within the Lebanese Swimming Federation and that said Committee had “*been given full authority to participate in and vote on national and international related matters during the period of their mandate*”, including “*the NOC elections*”. There can thus be no doubt that the Lebanese Swimming Federation could validly participate and vote during the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025 and must be considered for the calculation of the quorum.
151. The Panel notes, second, that, according to the two emails admitted on file after the hearing in the present matter, on 25 March 2025, World Boxing informed the Lebanese Boxing Federation that it had “*received [its] application*” and that, on 2 April 2025, World Boxing informed the Lebanese Boxing Federation that “*[its] application [was] complete and will be reviewed and approved during the board meeting on 22 April 2025*”. While it may thus be inferred from this second email that the Lebanese Boxing Federation was admitted as a provisional member of World Boxing as of 22 April 2025, there is no clear evidence that that was effectively the case. What is however clear is, as mentioned in the announcement made by World Boxing on 22 May 2025, that by that date the Lebanese Boxing Federation’s application had been approved by the Executive Board of World Boxing and that the “*final approval of membership status*” was to be conferred by the Congress which was scheduled to take place in November 2025. As a consequence, the Panel finds that, contrary to what the Respondents have argued, on 16

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May 2025, the Lebanese Boxing Federation could not be considered as having been admitted as a full member of World Boxing and could, thus, not be taken into consideration for the calculation of the quorum in the Extraordinary General Assembly held on that same date.

152. However, this finding has no incidence on the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly of 16 May 2025, given that – when taking into account the four new member federations admitted on 22 April 2025 and the Lebanese Swimming Federation for the purpose of that calculation – it is manifest that the quorum required for that General Assembly to be considered “legitimate” within the sense of Article 6-8-1 of the LOC Statutes, *i.e.* “if the majority of the members who have the right to vote attend the meeting”, is reached. Indeed, in that case 17 out of 31 members with a right to vote attended that Extraordinary General Assembly.
153. Finally, as regards the Second Appellant’s argument drawn from an alleged infringement of statutory procedures for budgetary and administrative documents set out in article 7-12-3 of the LOC Statutes, the Panel recalls that the scope of the present appeal is limited to the validity of the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025. The agenda of this Extraordinary General Assembly set out in the convocation dated 2 April 2025 reads as follows:
- “1. *Roll call of attendees.*
2. *Declaration of the legality of the meeting.*
3. *Approval and ratification of the minutes of the previous General Assembly.*
4. *Word of the President.*
5. *Appointment of vote auditors.*
6. *Election of a new Executive Committee for the Lebanese Olympic Committee”.*
154. It is clear from this agenda, and the Second Appellant has not argued otherwise, nor filed evidence that would show otherwise, that the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 was an elective general assembly and that the members of the LOC were not called to vote on any budgetary or administrative documents that would have required the participation or the approval of the Secretary General, the Treasurer or the Accountant. Hence, the Panel considers that this argument is ineffective.
155. In light of the above considerations, the Panel concludes that the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 and the decision adopted therein are valid.

The request for relief (iii)

156. As regards the Appellants’ request for relief (iii) asking the CAS to issue an award “*Declaring that any official act accomplished by the purported Executive Committee purportedly elected on 16 May 2025 is null and void*”, the Panel notes, first, that this

request is of a declaratory nature. In this respect, it needs to be recalled that, pursuant to constant CAS jurisprudence, declaratory reliefs can only be granted if the requesting party establishes a special legal interest to obtain such declaration (CAS 2009/A/1870; CAS 2011/O/2574; CAS 2011/A/2612; CAS 2013/A/3272, CAS 2020/A/7590). However, in the present matter, the Appellants did not bring forward any argument apt to establish that they have a special interest to obtain this declaratory relief.

157. Second, this request for relief (iii) is intrinsically linked to the request for relief (ii), by which the Appellants ask the CAS to declare that “*the [Extraordinary] General Assembly held on 16 May 2025 and all decisions taken therein – including the purported election of a new purported Executive Committee – are null and void*”. Consequently, even if the Second Respondent had established that it had a further legal interest in seeing its request for relief (iii) granted, *quod non*, this request for relief shares the fate of the request for relief (ii) and must be dismissed.
158. Consequently, the present Appeal, insofar as it is admissible, has to be dismissed.

XII. COSTS

(...)

ON THESE GROUNDS

The Court of Arbitration for Sport rules that:

1. The Court of Arbitration for Sport has jurisdiction to rule on case *CAS 2025/A/11499 Jihad Salameh & Lebanese Fencing Federation v. Dr. Boutros Jalkh et al. & Lebanese Olympic Committee*.
2. The appeal filed on 6 June 2025 by Mr. Jihad Salameh and the Lebanese Fencing Federation against Dr. Boutros Jalk, Mr. Mazen Ramadam, Mr. Jack Tamer, Mr. Sami Kiblawi, Mr. Tanios Hnein, Mr. Hassan Rustom, Mr. Khoder Moukaled, Mr. Roukoz Zgheib, Mr. Pierre Hani, Mr. Mazen Kobeissi, Mr. Wassim Ismail, Mr. Zafer Kabbara, Mr. Bachir Bechara, Mr. Fadi Bou Nader, and the Lebanese Olympic Committee regarding the inaction and refusal of the Lebanese Sport Arbitration Center to adjudicate their request filed on 26 May 2025 is admissible, except for their requests for relief (i), (iv) and (v).
3. The remainder of the appeal filed on 6 June 2025 by Mr. Jihad Salameh and the Lebanese Fencing Federation against Dr. Boutros Jalk, Mr. Mazen Ramadam, Mr. Jack Tamer, Mr. Sami Kiblawi, Mr. Tanios Hnein, Mr. Hassan Rustom, Mr. Khoder Moukaled, Mr. Roukoz Zgheib, Mr. Pierre Hani, Mr. Mazen Kobeissi, Mr. Wassim Ismail, Mr. Zafer Kabbara, Mr. Bachir Bechara, Mr. Fadi Bou Nader, and the Lebanese Olympic Committee regarding the inaction and refusal of the Lebanese Sport Arbitration Center to adjudicate their request filed on 26 May 2025 is dismissed.
4. (...).
5. (...).
6. All other and further motions or prayers for relief are dismissed.

Seat of arbitration: Lausanne, Switzerland

Date: 20 March 2026

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

Jacques Radoux
President of the Panel

Luigi Fumagalli
Arbitrator

Benoît Pasquier
Arbitrator