SUMMARY

The year of 2019 will surely be remembered as a very eventful 12 months. It was a year that saw CONIFA collaborating with a major international sponsor for the first time, and working parallel with a hosting national government during the European Football Cup 2019. The year came with ups and downs in regards to plans for the World Football Cup 2020.

The main focus of 2019 was on the European Football Cup hosted in Artsakh and sponsored by Sportsbet.io. Holding an event of this size in a mostly unrecognized countries in the Caucasus came with a wealth of challenges for such small, volunteer-run organizations as CONIFA. As it was the first ever major international event hosted in Artsakh, it was equally challenging for the Artsakh FA and government. The result was a tournament that grabbed the attention of the football world, generated worldwide headlines and celebrated the spirit of CONIFA in a manner which will never be forgotten by anyone who was involved. It is fair to say that Artsakh 2019 set new standards for a European Football Cup and for the Republic of Artsakh alike – working hand in hand, the impossible was not only done, but done in a way that exceeded all expectations.

As well as bringing CONIFA to the attention of millions around the world with journalists from over 100 media outlets attending the tournament, and more than 1.4 million Twitter impressions during the event, the tournament left a positive legacy as we increased the strength of the CONIFA family.

As CONIFA’s profile continues to grow, it is almost inevitable that its membership will follow suit and 2019 saw the addition of four new members as diverse as Hawai’i and Mapuche.

The Executive Committee elected and which has been operational in 2019:

President: Per-Anders Blind (Sapmi / Sweden)
1st Vice President: Kristóf Wenczel (Hungary)
2nd Vice President: Dimitri Pagava (Abkhazia / Russia / Sweden)
General Secretary: Sascha Düerkop (Germany)
Member Development Director: Paul Watson (United Kingdom)
Legal Director: Kieran Pender (Australia / United Kingdom)
Media Director: Cassie Whittell (United Kingdom)
Women’s Football Director: Kelly Lindsey (USA / Hongkong)
Tournament Director: Rene Jacobi (Germany)
Referee Director: Roger Lundbäck (Sweden)
African President: Justin Walley (United Kingdom)
Asian President: Jens Jockel (Germany)
European President: Alberto Rischio (Padania / Italy)
North American & Caribbean President: Noah Wheelock (Cascadia / Canada)
Oceanian President: Ben Schultz (Australia)
Executive Committee Member: Safin Kanabe (Kurdistan / Iraq)
Out of the six continents, two continents have created Continental Committees:

*The European Committee operational in 2019:*

- **President:** Alberto Rischio (Padania / Italy)
- **General Secretary:** Piotr Podlewski (Poland)
- **Women’s Football Management:** Hakan Kuorak (Sapmi / Sweden)
- **Sponsor Development Manager:** Lorenzo Bernardini (Italy)
- **Sponsor Development Manager:** Matteo Poretti (Switzerland)
- **Tournament Manager:** Hiratch Yagan (Switzerland)
- **Media Manager:** Federico Borello (Italy)

*The Asian Committee operational in 2019:*

- **President:** Jens Jockel (Germany)
- **General Secretary:** Oscar A. Mussons (Australia)
- **Sponsoring & Marketing Manager:** Asher Mulroney (Australia/Malaysia)
- **Sponsoring & Marketing Manager:** Franco Ficetola (Italy)
- **Sponsoring & Marketing Manager:** Frankie Lambert (United Kingdom)
- **Financial Manager:** Mehmet Mimoglu (Northern Cyprus)
- **Regional Manager Central Asia:** Medet Mukanov (Kyrgyzstan)
- **Regional Manager East Asia:** Motoko Jitsukawa (Japan)
- **Regional Manager South-East Asia:** Silambarasan Devraj (India / Latvia)

In addition, two topical Directorates built their own committees. The Referee Management Committee:

- **Referee Director:** Roger Lundbäck (Sweden)
- **Deputy Referee Director:** Dennis Wall (Sweden)

And the Media & Communications Committee:

- **Media & Communications Director:** Cassie Whittell (United Kingdom)
- **Deputy Media & Communications Director:** Matt Hudson (United Kingdom)
- **Photography & Design Director:** Brad Merrett (United Kingdom)
- **Press Officer:** Adam Barlow (United Kingdom)
- **Social Media Managers:** Ola Bjerkevoll (Norway / United Kingdom); Sarah McCann (United Kingdom)
- **Website Manager:** Stephen Gale (United Kingdom)

This is an impressive number of very active people, who have worked day in, day out for the future of CONIFA and football outside of FIFA. Never before has CONIFA had such a not only huge, but also very active and strong team.

The Executive Committee conducted 13 meetings in 2019, 12 via Skype and 1 in person during the European Football Cup 2019 in Stepanakert, Artsakh.
MEMBERS – NEW MEMBERS 2019

At the end of 2018, CONIFA had 54 members. In 2019, 4 (Hawai’i, Mapuche, Rapa Nui, West Papua) members joined CONIFA. Thus, CONIFA today has 58 members from 6 continents.

AFRICA: Barawa, Barotseland, Chagos Islands, Darfur, Kabylie, Matabeleland, Somaliland, Western Sahara, Zanzibar (9)

ASIA : Arameans Suryoye, East Turkestan, Karen People, Kurdistan, Laz People, Lezghians, Panjab, Rohingya, Ryukyu, Tamil Eelam, Tibet, United Koreans in Japan, West Papua (13)

EUROPE: Abkhazia, Chameria, Cornwall, County of Nice, Delvidek, Donetsk, Ellan Vannin, Felvidek, Franconia, Greenland, Jersey, Karpatalya, Luhansk, Monaco, Nagorno Karabakh, Northern Cyprus, Occitania, Padania, Raetia, Romani People, Sapmi, Sardinia, Skaneland, Szekely Land, South Ossetia, Transnistria, Western Armenia, Yorkshire (28)

NORTH AM: Cascadia, Quebec (2)

OCEANIA: Australian First Nations, Hawai’i, Kiribati, Tuvalu (4)

SOUTH AM: Mapuche, Rapa Nui (2)

CONIFA has grown in Asia, Europe and Oceania in 2019.

AFRICA: 0% (+/-0)

ASIA: +8% (+1)

EUROPE: 0% (+/-0)

NORTH AM: 0% (+/- 0)

OCEANIA: +33% (+1)

SOUTH AM: (+2)

Through our members, we do now today represent roughly 400 million people on 6 continents.

New members 2019:
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

The 6th CONIFA Annual General Meeting was held in Krakow, Poland, on January 26-27, 2019. The meeting was held in Hotel Witek outside of the city. CONIFA wants to express its gratitude to the team of Hotel Witek for organizing the whole event in an absolutely perfect manner.

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CUP 2019

The 3rd edition of the CONIFA European Football Cup was held across Artsakh in 4 venues (Stepanakert, Askeran, Martuni, Martakert) from the 1st of June to the 9th of June. 8 teams from across Europe competed in the tournament and played a total of 20 matches. The groups were drawn on January 27, 2019 in Hotel Witek in Krakow in a draw ceremony, which was broadcast live by mycujoo (https://mycujoo.tv/video/conifa?id=33967).

The two groups of four were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abkhazia</td>
<td>South Ossetia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chameria</td>
<td>Western Armenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artsakh</td>
<td>Padania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sapmi</td>
<td>Szekely Land</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A busy opening day of action concluded with the Opening Ceremony at the Republican Stadium in Stepanakert where a crowd of over 15,000 enjoyed the flag parade and a two-hour long opening ceremony.

With four venues in use each day and eight games to be played, the match days were hectic and action-packed. Crowds exceeded expectations and as well as the many locals, some ground-hoppers made the long trip from Western Europe.

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1 Group positions reflect the outcome of the group stage
Group A proved to be fiercely competitive with the host Artsakh narrowly not making it out of their group, despite a convincing opening match win vs. Sapmi and a draw against group winners Abkhazia.

Group B was seen as a ‘Group of Death’ and proved fiercely competitive. To the surprise of most followers and against all odds, South Ossetia won the group, dropping their only points in a draw against Szekely Land in a then meaningless last match. Shockingly, the group also saw the twice European Champion Padania going out in group stage for the first time.

In the semi-finals, both, South Ossetia and Western Armenia needed to rely on penalties to see of their respective opponents Chameria and Abkhazia. Abkhazia won the bronze medal, beating Chameria 1-0 in the bronze match, while South Ossetia won a the final in the most dramatic fashion. After scoring a “ghost goal” in the 68th min, which went in and then through the broken goal net, the Ossetian keeper saved a penalty in the 98th minute to ensure their success.

Congratulations once again to the European Football Cup champions 2019 – South Ossetia!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>D</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>South Ossetia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Western Armenia</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Abkhazia</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Chameria</td>
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<td>Székely Land</td>
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<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Meeting the Rohingya in Kuala Lumpur and visiting Hong Kong and Macao (Jens Jockel, Oscar Mussons)

During early February, Jens Jockel, president of CONIFA Asia, headed to Hong Kong, Macao and Kuala Lumpur for a hectic few days, meeting various football associations and sponsors in the region. Jens and his team are looking to set up the first ever CONIFA Asia Cup and, as part of this, firstly met with All Black FC, a football team originally set up by refugees to assist displaced people who are seeking asylum in Hong Kong. CONIFA also met potential partners for the Asia Cup, visited various venues and looked at how CONIFA could benefit local teams in the region. Jens also travelled to Macao, to meet up with the Macao FA, as well as a potential regional sponsor, before heading to Kuala Lumpur with Oscar Mussons, general secretary of CONIFA Asia. There, the duo spent a couple of days working with Rohingya FC. The Rohingya team was formed by refugees from Myanmar, who have fled to Kuala Lumpur to escape from the persecution in their home country, and who are eager to use football as a way of bringing their youth together.
Member Visit to Western Sahara (Rene Jacobi)

Between 26th February and 28th February 2019, René Jacobi, CONIFA’s Tournament Director, travelled to Algeria to visit camps there housing thousands of Western Sahara refugees. CONIFA members, the Western Sahara FA is looking to improve its set up and ensure those living in refugee camps can play a decent standard of football, something that can be almost impossible due to the lack of basic equipment and even a pitch. Players have to play on sandy, stony ground, often with no lines, nets in the goals, or enough kit to go around. The Sahrawi refugee camps have been described as ‘one of the most protracted refugee situations in the world’ and result from fighting between the Sahrawi people and Moroccan forces during the Western Saharan War in 1975-1976. Over 40 years on, many of the original refugees still live in a group of camps within the Algerian province of Tindouf.

Meeting Darfur United in Arizona, USA (Noah Wheelock)

In March 2019, CONIFA North American President travelled to Phoenix, Arizona, to meet the team of and behind Darfur United during their first ever North American training camp. Noah did not only help Darfur on the ground, but also had the chance to meet the players and tell the story of CONIFA to them.
**Member Visit to Somaliland (Sascha Düerkop, Paul Watson)**

From 8th to 12th of March 2019, CONIFA General Secretary and CONIFA Development Director Paul Watson visited Somaliland as the first ever official CONIFA delegation to the country. During the 4 day visit, the delegation met the Sports Minister of the country and inspected stadiums, hotels and hospitals in Hargeysa, Borama, Gabiley and Berbera to advise on required renovations to host a major CONIFA event in the future. The delegation was lead by Ilyas Mohamed and five other members of the Somaliland FA, who excellently introduced the CONIFA staff into the country.

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**Member visit to Sardinia (Alberto Rischio, Federio Borello, Hiratch Yagan)**

In early April, CONIFA’s Europe President, Alberto Rischio, and two members of the Europe committee – Federico Borello, European Media Manager and Hiratch Yagan, European Tournament Manager – spent two successful days in Sardinia, meeting with the Sardinian FA, and visiting various sites of interest across the island. Gabriele Cossu, President of the Sardinia FA, and Stefania Campus, Sardinia FA Marketing Manager, made the European delegation very welcome and accompanied them on a number of fact-finding visits. The team went to the Tonino Taddia stadium in Pabillonis, to see the facilities on offer there, as this is looking likely to be the new HQ of the Sardinia FA. The group also visited the famous stone installations created by Pinuccio Sciola. These sculptures ‘sing’ and are a wonderful sight to behold.
Meeting East Turkestan and West Papua in The Hague (Jens Jockel, Paul Watson)

In August 2019, Asia President Jens Jockel and Member Development Director Paul Watson, headed to The Hague, Netherlands, to meet up with two relatively new CONIFA member teams. Both West Papua and East Turkistan (formerly named Uyghur) FAs have recently moved their headquarters to the Netherlands, and with this in mind, Jens and Paul were able to spend time with Simon Sapopier, Sophia Sapopier and Jeroen Zandberg from West Papua along with Elshat Atasoy and Arafat from East Turkistan. The group met at The Hague Football & Cricket Ground (HV & CV Quick). After a tour round the facilities, discussions took place that covered the possibility of a friendly being played between the two FAs; West Papua’s training plans now they are based in The Hague; and how the East Turkistan team is looking to call up players from across Europe to join its squad. The group also discussed the ‘Freedom Cup’ which took place in Germany in June 2019, which brought together Uyghur teams from Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium and France.

Asian Cup preparation meeting in Kuala Lumpur (Jens Jockel, Oscar Mussons)

The CONIFA Asia committee travelled to Malaysia in September, to meet with relevant local stakeholders, as well as visiting and supporting the Rohingya FC team. Rohingya is a CONIFA member who is based in Kuala Lumpur. The Committee delegation was represented by Jens Jockel, Asia President; Oscar Mussons, Asia General Secretary; and Asher Mulroney, a member of the Asia sponsorship and marketing department. The main meetings held in the country were focussed on exploring and analysing whether Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia would be able to host the first CONIFA Asia Cup. Among the stakeholders at the meeting were business people, media figures, human rights advocates and sport professionals who felt encouraged by the visit and are positive about the future organisation of the tournament in the country, finally those people were appointed to form the local organizing committee.
Evaluation: WFC 2020 Hosting & Negotiations in Macedonia (Jens Jockel)

In November, Asian President Jens Jockel, visited Skopje to further develop work on CONIFA’s plans to host the World Football Cup in Macedonia. Together with local consultant Darko Najdovski, he met several football clubs and their managements. Furthermore, he visited several possible venues to report and evaluate infrastructure and pitch conditions to the CONIFA Executive Committee. Finally the travel was brought to an end with very fruitful negotiations with Hotel Continental in Skopje, which will function as accommodation for all the teams and the CONIFA staff.
SOCIAL MEDIA

CONIFA is present in the following Social Media platforms:

Facebook:

The most successful post on Facebook in 2019 was a post with the match report from East Turkestan v West Papua, posted on 22 October. This post reached over 9,000 people and over 1,000 people engaged with the post.

The second most successful post was a bilingual Kabylian/English post proclaiming the qualification of Kabylia for the World Football Cup 2020 (7,000 people reach, 500 engaged users), while the third most successful one summarized the opening ceremony of #Artsakh2019 (6,000 people reached, 1,000 engaged users).

Overall, the CONIFA Facebook page now has 25,778 likes (02.12.2019), which is a plus of 4.5% compared to the 24,178 likes at the end of 2018. The graph below shows the reach of the Facebook
page, showing a massive peak during the European Football Cup 2019 (June) and a smaller peak during the draw ceremony for Artsakh (end of January).

Analyzing our members on Facebook, we observe that our core audience is male and between 18 and 34. Combined, 68% of our Likes on Facebook are coming from that audience group.

An analysis by geographic location of our followers shows that especially people from Somalia, Algeria, Iraq, Nepal and the UK liked our Facebook page (in that order). Trying to associate such likes with members can only be an educated guess, but became much easier this year, as Facebook now also provides us with the city all followers are located in. We can observe that significant portions of our likes from Algeria come from the region of Kabylia and likes from Iraq from the Kurdistan Region.

Followers from the UK were usually followers or observers of the World Football Cup 2018, as nearly half of all UK-based likes are from Greater London. The many followers from Nepal, as mentioned in the Activity Report 2017 and 2018 are most likely originating from bots.
Following the analysis, we would ask all our members to intensify their Facebook promotion and direct visitors to our Facebook page. Furthermore, we call on our members to better promote new content, which appeals to our followers - matches, news and tournament information.

Twitter:

On Twitter, the biggest post of the year was kicking off the European Football Cup – this tweet on 31 May promoting Sportsbet.io’s tournament video had a reach of over 76,000. This number is not organic as Sportsbet.io promoted the tweet heavily, with paid-for promotions.

The CONIFA Sportsbet.io European Football Cup 2019 kicks of this Sunday, a tournament celebrating the football of unrecognised nations and minority peoples. Szekely Land's Szilard Magyari tells us why he plays. #DefyTheOdds

The second largest was a video showing South Ossetia being crowned EFC champions, which had a reach of over 23,000. This follows much of the social pattern, which shows that tournament news and match news is the absolute driver for social media.
Our followers on Twitter are 84% male. They are overwhelmingly based in the UK (this is all the data that can be gathered from Twitter now it has amended its analytics).

Our overall followers on Twitter now total 15,180. This is up 1,600 followers from this time last year, a slow but steady rise. The media team’s strategy is to grow our Twitter followers to a minimum of 20,000 in 2020.

Twitter shows that breaking news, match reports and images, plus video, is what encourages followers. As before, we would encourage our members to engage with CONIFA’s social media as much as possible, to ensure cross promotion.

**Instagram:**

CONIFA has been on Instagram since April 2016. In 2017, the platform saw 7,764 likes, and content posted in 2018 accumulated 34,487 likes, which was driven in part by the World Football Cup 2018.

Posts in 2019 have seen a large rise in likes. From 2018’s total, we received approximately 45,000 likes across the year, a rise of 32%.

We posted a total of 307 posts on Insta in 2019, with the biggest post being on 09 June 2019 – showing the final score of the European Football Cup. This received 470 likes and a reach of 4,267.
The second biggest post was showing a missed penalty in the final of the EFC; this has 450 likes and reached over 4,800 people. The video in the post has been viewed over 3,500 times.

The third biggest post showed the crowds at the EFC final and was liked 397 times and reached over 3,200 people.

On Instagram, our followers are mainly men (84%), aged between 25-34 (40%). They are most commonly based in the UK, followed by Brazil, USA and Georgia. London is the most popular city for CONIFA’s Instagram followers.

We now have 4,676 followers on Instagram (as of 5 December 2019). The goal is to grow this to 10,000 followers over the next 18 months. Due to a change in Insta’s analytics programmes we cannot analyse data any further than this.

In terms of growing Instagram, we require high quality imagery, which isn’t always easy across CONIFA. Match photos and reports gain the biggest likes and clicks, so photography of matches and players from all our FAs as and when relevant would be incredibly helpful.
REPORTS FROM DIRECTORS

CONIFA President: Per-Anders Blind

Main administrative role

Preparing, moderating and compiling minutes from 12 Global ExCo meetings, 3 extraordinary ExCo meetings, 3 Presidential office meetings and 1 meeting between the Presidential office and the General Secretariat (no minutes).

Handling all invoices (in/out), payments, CONIFA accounting, financial reports for the whole year.

Upholding the administrative location of CONIFA.

Continuously contact with CONIFA stakeholders all over the world, such as: current and potential members, governments, organisations, potential sponsors, potential hosts, media etc.

CONIFA NO LIMIT, Monaco 11-13th January 2019

For the first time ever, CONIFA and its European Committee organised the CONIFA No Limit European Championship in collaboration with Monaco Special Olympic. The tournament who contained 4 CONIFA members: Padania, Monaco, County of Nice and Sardinia took place between 11-13th January in Monaco.

It was an amazing tournament where the result always wasn’t in focus. It was more about sharing the joy of playing football, being proud of representing their people/region and being fantastic ambassadors of the tournament value: There’s No Limits.
For the first time ever, there was a mix of football players with huge difference in their disabilities, from mental and physical impairments, who played and formed a team. Monaco SO became the first ever No Limit European Champion.

CONIFA was represented by Per-Anders Blind, Global President, Kristóf Wenczel, Global Vice President, Roger Lundbäck, Global Referee Manager, Alberto Rischio, European President and members from the European Committee: Lorenzo Bernardini, Federico Borello and Riccardo Polacco.

CONIFA AGM 2019, Kraków, Poland, 26-27th January 2019

Later in January, it was time for the 6th Annual General Meeting in Kraków Poland. A well-visited event and a great opportunity to meet new and old friends from all over the world. During the AGM we closed 2018 with a presentation from the first ever women football match in the history of CONIFA, the game between North Cyprus (KTFF) and FA Sapmi.

The Global ExCo presented the plans for 2019 and had also the nice opportunity to present our partnership together with representatives from Sportsbet.io. It was two inspiring and constructive days filled with hope for a bright future and a very existing upcoming CONIFA Sportsbet.io European Championship 2019.
The third edition of CONIFA European Football Cup, took place in Artsakh (1-9th June), see more in the Activity report. As President of CONIFA, my key areas of responsibilities was to conduct organisational meetings, being a support to the European President, participate in Press Conferences and interviews, meeting government representatives, public speaking, luckily I also had time to blend with the amazing people of Artsakh and do some ground work in the stadiums of Stepanakert, Askeran, Mataker and Martuni. I hereby would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Global Executive Committee, the European Committee, the government and the people of Artsakh, the Artsakh Football Association and of course Sportsbet.io for a world class well-done contribution which gave a “shockwave of success” far outside Europe.

Summary:

From a Presidential perspective it has been a year with mixed feelings. From the positive side (the first 6 months): Our tournaments. Both CONIFA No Limits and the CONIFA Sportbet.io EFC 2019 reached a massive success and brought a joy and pride to millions of people around the world and really showed that CONIFA now is a “powerhouse in football”, with its unique values. A huge step was also to migrate our website and email system to a new service provider - a heroic work done by Noah Wheelock, our North American Director. From the negative side (the following 6 months), which sadly was period filled with internal challenges and bureaucracy, prevented us to focus on the main purpose of the organisation – to serve the best interest of our members. I have high hopes that the AGM in Jersey can be a springboard for the organisation and bring back the organisation to its core values again.

General Secretary: Sascha Düerkop

Administration:

The year 2019 was mostly full of innovation and making huge leaps forward. For the first time, CONIFA has well-defined values, embedded in a binding Code of Conduct. For the first time, CONIFA now has a system to govern Conflict of Interest and, not for the first time, but more than before, CONIFA showed its capacity to mediate conflicts between the many partners it works with on a daily basis. From administrative point of view, I would thus say that CONIFA has transformed itself from a small organisation run “as good as possible”, but often without clear procedure and behind schedule, into an organisation that is now well-positioned to maintain the positive spirit CONIFA inherits for the next decade and beyond. A group of mates have grown into an organisation that involves more
and more people and that is increasingly run professionally, transparently and up to the highest standards. Or, more colloquially, CONIFA has grown up, without losing its family atmosphere.

As general secretary, I did maintain the members register, the qualification status for the World Football Cup 2020 and contact databases. Together with my colleague Paul Watson, I have made an extensive overhaul of the member register, managing to speak to every of the 57 members at least once over 2019 and asking them about their status, their current issues and challenges and how to help them. This was a massive task, but resulted in up to date contact data for any member and efficient communication since.

Event management:

I was the main point of contact for Hotel Witek, the hotel that hosted the AGM 2019 in Krakow, and thus played a major role in organising the last Annual General Meeting. In the months following, I have focused my efforts on the World Football Cup 2020, then planned to be in Somaliland, and have travelled to Somaliland in March. In this time, I had regular exchange with several European Union by-institutes, NGOs, governmental offices in Somaliland and abroad and a number of companies that wanted to get on board with the tournament. The sponsorship of Young Pioneer Tours is a tangible outcome of this period of network and so is a donation of new football goals, the same that stand in Wembley, to the Somaliland FA, which were erected in the Hargeisa national stadium by now.

From late March onwards, I got increasingly involved in the European Football Cup 2019 on request of the European President Alberto Rischio. I took over most of the communication with the teams to help them with their travel plans, hotel bookings, visa issues, etc. I also took up an increasingly demanding role in coordinating the tournament preparations with the Artsakh government and Modd, a local agency. While I initially was not meant to be so involved in the tournament, it ultimately resulted in 30+ hours weeks of works to tie all ends together and ensure the tournament goes along well. On the ground, I took a less visible role and mostly gave about 20 interviews.

Following the European Football Cup, I switched my focus back on the World Football Cup 2020, finally. Sadly, at this stage, it became apparent that Somaliland will not act as a host for the World Football Cup 2020, making much of the initial network done earlier the same year irrelevant. I do know that the Somaliland FA, however, could proceed at least with some of the inroads made and hope that some of the major sponsorships that were on the table could ultimately be realised. As soon as it became clear that Somaliland will not host the tournament anymore, I started to seek for alternatives and presented a total of 12 different options to the Executive Committee. To do so, I have made over 50 contacts and got 8 hotel quotes from around the world. Of those proposals, Skopje ultimately materialised and I am since heavily involved in finding partners on the ground. While accommodation and transportation could be sorted already, I am also currently negotiating with a local event management agency, a ticketing service provider, 10+ stadiums (with Jens Jockel) and several smaller potential partners.

Summary:

From my perspective as general secretary, the year 2019 was another very successful one on the face of it, but possibly the most challenging one “behind the scenes”. While the European Football Cup was a massive success for all parties involved, it’s administration and organisation was extremely
challenging at times and finally required the full attention and resources of the entire CONIFA team, which was not planned initially. The move of the WFC venue from Somaliland to Skopje, and the short notice to plan a new tournament, was another massive challenge that did need and will still require all efforts of the CONIFA volunteers. Despite those hiccups, however, my feeling is that CONIFA is stronger in its setup than ever before and is run more professionally than ever before. Responsibilities, today, are shared on more shoulders and there is an increasing number of fresh ideas, innovative-thinking minds and exchanges with NGOs and partners around the world. Personally, I think 2019 CONIFA was “at the crossroads” and I am confident it has taken the right turn and will be stronger than ever before in the future.

North American President: Noah Wheelock

In 2019, I worked closely with a number of members, many of which belong to other continental groups but have teams based in North America. I had close contact with Darfur United, whose parent organization (i-ACT) is based in Los Angeles. With Darfur United, I helped to coordinate a match with the North American member, Cascadia, which was played in Washington State. I also attended Darfur’s first ever North American training camp, which took place in Arizona in the spring. I assisted Karen FA in their membership, which, while an Asian member of CONIFA, is based in Minneapolis. Conversations are ongoing with Karen FA, who hope to host a Women’s World Football Cup in Minnesota in the future. For ongoing member acquisition, I have been part of in-depth talks with both Washington DC and Acadiana as potential members, as well as NIFA (Native Indian Football Association), an indigenous group based in Western Canada. Most recently, I stewarded Hawai’i into CONIFA membership, though they will ultimately play in the Oceania continental group. On the business development side, I have been in close contact with Erreà as a potential kit and accessory supplier for WFC 2020 and/or other future tournaments. With regards to travel, I attended Darfur United’s first ever North American training camp and team selection in Arizona in March.

Media & Communications Director: Cassie Whittell

2019 has been a fantastic year for CONIFA Media. We have used the last 12 months to grow the media team and strengthen core areas of delivery; develop a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year media strategy; and drive growth across all areas of social media, the CONIFA website and coverage of 2019’s key event, the European Football Cup.

1/ The team

The day-to-day media and communications team now consists of:

Cassie Whittell - media and communications director
Matt Hudson - media and communications deputy director
Brad Merrett - design and photography director
Stephen Gale - website manager
Ola Bjerkevoll - social media manager
Sarah McCann - social media manager
James Healey - social media designer and video producer
Adam Barlow - press officer
Every member of this team was recruited in 2019, apart from Cassie Whittell and Ola Bjerkevoll. Matt, Brad and Cassie have between them overseen all hires in 2019.

In addition, we work with the CONIFA global content team, who produce work on an ad hoc basis, and which consists of:

Olaf Jensen
Liam Potter
Pat McGuinness
Dominic Stevenson
Alun Macer-Wright

Having this strength and breadth of experience across so many fields means we are able to cover CONIFA news, matches, launches and member stories with insight and depth. We can manage photography rights with our new contributor’s contract, set up by Brad and Kieran Pender in legal; produce short form social video content; create powerful imagery and brands; engage with strong social posts; and drive to our website with our writing and creative output.

2/ Media strategy

Matt Hudson and Cassie Whittell have developed this strategy to guide the work of the media team across a number of short and longer terms goals. Please see appendix for this.

The key mission + vision statement for CONIFA Media is as follows:

Mission:
Bringing to life the incredible stories and people who are involved in the CONIFA family

Vision:
High-quality, reactive media team who have the ability and willingness to tell CONIFA’s stories via our various media channels

This is what we strive for throughout all the work we produce, and this strategy informs all the work we do for CONIFA.

3/ Growth and coverage

In October 2019, the media team added a second social media manager to the roster - Sarah McCann, who joins Ola Bjerkevoll as CONIFA’s dedicated social manager. This means we are now able to set up a schedule for social media management and build a dedicated monthly social media content plan for the first time. We are now able to post every day and respond quickly to queries and requests on these channels.

We also have a dedicated social media designer/video editor for the first time in James Healey, meaning we can create social media imagery and video dedicated to each platform.
This year we have seen our Twitter followers surpass 15,000 for the first time, a fantastic triumph for our social media team.

We have also seen growth in traffic and numbers on Facebook - with over 25,000 followers - and on Instagram, with over 4,600 followers.

On the website, we have produced 59 pieces of content in the last 12 months (excluding EFC content), and managed a full service delivery during the European Football Cup to our lead sponsors, Sportsbet.io, as well.

Highlights of content produced in 2019 includes 5 articles on Refugee Week 2019; a full suite of content for International Day of the Girl; and a takeover of Instagram by CONIFA Women Director Kelly Lindsey to highlight her appointment.

Stephen Gale, our website manager, and Noah Wheelock, successfully migrated our website to a new host, making it more robust and secure - a mammoth task, for which Noah has our immense gratitude.

The global media team also provided round the clock coverage in full of the 2019 Sportsbet.io European Football Cup in Artsakh in June 2019. In that time, we produced over 1,300 pictures for the CONIFA archive, 36 pieces of content and 468 posts on all social media channels.

We also accredited over 100 global media to the tournament and streamed 20 matches with Mycujoo.

We wish to place on record our thanks to the following people for their help and support in Artsakh, in producing content, delivering content to our sponsors, taking photos and ensuring streaming worked so effectively. In no particular order:

Content:
Olaf Jensen
Alun Macer-Wright
Liam Potter
Matt Hudson
Stephen Gale
Claudio Cavallo
Ola Bjerkevoll

Streaming:
John Niemann and the Mycujoo team
Shaun Underhay
Dominic Stevenson
Photography:
Brad Merrett
George Ghazaryan
David Ghahrahamyan
Jacopo de Falco
Manfredi Pantanella
Lavinia Parliamenti
Karapet Sahakyan

Support team:
Gayane Hayrapetyan
Anna Tsaturyan
Irina Safaryan
Adam Barlow
Sophie Royle

A huge thanks to you all. Without you, the European Football Cup would simply not have been the success it ultimately became.

We look forward to consolidating 2019’s successes and improving on them further in 2020.

Referee Director: Roger Lundbäck

It’s an absolute pleasure and big challenge to be an referee in one of CONIFAs tournaments. Really different from other tournament and I think it’s much better both as referee and personally level. Outside the pitch it’s very friendly but when the game is on we’re all really serious in our rolls and then we focus on doing as few mistake as possible. We will help the teams with the rules of the game and hopefully we have high respect for eachother.

CONIFAs referees have a really high passion for being referee because they don’t get paid for the games. We don’t pay them anything but they will get accommodation and food.

It’s a big challenge to find these refs because the standard of the teams is really high so the skills of the refs need to be in the same level or higher so that’s the biggest challenge for us to find.

We have now the green card in CONIFA and we really likes it. You can get green card for diving or bad behaviour. In our last two tournament we notice a better atmosphere on the pitch because the players now knows what could happened. A green card means that the player will be sent off but the teams can make a substitution if they have any left.

This year we went to Monaco in January for ConIFA No Limit Euro 2019. An great tournament for disabled people. Referees from Italy and Sweden.
In June we had ConIFA Euro2019 in Artsakh and referees from Kurdistan, Germany, Donetsk Republic, Armenia and Sweden. It was an big challenge too
get everything solved because we had less referees then we wanted but we did it and that’s the most important.

I hope in the near future we can have even more tournaments and more crew in the referee family, so everything will be easier and better for the ref teams. We are the third team on the pitch and it’s always a fantastic feeling too meet all Conifa members both on and off the pitch. Enjoy every moment!

Asian President: Jens Jockel

1. Participation in the following CONIFA-Events:
   1. Annual General Meeting 2019 in Krakow, Poland -) Acting as Co-Organizer
   2. CONIFA Sportsbet.IO European Football Cup in Artsakh -) Creator of the Tournament Rules and disciplinary framework; lead of the Disciplinary Committee and organizer of the CONIFA vs. Media Game

2. Travels for CONIFA (global)
   1.) November 2019: Trip to North Macedonia in order to evaluate the facilities in the Skopje area for the upcoming World Football Cup in 2020. Successful negotiation in regard to stadiums, hotels and other facilities.

3. Travels for CONIFA ASIA
   1.) February 2019: First field-visit in Malaysia, as well visit of Hong Kong and Macao. Negotiations & meetings with potential stakeholders, host cities, host clubs and federations. Furthermore evaluation of the current status. Member visit and help: Rohingya FC. Big delivery of goods/ equipment together with Oscar Mussons (Gen.Sec Asia).
   2.) August 2019: Visit of The Hague, Netherlands, with Paul Watson (Development Manager). The aim: Meeting the representatives of East Turkestan and West Papua to strengthen bonds and to gather information on the activities and needs of those two members. The visit has turned out to be very successful: Both of the teams played against each other, they do have a stadium as “home venue” now and a strategical partner, with the football and cricket club “HV and CV Quick”. The activity of both teams has increased dramatically.
   3.) September 2019: Visit of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with Oscar Mussons (Gen.Sec CONIFA Asia) and Asher Mulroney (Sponsoring/Marketing CONIFA Asia) in order to create a local committee on the ground. The local committee was established and consists out of: Public figures, movie-makers, refugee activists, lawyers and Sports Business experts. Furthermore visit of Rohingya clubs and potential stakeholders.

4. Work as CONIFA ExCo-member & President:
   1. Attended as member of the CONIFA Executive Committee several meetings throughout the year and fulfilled general and specific tasks within our responsibilities
   2. Worked as president of the CONIFA Asia Committee hand-in-hand with a motivated, diverse team on big tasks, such as the Asia Cup, active help for struggling members and a big range of other topics.
   3. Took care of my responsibility as member of the CONIFA Executive Committee, as well as as an ambassador towards federations within and outside of CONIFA and visited dozens of
professional and semi-professional football clubs in different countries and CONIFA-relevant-regions, such as:

i. Germany
ii. Armenia
iii. Artsakh
iv. Bosnia and Herzegovina
v. Czech Republic
vi. England / Cornwall
vii. Hong Kong
viii. Italy
ix. Luxembourg
x. Macao
xi. Malaysia
xii. Netherlands
xiii. North Macedonia
xiv. Poland
xv. Russia
xvi. Singapore

4. And met spokespersons and deciders of the following football federations/top clubs:

i. Germany
ii. Armenia
iii. Artsakh
iv. Hong Kong
v. Luxembourg
vi. Macao
vii. Malaysia
viii. North Macedonia

5. Actual tasks and projects for CONIFA / Changes in CONIFA Asia

Main aspect of my work right now, besides maintaining the contact and information flow within the Asian Continent is the work on the Asia Cup with my team and helping struggling members in each possible aspect.

During the field-visit of the leadership of CONIFA Asia (Gen.Sec Oscar Mussons, Sponsoring/Marketing Manager Asher Mulroney and me) in October, we did create a local committee in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in order to work actively on the ground, on making an Asia Cup 2021 possible.

The local committee consists, apart the leadership of CONIFA Asia, out of: Public figures, movie-makers, refugee activists, lawyers and Sports Business experts. Right now (December 2019) the committee reached out to the political elite of Malaysia in order to evaluate the chances of support from the “highest stage”.
Furthermore, “CONIFA in Japan” was created as sub of CONIFA Asia, by Motoko Jitsukawa, member of CONIFA Asia and East Asia Manager. “CONIFA in Japan” was established in order to promote CONIFA Asia and its objectives in Japan and build a platform for immigrant teams and potential CONIFA members. Furthermore, it should encourage the CONIFA teams in Japan (Ryukyu and United Koreans) in their football-specific activity.

6. Privately:
   I am about to receive my diploma in Game Analysis and Scouting in the beginning of 2020 and I have had regularly workshops with top-notch-staff in this branch over the last two years (DFB etc.).

   If any federation within CONIFA, is struggling in this branch, I would be happy to help you with my knowledge.

7. Personal changes on board of CONIFA ASIA:
   Gursimran Hans (UK) left the board. Asher Mulroney (Australia/Malaysia), Franco Ficetola(Italy) and Frankie Lambert(UK) joined CONIFA Asia and act now as the new Marketing/Sponsoring team.

8. Last but not least
   If you have any (constructive) ideas towards CONIFA Asia in general, the upcoming Asia Cup or you just need help with an issue, do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail: asia@conifa.org. Me and my team will try to help you as good as we can.

Legal Director: Kieran Pender

Dear Colleagues,

1. Firstly, I thank and commend you for another successful year for CONIFA. We are a truly inspiring organisation. Thanks to the hard work and contributions of our Executive Committee, volunteers, members, sponsors and supporters, we continue to achieve new heights.

2. Following the 2019 Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee decided to create a Legal Director role, within the General Secretariat, in light of the increased legal and regulatory issues arising for CONIFA. I assumed this role, stepping down as Media & Communications Director.

3. There have been four primary aspects of this role in 2020. I detail them as follows.

   Commercial Support

4. I have worked with relevant Executive Committee colleagues to prepare and execute agreements and memoranda of understanding with various stakeholders. In 2019, this work was predominantly focused on our 2019 Sportsbet.io European Football Cup in Artsakh. I led negotiations and development on sponsorship agreements, multimedia services agreements, host agreements etc. These have proven beneficial to CONIFA, and there has been no issue with any party's compliance with the terms of the agreements.
5. Another responsibility of the Legal Director is to manage CONIFA’s regulatory responsibilities, including under our Constitution, and deal with any disputes that arise. In 2018, CONIFA member Manx International Football Alliance (MIFA) was provisionally expelled from CONIFA following MIFA’s unilateral withdrawal from the 2018 Paddy Power World Football Cup. MIFA subsequently instructed lawyers, who threatened to commence legal proceedings against CONIFA. At the time of writing this has not happened. MIFA has been readmitted to CONIFA, following a vote of the 2019 Annual General Meeting. Relations with MIFA appear to have normalised, although MIFA has not formally withdrawn its threat of legal action.

6. One significant development has been the creation of a CONIFA Conflict of Interest policy. For the first time, all members of the Executive Committee will be asked to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration at the 2020 Annual General Meeting. These declarations will then be reviewed by the Executive Committee and appropriate steps taken to mitigate the risk of any conflict of interest arising.

Complaint Management

7. The Legal Director, and more broadly the General Secretariat, are responsible for managing complaints and disputes arising under CONIFA’s internal regulations. In 2019, five complaints arose. Two arose in the context of the tournament management of the European Football Cup. One was successfully mediated, one remains outstanding. One arose in the context of a friendly between CONIFA members, and was successfully mediated. Two arose in the context of inter-personal conflict. As these involved a member of the General Secretariat, the Presidency assumed control of the complaints. At the time of writing, neither had been finalised.

8. At the 2018 Paddy Power World Football Cup, a complaint was made by a staff member of one CONIFA member against a staff member of another, about conduct that did not uphold the values at the heart of CONIFA. At the time CONIFA did not have the internal regulations that we now have, and accordingly no process was provided for effectively managing this complaint. Regrettably, that deficit of procedure, and several other complications, meant that the complaint was not handled to the standard to which we would have hoped. Throughout 2019, I have investigated and considered the complaint. In June, the Executive Committee reviewed my Final Investigation Report and accepted my recommendation. My recommendation was as follows:

5. Having considered all the material before me, including the video footage of the match in question, I consider that it is not possible to determine, in a manner conforming with the tenets of natural justice and procedural fairness, whether or not [the respondent] made the comments he is alleged to have made.

6. Accordingly, it is my recommendation that the Executive Committee determine that no finding is possible in the circumstances, and conclude this matter.

7. [Such conduct] has no place within CONIFA and all allegations should be investigated fully. Nevertheless, as a British judge once observed, ‘truth, like all other good things, may be loved unwisely – may be pursued too keenly – may cost too
much’. It is my considered view that to proceed with disciplinary proceedings against [the respondent], in the absence of corroborating evidence and given that over a year has passed since the allegation was made, would be in itself an injustice.

8. CONIFA must bear primary responsibility for our failure to investigate this complaint in a timelier manner. I recommend that a letter be sent to the [the complainant], offering our apologies that this was not handled better. Similarly, I recommend that a letter be sent to [the respondent and the respondent’s member FA], offering our apologies for the procedural shortcomings in this investigation. I am confident that the introduction of the Code at the 2019 AGM and the creation of a legal directorship will prevent these circumstances repeating. However, in light of [the respondent’s member FA] ongoing dissatisfaction with the Code, I recommend that in the proposed correspondence, [the respondent’s member FA] be invited to propose a revised Code or revisions to the existing Code for adoption at the 2020 AGM. The same opportunity should be afforded to all CONIFA members. [The respondent’s member FA] attention should be drawn to clause 3.1.7. (Notice of Business) of the Constitution to ensure any proposal they, or any member, wishes to make will be considered at the 2020 AGM.

Member Development

9. I have, for some time now, been assisting the Kiribati Islands Football Associations (KIFA) in their attempts to join FIFA. These continue, albeit have been somewhat delayed by internal personnel changes at KIFA.

2020

10. It is with regret that I have decided, following a three-year tenure on the Executive Committee, to not stand for re-election. It has been an honour to serve such an important organisation, but regrettably professional commitments now limit the time I can give to CONIFA. I would like to thank everyone in CONIFA for welcoming me into the family, and particularly acknowledge the friendship and support of Cassie Whittell, Sascha Duerkop, Paul Watson and Noah Wheelock. I look forward to remaining part of CONIFA, albeit in a slightly less active capacity.

Member Development Director: Paul Watson

Having created the new role of Member Development Director, my first task was to work out a structure for the position and 2019 was largely focused on collecting information on how the role can be of use in assisting CONIFA’s growing membership base.

The first major task was to create an up to date communication protocol with member FAs - a database that lists the most effective method of communication with each FA. This exercise provided an insight into the complexity of the communication challenges within CONIFA but also served as a good opportunity to check in with as many members as possible and get a better understanding of their goals, structures and the difficulties that they face. We now have a spreadsheet of member
contacts that we can use as a framework with the aim of ensuring that we have a reliable line of communication at all times to each FA.

Aside from regular email, Facebook, WhatsApp and phone contact with members, I visited The Hague with Asia President Jens Jockel to meet the East Turkistan and West Papua FAs, strengthening bonds and assisting both teams in their bids to become more active members of the CONIFA fold.

Having heard from a number of members that sourcing basic football equipment for grassroots projects, especially youth focused projects, was a problem, I set up a partnership with Boots2Africa, a UK based charity providing second-hand football boots to charitable causes. By then locating routes to ensure delivery was possible without entering the insecure and prohibitively expensive postal system, I was able to begin the process of providing boots to children and adults under the umbrella of various CONIFA member FAs who are in need.

In 2019, CONIFA sent out 525 pairs of boots, 110 footballs and a variety of training equipment such as cones and goalkeeper gloves to recipients from Barawa, Somaliland, Matabeleland, Zanzibar and Tibet. This work was made possible through several donations, including those of Boots2Africa, and was at no financial cost to CONIFA.