

WEST INDIES CRICKET UMPIRES' ASSOCIATION BIENNIAL CONVENTION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2025

INTRODUCTION

Members of the General Council, Honorary Life Members, Observers, friends all. Greetings to you and thank you for taking the opportunity to attend the 31st WICUA Biennial Convention. Firstly, I would like to thank our host, Trinidad & Tobago led by President Kowlessar, Honorary Secretary Mr. Barry Roopia and their executive and planning team for the wholehearted effort to put together this convention. From all indications so far, the convention seems to be moving in the right direction, with the success of the events that have already been completed.

I want to thank the Officers and the delegates who have the awesome responsibility of overseeing the WICUA and maintain its status as an entity. You have expended a lot of time and effort in the service of this organization, and this must be noted and recognized. Service given here is voluntary, but you have gone above and beyond the cause of duty, particularly the officers who form the executive and meet every two months and at times emergency meetings over the past two years to fulfil the obligations of your office. We truly appreciate this level of service, and hope that this level of service will continue.

Colleagues and friends, permit me to thank former president Mr. Cecil Fletcher and former executive vice president Mr. Billy Doctrove for the years of committed service to this organization. I must say that President Fletcher although put away his bat in 2023, has not stopped batting for this organization. He continues to play a pivotal role in assisting us in accomplishing many of our objectives during the period under review. The same must be said of Billy, he continues to check in with us regularly and represented us well in Barbados recently at the funeral for our dearly departed executive Vice President, Patrick Grazette.

Please allow me to mention another of our Stalwart former executive member, Mr. Norman Malcolm. Mr. Malcolm unfortunately had to resign early in the term due to ill health. Mr. Malcolm served the Association for 20 years as assistant Secretary treasurer and was totally committed and dedicated to the task for which he was elected to serve. I want to wish Mr. Malcolm all the best as we and his family are working and praying hard for him to overcome his illness. We once again thank him for his dedicated service to the WICUA.

Friends, it is with a deep sense of sadness and hurt that I must report that our executive vice president Mr. Patrick Grazette passed away in April of this year after a long illness. Patrick was elected Executive Vice President at the last convention in the Cayman Islands after serving as Area Vice President since 2011, when he was appointed by the executive upon the resignation of the then area vice president. Patrick served us well in his usual quiet demeanor and deliberate way of communication. He was a team player and contributed immensely to the growth of this organization. He will certainly be missed. Let peace be with us as we mourn and show respect to our fallen brother.

REVIEW:

Colleagues, in the last two years being the first in my presidency, have been filled with lots of ups and downs in relation to our successes and achievements and the resignations of members of the executive. We have made several changes to the way we operate as an executive and have basically revolutionized some of the operations to bring it into the 21st century business operation approach. Firstly, let's look at the accomplishments of this executive over the 2023 -2025 administrative period.

We have completed a comprehensive negotiation with the Cricket West Indies regarding an increase in fees for the panel umpires, which resulted in increased fees and retainer payments in a four-year agreement. The increased fees have impacted all the levels of the panels - International, Senior, Junior and the female panel, which is now incorporated into the Junior panel.

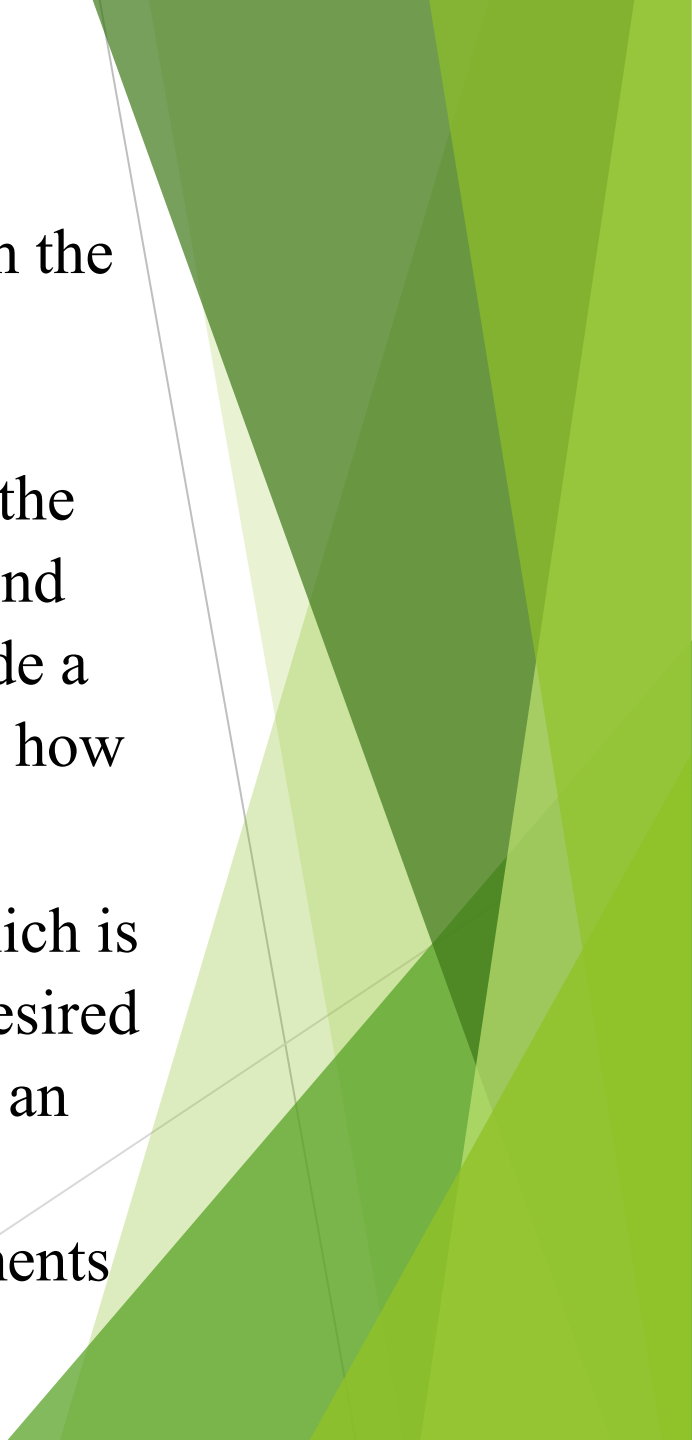
We have signed a historic and unprecedented Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cricket West Indies after a lengthy period of negotiation to ensure that the benefits to be derived from this agreement were in our interest. The MOU has ensured that there will be increased funding for WICUA to stage conventions, to increase our administration expenses, the addition of additional personnel as supervisor for WICUA Examinations and the provision of match tickets to a wide range of umpires to attend international and regional matches. Ladies and gentlemen, this matter of match tickets for umpires has been a sore point for umpires for a long time and I am pleased to know that we are satisfied with what is now in the agreement.

We have totally revamped the WICUA website. A new website is now in effect to make it more appealing and provide more information to the public. The new website arrangement with the new provider also provides email addresses for the president, secretary and treasurer. These new email addresses have already been promulgated and are being used as the means of communication in the organization. This is aimed at keeping in line with modern 21st century organizations.

We have relaunched the WICUA exchange program, which will have far reaching impact on the umpiring fraternity, providing cultural exposure, and umpiring in another country, gaining valuable overseas experience. The programme started with exchanges between the USA and Jamaica, and we are hoping this will be the start of something more expanded. We want to thank the USA and Jamaica for making this happen.

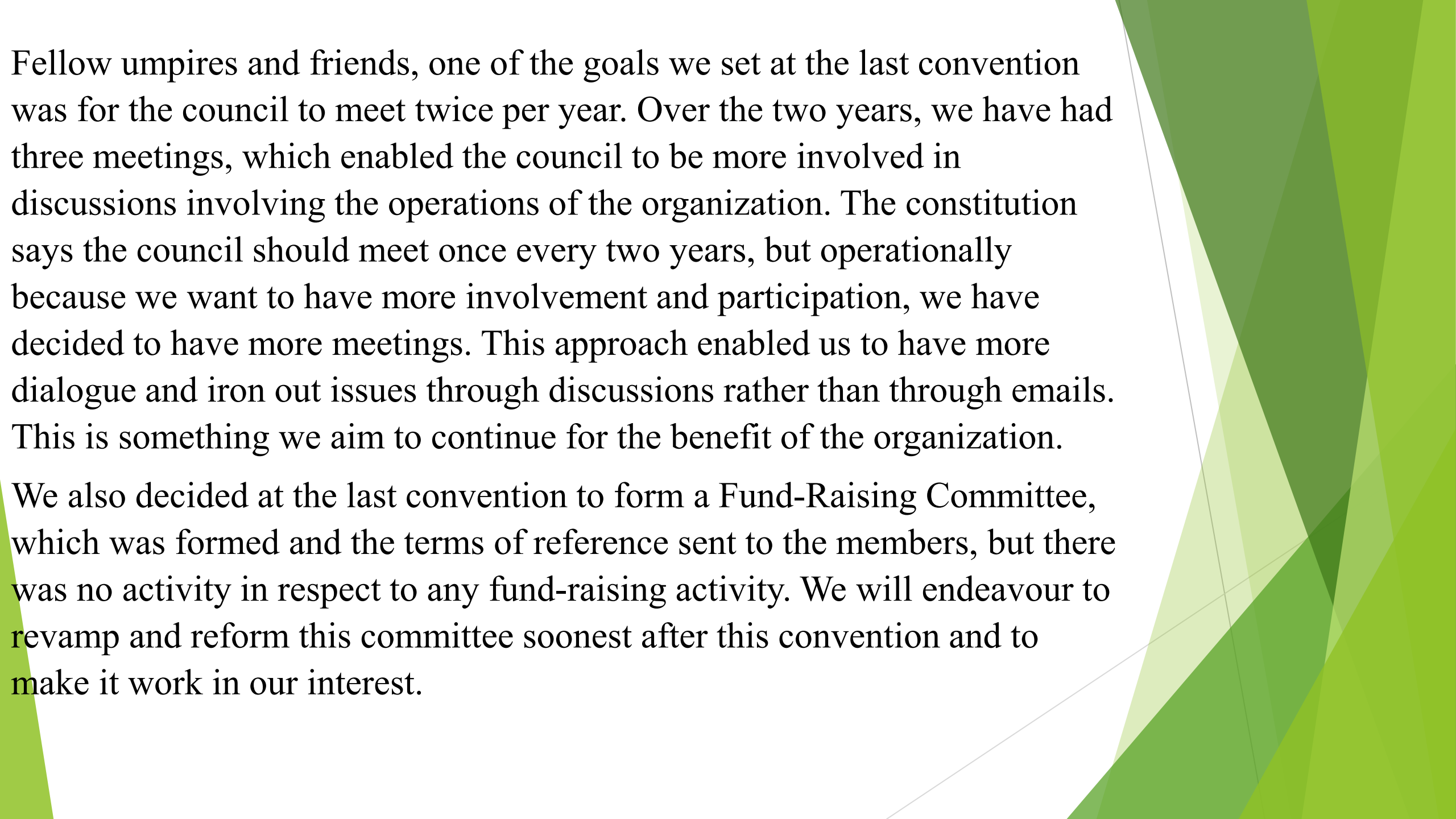
We have had extensive Trained the Trainer Program to have more qualified and Trained umpires to deliver training to our recruits, young and seasoned umpires. These training sessions were attended by a large cohort of umpires throughout the entire region including a former international umpire from India. I had the pleasure of giving opening and welcome remarks at the opening of the first iteration of these sessions in the first year.

Colleagues, this is very important. We have held three historic and unprecedented meetings with the panel umpires during this period under review. One meeting was held with the senior panel, one with the Junior and women's panel and the final one with the combined panels. The Umpires were happy with this level of interface as they have never had the opportunity to meet with the WICUA before and appreciated the opportunity which led to a high level of discussion on matters of concern which both parties agreed as the way to dialogue in the future to arrive at building consensus. Arising from these meetings, the Umpires have agreed to pay their contributions (cess) and have offered their cooperation in this manner. The WICUA has decided to waive the outstanding cess payments from 2017 to October 1, 2023, when the new contract period began. In the next term, we intend to continue this approach.



We have established the President's Quarterly. This quarterly report from the president, provides information to the umpiring fraternity on umpiring matters throughout the territories. It also provides feedback from the executive on administrative matters and new development. Including in the president quarterly is the new approach to financial responsibilities to send out the financial statement on a quarterly basis. This we hope will provide a greater level of transparency for the general membership for them to see how the funds are being spent.

We have created a Vision and Mission statement for the organization which is in the brochure. Typically, A vision statement outlines an organization desired future state and long-term aspirations while a Mission statement defines an organization's purpose, what it does, and how it achieves its goals. It typically focusses on the present. We have therefore written these statements to meet our objectives.

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Fellow umpires and friends, one of the goals we set at the last convention was for the council to meet twice per year. Over the two years, we have had three meetings, which enabled the council to be more involved in discussions involving the operations of the organization. The constitution says the council should meet once every two years, but operationally because we want to have more involvement and participation, we have decided to have more meetings. This approach enabled us to have more dialogue and iron out issues through discussions rather than through emails. This is something we aim to continue for the benefit of the organization.

We also decided at the last convention to form a Fund-Raising Committee, which was formed and the terms of reference sent to the members, but there was no activity in respect to any fund-raising activity. We will endeavour to revamp and reform this committee soonest after this convention and to make it work in our interest.

Colleagues, during the period under review, unfortunately, there were some resignations from the executive and as I mentioned before the death of Patrick Grazette. It is unfortunate that these resignations occurred, but everyone had their own reasons for leaving which should be respected. I want to thank Messrs. Terrence Richards, Roan McFarlane, Jeewanlal Sookhoo and Athol Hamilton who had replaced Mr. Malcolm for their level of service to the WICUA and wish for them the very best in their future endeavours.

Based on the constitution, which we follow slavishly and previous precedents, the executive appointed Mr. Azad Khan and Mr. Rohan Chambers as Honorary Secretary and Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer respectively to fill those two vacant posts at that time. Azad and Rohan have tremendous experience in their respective fields and have settled in their roles seamlessly, hitting the ground running and are playing an instrumental role in the changes that are occurring in the Association. The other positions were not filled as those resignations came much later and too close to the convention, hence they will be filled in this meeting.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE 2025 -2027:

- 1) The foremost major plan is to increase training opportunities in the territories by planning and delivering training seminars, utilizing our chairman along with Senior umpires, other certified Trainers, plus the utilization of former ICC Elite Umpire Joel Wilson to be a part of this venture. In speaking with persons in some of our territories, the need is great. We are going to prioritize them at the start of the program, but we intend to reach all the territories.
- 2) In addition, WICUA is the full member responsible for cricket umpiring in this hemisphere: We intend to significantly broaden our reach to train umpires in Central and South America and to invite some of these countries to become members of WICUA. We would like to utilize the services of Messrs. Wilson, Nero, and other senior umpires to be our ambassadors to reach into these areas to expand umpiring opportunities in this hemisphere. A part of the plan is to have the trainers officiating in matches with these umpires as part of the training exercise to bolster their confidence.

3) WICUA is planning to work in tandem with the territories to procure much needed training equipment necessary to augment the training programs. These include computers, overhead projectors, screens, software and other necessary training equipment to ensure the programs meet the technological requirements to successfully carry out the training program.

4) The MOU and the umpire's contract will end in 2027.

Therefore, we will be planning our preparation documents for 2026 to submit a comprehensive and detailed proposal to CWI in January 2027 for the new contract period, and the renewal of the MOU, the aim is to get increased benefits from the package.

5) The WICUA is looking at increasing the funding for the Exchange Program, as well as expanding the program to include more umpires. WICUA will be working with the territories to make this happen.

6) The WICUA plan is to ensure that the WICUA website is accessible to all umpires. An outreach program will be developed to promote and publicize the website to make it more informative, inciteful and provide educational information.

7) In the next term, WICUA wishes to make the fundraising committee more relevant to be able to use their initiatives to raise funding for WICUA throughout the region. The committee will have mini fundraising committees in each country, so that various fundraising events can take place throughout the WICUA territories.

8) WICUA plan is to ensure that the Area Vice Presidents work more closely with the territories under their jurisdiction to help coordinate events and activities to enable a seamless flow of communication about what is happening in their area, hence they will be in a better position to produce reports.

9) The plan for the next period is to reduce the President's Quarterly to Semi-Annually to provide more time between reports to garner more information between reports.

10) WICUA aims to forge and establish a mutually beneficial relationship with ICC Americas to include Training, Exchange Programs etc., to widen our reach, influence and experience. Funding will be sought from ICC Americas to augment this program.

11) To continue our work with CWI and to continue the good working relationship that exists between both organizations, that in my view will redound to the benefit of the WICUA as we seek increased funding and perks that are in our best interest.

12) Our aims and objectives based on our Vision and Mission Statements are to make this association the envy of world umpiring organizations and to make our members and umpires fulfill their dreams and aspirations to become world class cricket umpires within this region, this hemisphere and the entire world, wherever they officiate. We intend for them to showcase their mastery and their exceptionally well trained and developed experience to show to the world that the WICUA umpires are a force to be reckoned with.

13) Finally, the WICUA plan is to work in tandem with the CWI to put all the necessary ingredients in place to get one of our umpires on the ICC Elite Panel within the next three years.

It is with humility, pragmatism and unity that I have forged with you to carry out the mandate of this association. Humility means giving of self in a selfless manner and being responsible and accountable to the organization in all its endeavours. Pragmatism means to be practical. The approach to decision making, and to be inclusive and transparent, which is the hallmark of this administration over the last two years. Unity involves the involvement of everyone and the total collaboration of all for the success of the organization. We are depending on you to buy into these policies and to play your role in helping us fulfill the organization's Vision and Mission. As the convention theme states, "THE FUTURE IS OURS"

Thank you.

Prepared by:

Vivian Johnson

President, WICUA

July 14, 2025.