Using Table Tennis to bring #PeaceOnTheTable
A WORD FROM US

World Table Tennis Day 2022 took place at a significant time.

Roughly six weeks before World Table Tennis Day, the Russian troops invaded Ukraine. Many were left hurt, displaced, and wondering when the ordeal would end before the peace returned.

It is through moments like these we remembered the importance of peace and the pain in its absence.

World Table Tennis Day 2022 focuses on using table tennis for peace-making and conflict resolutions. In line with the biennial celebration of the 50th anniversary of Ping Pong Diplomacy, the ITTF Foundation has made it the theme for this April 6. Thanks to all Promoters and event organisers around the world, World Table Tennis Day 2022 has contributed to the UNSDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, shed the spotlight on the power of sport, particularly table tennis in building bridges, creating friendships, and seeking reconciliation on both the states and grassroots levels.

This year on April 6, we have proved that together, we are stronger.

The ITTF Foundation has spent a fun (and sweaty) day playing with the Ukrainian Deaf-mute national team players that are currently taking refuge in Leipzig, Germany where our headquarter sits. Over 300 physical events have taken place worldwide on that day, all sought to create dialogues and bring #PeaceOnTheTable through table tennis.

We have also published a Ping Pong Diplomacy toolkit to help those who wish to bring Ping Pong Diplomacy to the grassroots level, on World Table Tennis Day or not. Some great examples are the awareness programmes to divert youth to sport instead of crime by the Fiji Table Tennis Association, the anti-conflict city walk and the conflict-resolution table tennis matches by the Offiong Edem Foundation in Calabar South, Nigeria, and a one-week table tennis camp in Nepal by Saroj’s Table Tennis 4 All to combat religion and Caste biases.

My sincere gratitude goes out to all participants, players and the ITTF Group for helping us spread the message. It was a reminder that while the road to peace is still long and rocky, through continuous work we seek to motivate and inspire others to bring peace through table tennis.

Leandro Olvech
ITTF Foundation Director
First time with a registered event:
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Madagascar
- Eswatini

314 EVENTS
107* COUNTRIES and TERRITORIES
*including the 24-hour live stream
The power of our favourite sport in peace-making should be celebrated everywhere regardless of physical borders and boundaries.

On April 6, we ensured that there was something for everyone in the 24-hour live stream. From informative Expert Talks and Panel Discussions to fun table tennis workouts, the worldwide table tennis community was invited to the online celebration of table tennis, and its long history in building friendships, creating dialogues, and making peace.

Our curated programmes include:
• Meet & Greets with table tennis stars Kanak Jha, Lin Gaoyuan, Wang Manyu and table tennis celebrity Adam Bobrow;
• Live broadcast of the celebration events in Portugal (with ETTU and ITTF Foundation Goodwill Ambassador Galia Dvorak), and Skopje (co-hosted by North Macedonia Table Tennis Association and Kosovo Table Tennis Association);
• Event highlight from our dedicated Promoters FUDELA, Offiong Edem, American Youth Table Tennis Organization and ITTF Member Associations Fiji Table Tennis Association, Tahitian Table Tennis Federation, and Yemen Table Tennis Association;
• Workouts to bust some sweat with Rachael Milligan;
• Expert Talks and Panel Discussions on how sport can be used as a tool for peace-making, dealing with bias and discrimination in daily lives, as well as understanding and supporting the resilience of the refugees.

Our sincere gratitude to all panellists Lisa Bendiek, Joel Bouzou, Heleena Kakar, Dr Lars Bo Kaspersen, Corinna Klinger, Wilfried Lemke, Dr J. Simon Rofe, Connie Sweeris; ITTF officials and Ambassadors Petra Sörling, Khalil Al-Mohannadi, Steve Dainton, , HRH Princess Zeina Rashid of Jordan, Ryu Seung-Min and Galia Dvorak for sharing your thoughts and expertise in the 24-hour live stream.

22,965 table tennis enthusiasts worldwide joined our 24-hour live stream
The Promoters initiative calls for local table tennis enthusiasts across the globe to help us promote the power of table tennis in peace-making with their curated events. After fierce competition, we have selected 25 passionate Promoters from all five continents this year to support our goal of bringing #PeaceOnTheTable through our favourite sport.
THE PROBLEM

While the result of all conflicts is similar, the nature of those conflicts may vary. We first looked into the types of conflicts our Promoters wished to address with their World Table Tennis Day events.

63% of the targeted conflicts persist on the community/grassroots level, while 21% of the targeted conflicts extend to a national level, affecting various groups and individuals across neighbourhoods and regions.
TACKLING THE CONFLICTS

The approaches our Promoters used to tackle the conflicts they have identified.

- Symbolic gestures or peace-making ceremony
- Teaching conflict-resolution skills
- Educating about the conflict
- Conflicting communities play together / mixed doubles
- Awareness campaign
- Participants are people involved in / affected by conflict

Peddie, SOUTH AFRICA
Activities our Promoters planned for this April 6

- Come’n’try Professional matches on screen
- Dancing Educational session
- Tournament Generation games Invite speakers
- Panel Exhibition Donation ceremony
- Live music

While many of the Promoter events targeted at multiple groups, children, women and girls, as well as youth are the top three most targeted groups, followed by the general public and members of club or association. We were happy to see our Promoters living up to one of the fundamental spirit of World Table Tennis day, exhibiting inclusion of our favourite sport by including people with disability, refugees and immigrants, elderly, and indigenous people.
THE RESULTS

We believe that events and activities need to be adapted and localised to reach its full potential, and we entrusted our worldwide Promoters to do just that.

82% feel like they have acquired skills or knowledge regarding conflict transformation or peace-keeping, and 95% of them are already applying the diplomacy skill and knowledge gained through the Promoters Initiative outside of the 2022 World Table Tennis Day event.

Aside from the financial support, we saw great importance in sharing our experience and knowledge in using table tennis for peace making. Our main publications for this April 6: the **Ping Pong Diplomacy toolkit** and **World Table Tennis Day toolkit** have helped 91% of the Promoters with event ideas. On the scale from one to ten, both toolkits averaged an eight from our Promoters when been asked how helpful they found the toolkits.

88% of the Promoters believe that they have achieved the goals they set for their World Table Tennis Day event

2% thought the goal was partially reached

91% of our Promoters will use the Ping Pong Diplomacy toolkit in the future.
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Sponsor Ukrainian players to participate in international tournaments and ensure their training opportunity.

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* If you need a donation receipt, please contact us at info@foundation.ittf.com

or Scan to donate

www.tabletennisunited.org
JOIN US
FOR WORLD TABLE TENNIS DAY 2023

It’s been exciting for us here at the ITTF Foundation and we look forward to seeing what ideas our community has in stock for next year.

www.ITTFFoundation.org
www.ITTFFoundation.org/programmes/tt4all/world-table-tennis-day