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Havana, December 13 (JIT)-- Brazilian Andrew Parsons has been re-elected for a second four-year term as president of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

Parsons, who was running unopposed, received 156 of the 159 valid votes during the 20th IPC General Assembly, held virtually unopposed due to the impact of COVID-19.

A former president of the Brazilian Paralympic Committee and the Americas Paralympic Committee, Parsons has held various roles in the Paralympic movement over the past 24 years. He was first elected IPC president in September 2017, succeeding Philip Craven, who stepped down after 16 years.

"I would like to thank IPC members for their support. It is an absolute honor to be re-elected as president of the International Paralympic Committee," said Parsons.

"I started as an intern at the Brazilian Paralympic Committee 24 years ago, so to be re-elected after what I believe was a successful first four years is fantastic. I am very happy. I also want to congratulate all the members of the bureau who have been elected, including our vice president Duane Kale, who did a very good job in the last four years chairing the working group on the governance review.

"It's a very interesting and new bureau. We have more women than ever before and with the chair of the athlete council we have eight former Paralympic athletes or Paralympic athletes. This will help us a lot in the next four years," she said.

"We are saying goodbye to some council members who were trying to get re-elected and I would like to thank them for the last four years. We have accomplished so much together, and it has been an honor to serve this organization and the athletes with you," he said.

"This 20th General Assembly was not only about the elections, but also about the approval of the new IPC bylaws. It has been a very important step for our governance and our purpose, clearer than ever. It is about athletes and members, about the Paralympic Games and about human rights. The new bureau will help us in this implementation," he considered.

"Our organization is going through an incredible time, even if we are still facing the pandemic. With the success of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games we show the world what this movement is all about, what we stand for and how we focus on the welfare of our members and our athletes," he said.

During his first four-year term, Parsons transformed the culture within the IPC to make it a more member- and athlete-centric organization. He also oversaw the safe and successful delivery of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

He also strengthened the IPC's relationship with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), signing a new agreement between the two organizations that provides financial stability to the IPC and maintains the one city, two Games model until 2032.

By adding a third strategic pillar to the IPC's activities, focused on promoting the human rights of people with disabilities, he has also redefined the IPC's purpose.

In addition to Parsons' reappointment, New Zealander Duane Kale was also re-elected to a second four-year term as IPC vice president. Unopposed, the four-time Paralympic swimming champion received 154 affirmative votes.

After competing at the 1996 Atlanta Paralympic Games, Kale served as New Zealand's chief of mission for the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Paralympic Games. Since his election as IPC vice president in 2017, he has chaired and led the IPC governance review process and the IPC Audit and Finance Committee.

"I would like to thank the membership for their endorsement of my second consecutive term as IPC Vice Chair and the opportunity to serve alongside President Andrew Parsons. Despite the challenges we have faced, we have made significant progress in executing our strategic plan and with our purpose. There is no doubt that, with the momentum we have, the next four-year cycle will continue to deliver results for our athletes, members and the Paralympic movement. It is an honor to serve this incredible organization," he

said.

IPC members also elected 10 members after three rounds of voting. The governing bureau now includes a record six women, including Jitske Visser, chair of the athletes' council. It also hosts a record eight Parathletes and Paralympic athletes.

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