

## **FIDE General Assembly**

**7-8 August 2022**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. FIDE President's address**

#### **2. Obituaries**

With a dedicated commemorative video the FIDE General Assembly commemorates colleagues who have passed away during the previous year.

#### **3. Report of the Chairman of the Electoral and Constitutional Commissions**

##### **3.1 Electoral Commission reports**

The General Assembly notes the reports.

#### **4. Roll-call**

Mr. Rivello presents the Electoral Commission's report. He draws the attention of the delegates that this is the first report under new Electoral Rules.

Mr. Rivello notes that no Federation has been suspended thanks to the introduction of the institute of 'a reverse delegate' for several FIDE Federations.

Mr. Rivello says the Commission has stated validity of candidates and approves the list of delegates. It also has dealt with complaints from some candidates, the decisions will not be published further to the requests from the candidates.

He thanks all the candidates for their positions prior to the elections. He thanks all members of the Constitutional and Electoral Commissions for their work and love for chess. He also notes that the new Electoral Rules are an important step towards more transparent and more efficient elections.

He also mentions two small changes to the Agenda, one – to hold the election of Scrutineers at the beginning of the electoral proceedings, to have all electoral moments together. The second one is to reduce the discussion following the Financial report to 15 minutes to enable the start of elections as soon as possible.

He also reiterates that this year the roll-call has been done during the registration, and as there are 155 delegates present, the quorum has been established.

[\*Note: Later, the ELE Chairman clarified that 180 delegates had already been registered by the time of the vote.]

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks Mr. Rivello and hopes that more delegates will be able to come in order to exercise their right and vote for all positions stated in the Agenda.

## **Section 1- Report of FIDE President**

Mr. Dvorkovich presents his report. He says it was his honour and privilege to serve FIDE during this period of time. In his report Mr. Dvorkovich:

- Due to the top significance of the major tournaments for the development of chess around the world, outlines top FIDE events held between the World Rapid and Blitz Championship in December 2022 and the 44<sup>th</sup> Chess Olympiad currently being held in Chennai.
- Expresses gratitude to the Government of Poland and FIDE Vice-President L. Turlej for the organization of the World Rapid and Blitz Championship 2021, the Spanish Chess Federation, Mr. J. Ochoa, the chess.com and Scheinberg family for the success story of the FIDE Candidates' Tournament 2022 and to the Government of Tamil Nadu and India and the AICF for their enormous efforts in organizing the World Chess Olympiad and FIDE Congress 2022 at a very short notice.
- Underlines a record participation of teams in Chennai: 186 teams in an open section and 160 teams in women's section due to the record high travel subsidies from FIDE.
- Underlines that despite the current geopolitical situation and political turbulences FIDE's partners continue standing by its side and assist in development of chess.
- Informs that FIDE is preparing the next World Championship cycle for both men and women and the Women's Grand-Prix series venues have been in place, and the Grand Swiss tournament on the Isle of Man for both men and women will take place, as parts of the cycle.
- Points out that the competitions for youth, junior and seniors have been restarted all across the world and being organized smoothly.
- Outlines FIDE activities in the field of preparing FIDE professionals: arbiters, trainers, FIDE school instructors, where modern technologies allowed online seminars and hybrid events, so more people were able to get training and to involve more people into chess activities.
- Expresses gratitude to all FIDE Commissions, Chairs, Secretaries, Councilors for their important contribution to the development of chess.
- Describes the activities of FIDE during the Year of Woman in Chess, including parallel activities currently being held in Chennai: Queen's Pavilion, Woman in Chess Awards etc. Confirms that activities will be continued every year in order to minimize the gender gap.
- Shares his positive confidence that FIDE is getting its momentum in its social mission where all ages and all groups are targeted, from pre-school to veterans and from people with various disabilities but great abilities to refugees and inmates. Invites everyone to join these projects and wishes to whoever will be elected to continue and expand the social programme and thanks everybody who has contributed.

A short video about social projects of FIDE was demonstrated.

Ms. Namangale from Malawi thanks FIDE President for designating this year as the Year of Woman in Chess and all delegates who have supported this initiative. She expresses joy about

the increase of the number of women's teams in the Chess Olympiad 2022. She inquires of the ways to make this initiative sustainable and calls on the Congress to support the activities of women throughout the Federations.

Mr. Dvorkovich responds that women's chess has been FIDE's priority for some time and will remain so for many years to come. A long-term plan should be prepared with a clear vision of what will have to be done in this direction for each period of time as well as a budgeted allocation of resources required to move women's chess forward. He stresses that the foundation for this process should start with education and teaching more young girls to play chess. Instructors and coaches need to be provided to develop the talent around the world. All levels should be involved, from national to zonal and continental. We need to create motivation to continue chess careers, we should also provide stipends in the university level and the prizes in the women's competitions should increase. FIDE has already started to increase the women's prizes. We should also create career opportunities for the women – they should be able to become arbiters, coaches, instructors, trainers and organisers, as well as officials and managers on all levels. Women have great potential in working and playing chess. Many partners would like to focus on sponsoring women's chess, and this is great news.

Mr. Mwanyika asks about sponsorship for tournaments.

Mr. Dvorkovich replies that FIDE has started sponsoring open tournaments.

Mr. Haureau from the Seychelles thanks the President and invites all delegates to express gratitude to FIDE for the wonderful work and each other for this wonderful forum after two years of lockdown.

## **Section 2 - Financial matters - I part**

### **2.1 Report of the FIDE Treasurer**

Ms. Zhu thanks the Indian hosts for organising the Olympiad and Congress at such a short notice. In her report she presents the Financial Statement for 2021 and the opinion of the FIDE External Auditors Ernst & Young and highlights main points:

- 2.1. mln euro as a net income in the last year as the highest ever FIDE profit;
- FIDE has managed to organise all its major official events in 2021;
- Gratitude to the FIDE team and the Organisers of these events;
- 3.2. mln euro in the FIDE reserve fund;
- Total cash balance at the end of 2021 as 5.7mln euros vis-à-vis 1 mln euros before 2018, with the highest ever number of 9 mln euros reached as FIDE cash balance during 2018-2022;
- An overview of the 2018-2022 period in financial terms: quick actions in opening bank accounts in the EU, Russia and later in Switzerland; creating reporting standards to ensure all interests of the FIDE stakeholders; creating a Development Fund; ensuring transparency in all FIDE activities; significant upgrade of all supervising functions; review of our internal audit system; institutionalisation of FIDE finances; upgrading the functions of the Verification Commission.

- Financial situation during the pandemics: financial losses, reduction measures, decreasing of administrative expenses, including payroll and travel cuts, budget cuts of almost 50%.
- FIDE survival among a small group of international sports federations that did not have to apply for emergency loans or other measures from the IOC.
- Remarkable performance in 2021.
- Over 6 mln euro spent as Development Fund assistance to Federations which is several times higher than the money received from Federations.
- Summary: from a Federation which lived mostly on money collected from National Federations, FIDE went a long way and became a modern body developing chess all over the world.
- 2 mln euro spent as a travel fund for Federations to come to the Chess Olympiad in Chennai.
- Gratitude to the FIDE President, FIDE Council, Verification Commission members and delegates.

### **The General Assembly approved Treasurer's report.**

#### **2.2 Verification Commission's report**

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks the Verification Commission for a deep analysis of FIDE finances in cooperation with the FIDE Treasurer and Financial Director.

Mr. Mazouz presents the report and praises great cooperation between the Commission and the Financial management of FIDE as well the External Auditor with whom for the first time a meeting was held before an audit was started. He informs that there are 37 staff members in FIDE. He also confirms that the financial situation in FIDE has been improved despite the covid and the revenues in 2021 have been soaring.

Mr. A. Priest makes a presentation as the Verification Commission Secretary. In his presentation he highlights several areas, in particular:

- More powers to engage and ask questions in respect of the financial work per new FIDE Charter.
- Great cooperation with Treasurer, Financial Director and the Office.
- Accomplishment of the last year's Commission's recommendations.
- Some challenges in respect of some of the Commission's recommendations, e.g. the time of the submission of the External Auditor's report to the Commission.
- Explanations why FIDE remains with Ernst & Young as an External Auditor.
- Adoption of a nepotism policy within FIDE.
- Outline of new recommendations of the Commission: preparation of a cash flow by a direct method, having all the financial documentation and contracts in English, adjustment to the law change in Switzerland regarding tax refund, a transparent bonus policy for the FIDE employees and its inclusion into the FIDE budget, inter alia.
- An important change of an accounting system of FIDE employing standard double entry accounting. The system should support making financial information widely available both to FIDE management and National Federations as well as other interested parties. The Commission recommends a new system to be a priority and to start being operational on 1 January 2023.

- Proposed generating an income for FIDE during the single year to help operating during the subsequent year and a rolling two-year budget process.

Mr. Priest concludes by saying that the Verification Commission has become much more involved which is important for all member Federations, to know more about FIDE finances.

Mr. A. Herbert from Barbados congratulates the Treasurer and the Verification Commission for an outstanding work and strongly supports the recommendation in respect of a change of an accounting system of FIDE, underlining that it is possible to find a relatively unexpensive programme in the market.

Mr. Priest replies that the purchase of a new system should be cheaper than the maintenance of a current one.

Mr. Tolbaev from Kyrgyzstan also expresses his strong support to the change of the current system and asks about time frame involved.

Mr. Priest replies that the change has actually started as the financial team has recognised the necessity and started taking required steps towards this direction. He also confirms his personal involvement in assisting throughout this transition as an expert in Quickbooks programme. He again draws the attention to the Auditors' concern over the control of the existing system but underlines the change is impossible to be made this year.

**The General Assembly approved the Verification Commission's report.**

### **2.3 Discharge of the Treasurer.**

**The General Assembly discharged the Treasurer from the responsibilities for the financial year 2021.**

## **Section 3- Elections**

### **Elections of the 3 Scrutineers**

**The General Assembly elected three Scrutineers: Mr. George Kweku Arko-Dadzie, Mr. Ragai Al Susi and Ms. N. Rob.**

### **Acknowledgment of the elections for the Continental and Zonal Presidents.**

The General Assembly takes note of the results of the elections of the two Continental Presidents:

- Europe: Mr Zurab Azmaiparashvili

- Africa: Ms. Tshepiso Lopang

**The General Assembly noted the results of the completed elections in Zones and Continents.**

### **3.1 Election of the combined Presidential tickets**

Presidential ticket of Baryshpolets/Nielsen

1. President – Mr. Andrii Baryshpolets

2. Deputy President – Mr. Peter-Heine Nielsen

Presidential ticket of Dvorkovich/Anand

1. President – Mr. Arkady Dvorkovich
2. Deputy President – Mr. Anand Viswanathan

Presidential ticket of Kouatly/Wilkinson

1. President – Mr. Bachar Kouatly
2. Deputy President – Mr. Ian Wilkinson

The drawing of lots to determine which ticket will be the first to make a presentation to the General Assembly delegates was held by the Chairman of the Electoral Commission Mr. Roberto Rivello. The drawing of lots has determined the following order:

1. Presidential ticket of Baryshpolets/Nielsen
2. Presidential ticket of Kouatly/Wilkinson
3. Presidential ticket of Dvorkovich/Anand

During the presentation Mr. Kouatly has announced the withdrawal of the ticket Kouatly/Wilkinson from the FIDE Presidential elections.

Following the withdrawal, the elections of the combined Presidential tickets were held between the Presidential ticket of Presidential ticket of Baryshpolets/Nielsen and the Presidential ticket of Dvorkovich/Anand.

**The General Assembly noted that the ticket B. Kouatly-I. Wilkinson has withdrawn from the FIDE Presidential elections.**

**The Electoral Commission Chairman announces the results of the presidential elections : With a majority of the ballots (157 votes), the following presidential ticket is elected:**

**Mr Arkadiy Dvorkovich, President;**

**Mr Vishwanathan Anand, Deputy President;**

**The presidential ticket of Mr Andrii Baryshpolets obtained 16 votes.**

**There was one (1) invalid ballot and five (5) abstentions.**

**In accordance with art. 18.1 of the FIDE Charter, the President (i.e. Mr Arkadiy Dvorkovich) represents FIDE officially and can solely sign for FIDE.**

### **3.2 Election of four Vice Presidents.**

There were 13 candidates for the positions of four FIDE Vice-Presidents who received the following number of votes in the first round:

- Olalekan Adeyemi (NGR) – 39 votes

- Tahar Battikh (TUN) – 23 votes
- Patrick van Hoolandt (MNC) – 26 votes
- Xie Jun (CHN) – 113 votes
- Mohamad Jafar Kambuzia (IRI) – 7 votes
- Michael Khodarkovsky (USA) – 62 votes
- Darcy Lima (BRA) – 45 votes
- Georgios Makropoulos (GRE) – 80 votes
- Sheikh Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Mualla (UAE) – 89 votes
- Javier Ochoa de Echaguen (ESP) – 16 votes
- Mario Petrucci (ARG) -19 votes
- Anastasia Sorokina (AUS) – 63 votes
- Lukasz Turlej (POL) – 56 votes

There were two (2) invalid ballots and one (1) abstention.

The following were elected:

1. Ms. Xie Jun (CHN) – 113 votes
2. Sheikh Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Mualla (UAE) – 89 votes
3. Mr. Georgios Makropoulos (GRE) – 80 votes

In the second round the remaining 10 candidates received the following number of votes:

- Olalekan Adeyemi (NGR) – 14 votes
- Tahar Battikh (TUN) – 7 votes
- Patrick van Hoolandt (MNC) – 10 votes
- Mohamad Jafar Kambuzia (IRI) – 1 vote
- Michael Khodarkovsky (USA) – 67 votes
- Darcy Lima (BRA) – 16 votes
- Javier Ochoa de Echaguen (ESP) – 4 votes
- Mario Petrucci (ARG) – 1 vote
- Anastasia Sorokina (AUS) – 27 votes
- Lukasz Turlej (POL) – 21 votes

There were two (2) invalid ballot and one (1) abstention.

Mr. Michael Khodarkovsky (USA) with 67 votes was elected.

**The following persons are elected as FIDE Vice-Presidents:**

**Ms. Xie Jun (CHN), Sheikh Saud bin Adulaziz Al Mualla (UAE), Mr. Georgios Makropoulos (GRE), Mr. Michael Khodarkovsky (USA)**

### **3.3 Elections of the Treasurer, the Secretary of the Council and of three Vice Presidents.**

The newly elected President shall nominate one person for the position of the Treasurer, three (3) persons for the position of Vice Presidents and one person for the position of the Secretary of the Council.

**The General Assembly elected – by approving them - the following FIDE President’s nominations: Mr. Mahir Mammedov (AZE) – Vice-President, Mr. Joran Aullin-Jansson (NOR) - Vice-President, Ms. Zhu Chen (QAT) – Treasurer, Mr. Olalekan Adeyemi (NGR) – Vice-President, Mr. Mario Antonio Ramirez Barahas (MEX) – Vice-President/Secretary of the Council.**

**The General Assembly unanimously approved the usage of a title Vice-President / Secretary of the Council for the respective Member of the Council.**

### **3.4 Election of the Constitutional Commission members.**

**The General Assembly elected the following members of the Constitutional Commission: Mr. Daniel Florea (ROU), Ms. Ivy Amoko (UGA).**

### **3.5 Election of the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission member.**

**The General Assembly elected the following member of the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission: Mr. Pedro Dominguez (DOM).**

## **Section 4 - Financial matters - II part**

### **4.1 Budget 2023.**

4.1.1 Presentation of the Budgetary framework for 2023-2025

4.1.2 Mandate of the Council to adopt the Budget 2023

Mr. Dvorkovich suggests that the General Assembly provides the FIDE Council with a mandate to approve the Budget 2023 further to its consulting with all National Federations as the detailed budget should be approved closer to the start of a fiscal year.

General Assembly takes note of a budgetary framework for 2022-2025 presented by Mr. A. Volzhin. In his presentation Mr. Volzhin:

- Informs that FIDE can now make a mid-term planning as now FIDE has many contracts for three or four years thus having confidence in FIDE finances.



- Points out that because of seasonality, FIDE has to have a longer view in order to plan budget properly.
- Confirms the transition to a two-year budget preparation based on the specifics of the FIDE calendar: 2023 budget will be firm and 2024 budget will be preliminary.
- Explains the figures in the framework depending of what FIDE events will be held this or that year.

Mr. Quiros Rojas from Costa Rica asks as at the Zonal Council it has been discussed to increase assistance to the Chess in Schools and Women's chess on national level, but the budgetary framework still shows the same figures of 2 mln euro so how the support could be increased.

Mr. Volzhin again stresses that this is not a detailed budget and particulars should not be discussed here. He adds that the size of the Development Fund comfortably covers the assistance to the projects submitted by National Federations so far and has not been increased as no more new projects were provided.

Mr. Dvorkovich concurs and calls on all National Federations to apply with relevant projects. He adds that these figures demonstrate a very conservative approach by the FIDE financial team and FIDE is able to raise more donations in order to allocate more money to these important projects and all National Federations shall receive detailed budgets where they will be able to see exact amounts for the priority projects.

Ms. Zhu adds that for the first time an allocation for women's chess has been made in the budget this year, the year of Woman in Chess, to the amount of 100, 000 euro, which shall continue to be allocated on an annual basis during the next four years at least.

Mr. Makropoulos from Greece lauds the fact that under Mr. Dvorkovich's leadership the budget for the development and assistance for chess has been significantly increased. He also mentions that despite very considerable amount spent towards this end by FIDE in the last 40 years, unfortunately there have been not many positive developments. He will bring a proposal to restructure the groups meant for assistance and says there should be a reconsideration on how the funds should be distributed among the Federations.

Mr. Dvorkovich comments that the issue is not only about money but about the capacity and the ways the funds are spent, therefore FIDE, in addition to the financial assistance, shall render training, technical assistance as well as capacity building seminars for National Federations. FIDE will also introduce a mentoring programme where stronger Federations could assist weaker or new ones and each Zone should also try to make arrangements for all its respective members do various activities together.

Mr. Bruce from St. Vincent and Grenadines thanks Mr. Dvorkovich for reconfirming support for embryonic Federations recently joining the FIDE family. He asks if Federations can submit requests for women and girls assistance problems extra to the amounts which are provided now for women's in chess assistance.

Mr. Dvorkovich responds that there will be focus areas which shall be decided in consultations with National Federations towards the end of the year, which will be given extra funding. He confirms that a Federation can make a request for extra support on top of a standard allocation of 5, 000 euro from the PDC. He welcomes ideas from FIDE Council members and member Federations.

Mr Tolbaev from Kyrgyzstan suggests that some part of the development envelope could go to a sustainable development and co-finance some things, which helps to make it sustainable chess.

Mr. Dvorkovich concurs that it is a reasonable proposal provided FIDE has sufficient funding for such projects. Continents, Zones and Federations should find local partners which could co-invest into these projects, especially production of chess materials, to avoid logistical costs, so such proposals are welcome.

**The General Assembly approved to mandate the FIDE Council to approve the FIDE Budget 2023.**

#### **4.2 Appointment of External Auditor for annual audit of FIDE accounts for 2022**

**The General Assembly re-appointed Ernst & Young as External Auditor for annual audit of FIDE accounts for 2022.**

#### **4.3 Update of the Financial Rules regarding the tournaments' fees**

Mr. Dvorkovich provides the background to the proposal, initially submitted by the Chess Federations of France and Spain, which has been approved by the FIDE Council. He also says that this proposal concerns few Federations, except for rapid and blitz tournaments where it can affect a higher number of Federations.

Ms. Namangale from Malawi supports the proposal and asks if the proposed amounts could be lowered.

Mr. Dvorkovich replies that FIDE should care both for National Federations and its budget, where certain budgetary constraints prevent FIDE from increasing some allocations for the Development Fund. He adds that even stronger Federations are now enjoying some assistance, including programmes for disabled players therefore this proposal is balanced.

Mr. Kouatly reminds that allegedly rich Federations are not that rich therefore paying 35, 000 euro is a lot of money even for Spain or France.

Mr. Sanusi from Malaysia proposes that the amount in the proposal could be indexed by a Development level of a country.

Mr. Dvorkovich says only three Federations will reach this level and suggests that the new Council returns to this question bearing in mind that a new Development level system and whether we should keep zero instalments for rapid and blitz events. He proposes to approve the documents and instruct the Council to continue looking into this document.

Mr. Volzhin adds that this limit applies to level 1 countries only.

Mr. Borg from Malta reminds that this is an activity charge. Federations which pay this charge, organise events and generate revenues, from which they pay to FIDE.

Ms. Zhu compares the amount of 1 mln euro charged to Federations by FIDE in 2016 to the amount of 600,000 euros in 2021. She opines that as one family, FIDE management should consider together with the National Federations what is best for all, regarding all proposals, financial and non-financial ones.

Mr. Wijesuriya from Sri Lanka repeats what Mr. Borg says that some Federations do not even report their events so that they are not charged, and this causes some reductions of income for FIDE.

Mr. Dvorkovich requests the proposal to be formulated and sent to FIDE for proper evaluation and consideration. He also reminds that there is no charge for rapid and blitz and this will most likely be extended to the next year.

Mr. Quiros Rojas from Costa Rica expresses his reservation that such proposals which are about changing fees might lead to increasing of arrears and eventually prevent Federations from getting financial assistance.

Mr. Dvorkovich agrees that the situation about fees in general should be discussed carefully in the next two or three months, and replies that this will not lead to accumulation of any further arrears and points out that any new proposal should be made with due analysis of how to avoid the increasing of arrears. He reminds that FIDE accepts proposals from Federations with big amounts of arrears to reschedule their payments for a period of three years.

**The General Assembly approved the update of the Financial Rules regarding tournament fees.**

## **Section 5- Federation and Membership issues**

### **5.1 Admission of a new Affiliated Organization of FIDE**

5.1.1 The Mitropa Chess Association (Mitropa, MCA) applied to become an Affiliated Organization of FIDE.

Mr. Biagioli from Italy presents the request and says that this 50-year old Central European organisation would like to contribute its best resources to FIDE.

**The General Assembly approved the Mitropa Chess Association as an affiliated member of FIDE.**

### **5.2 Readmission of the ASEAN Chess Confederation**

5.2.1 The ASEAN Chess Confederation applied to become an Affiliated Organization of FIDE.

Mr. Leong from Singapore presents the request. He commends the FIDE President for ably chairing the meeting and going through Agenda which demonstrates his care and grasp of all the FIDE operations. Mr. Leong draws the attention of the Assembly to the fact that ASEAN Chess Confederation is accountable to ASEAN which is an analogue of the European Union and all the documentation had first to be approved by them before being presented to FIDE when it had been formed. Annual fiscal and normal reports are to be presented to the Jakarta ASEAN headquarters. The organisation will now enlarge their membership to give opportunity to population of 3.5. bln people to organise chess events.

Mr. Dvorkovich comments that sometimes it is not good to depend on political bodies, and FIDE should stay away, but this is a particular case with a long history and tradition. He supports the request for the re-admission.

**The General Assembly approved to readmit the ASEAN Chess Association as an affiliated member of FIDE.**

### **5.3 Federations issues**

Mr. Dvorkovich reports that unfortunately during last several years there have been quite a few Federations issues which were taken up at the Council meetings and at the General Assembly level as well. We had countries with internal conflicts and in some cases Federations were able to come to agreements, after some long debates. He requests all delegates to try and resolve all issues in a peaceful manner, considering that we are one family.

There have been difficult cases, where we had to go to the institution of a reverse delegates, and Messrs. Kouatly, Wilkinson, Tabti and Mrs. Reizniece-Ozola have served in Federations of Morocco, South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire and Pakistan. He welcomes again delegates of South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire to the General Assembly.

Mr. Dvorkovich is sad that the Government of Pakistan did not allow the Pakistan teams and delegate to participate in the events in Chennai on political grounds.

The only Federation where the issue has not been resolved is Morocco, where some progress, however, has been made, and their team is playing in Chennai.

Mr. Dvorkovich also mentions unfortunate conflicts between countries which lead to the conflicts between Federations as well, e.g., Pakistan and India. However, he notes that the All-India Chess Federation helps the Pakistan Chess Federation despite political disagreements. He also mentions the situation with the Kosovo Chess Federation, here in Chennai, which however, was peacefully resolved. He mentions the biggest crisis currently is in Ukraine following the Russian intervention there. All the issues create huge risks for our chess lives and we should try solutions to remain united.

Mr. Sanusi from Malaysia strongly supports Mr. Dvorkovich's statement and concurs that sports should be an instrument of unity, not conflicts. He says that certain mechanisms should be put in place rather than banning countries from participation, e.g., not allowing countries in conflict with each other to play against each other etc. He expresses surprise that FIDE does not have a standing procedure for dealing with such situations on an ad hoc basis.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados also expresses concern that one of our biggest federations was not able to participate in the Olympiad because of some bigger issues. He also recalls an issue during the 2016 Olympiad in Baku. Mr. Herbert suggests that in the future FIDE should try and have all members play with the use of modern technology. He opines that the institute of a reverse delegate is a tool which should be used very infrequently.

Mr. Dvorkovich says that about the hybrid format and the use of newest technologies will be in our discussions for possible use but to date it has been decided to use a traditional format.

Mr. Bharat Singh from India explains the situation in respect of the Pakistan's participation in the Olympiad and the Congress. He confirms that both Federations are in excellent relations and the pulling out was done by the country authorities and there is no fault of the Chennai Organising Committee.

Mr. Tolbaev from Kyrgyzstan refers to his son's question why there is no Russian team. He expressed his support to Mr. Dvorkovich's statement.

Mr. Dvorkovich agrees that unity is above but in some cases the recommendations from the IOC should be followed. He also once again expresses thanks to the All-India Chess Federation, Mr. Kapoor and Mr. Singh for all they have done.

Mr. Dvorkovich opines that for the future events FIDE should make sure that the winning bid has a provision regarding issuing visa in a facilitated manner, in due course and without any restrictions for anyone.

#### **5.4 Other matters**

Mr. Dvorkovich announces his decision given the fact that the new FIDE Council is smaller and there is quite a number of distinguished FIDE people serving FIDE for a long period of time, he has resolved with the support of the Council to form a FIDE Advisory Board who will participate and liaise with National Federations in the preparations of important FIDE decisions. It is not part of the Charter and will not have any formal legal authority. If needed, it can be incorporated in Charter during the next General Assembly. He invites to this Board Chairmen and Presidents of the big Affiliated Organisations, as well as former Council members who are not in the Council in the next term. He hopes that most of the people will accept. The regulations will be published in the next days.

The General Assembly gave a round of applause to the Minister of Education of the Republic of Georgia H.E. M. Chkhenkeli who has taken a decision to introduce chess into the schools' curriculums an obligatory subject starting from the age of six years. He presents a short welcome address.

Mr. Viswanathan presents Mr. Chkhenkeli a special award. Mr. Dvorkovich thanks the Minister as Georgia who sets an example to those countries where chess is not yet a subject in schools.

Mr. Dvorkovich also presents Mr. Kapoor, President of the All-India Chess Federation and Mr. Bharat Singh, Secretary of the All-India Chess Federation with tokens of appreciation.

### **Section 6- Administrative matters**

#### **6.1 Changes in the FIDE Handbook**

##### **6.1.1 Laws of Chess**

The General Assembly is invited to approve the changes in the Laws of Chess.

**The General Assembly approved editorial/minor/technical changes in the Laws of Chess.**

##### **6.1.2 The English Chess Federation's proposals**

Mr. Pein from English presents the proposals, the proposals were initially supported by himself and GM N. Short who is not present in Chennai, therefore the English Chess Federation has withdrawn its proposal in respect of the proposed change in the FIDE Charter regarding Article 17.6. He says that the purpose is very simple as it is making it easier to join. He further says that he has had discussions with the FIDE Legal Advisor A. Martynov and if passed, the resolution will allow two or three potential new members to join. It will also make it easier for future Federations willing to join FIDE.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados expresses his support to this proposal. He also reminds that before the new Charter, this was an actual membership criterion. He says there are still other IOC members in the Caribbean which are not affiliated to FIDE. He cannot see how FIDE can be affiliated to the IOC and discriminate the IOC members. He calls this a necessary correction.

Mr. Skehan from the Papua New Guinea supports this proposal and says it is similar to their proposal which is the next point in the Agenda.

Mr. Wilkinson informs the General Assembly that at the Constitutional Commission the members have no difficulty with this motion.

Ms. Paridar from Iran comments that their Federation is of the view that each Federation member of FIDE should be recognised by the NOC, and if we want to make sure new members follow, we must insist that the existing members also become first recognised by their NOCs.

Mr. Makropoulos from Greece concurs with Mr. Herbert and Mr. Pein and gives some historic insight on the situation regarding the membership in FIDE since 40 years ago. He opines that the way FIDE recognises its Federations then later might backfire if there is an internal conflict inside the Federation if two bodies appear, one being recognised by the Ministry and the UN and the other – by the IOC. He speaks in favour of the IOC having the priority for FIDE.

Mr. Dvorkovich agrees that FIDE has to find a right way how to formulate it and he proposes that the Constitutional Commission prepares a proposal for the FIDE Council.

With a qualified majority of 177 for, 2 against and 1 abstention, the General Assembly accepts the modification of article 9.4 of the FIDE Charter, as suggested by the English Chess Federation.

**The General Assembly approved the proposal of the English Chess Federation in respect of the proposed change in the FIDE Charter regarding Article 9.4.**

### **6.1.3 The Papua New Guinea Chess Federation's proposals**

Mr. Skehan presents the proposal and reasons behind the motions. He also introduces Mr. Sewa Fumey, elected as FIDE General Secretary in 2018 who subsequently resigned on policy differences and who was one of the presidential candidates but failing to provide any European Federation to support him. He explains that the motion in 6.1.3a is meant to correct the FIDE Council's last year decision to give a right to the Isle of Man to participate in the events under its own flag without giving them voting rights. He also refers to the opinion of the FIDE Constitutional Commission on this proposal as a "misreading" as it does not call for full rights for new Associate members.

Mr. Dvorkovich reiterates that this proposal could lead to the fact that some FIDE members would cease being members and he personally does not support this as each member of the FIDE family is important and he will protect each member. In the FIDE Council meeting Mr. Rivello made it clear that the Commission does not support this proposal.

Mr. Wilkinson representing the Constitutional Commission informs that the Constitutional Commission considered these matters carefully and its decision is included in the report dated 10<sup>th</sup> July. It is said that the Commission does not support the proposal considering its regard to the IOC rules and the wording of the proposal.

Mr. Van Hoolandt from Monaco comments that following the discussion of this proposal by the Monaco Chess Federation and the Small Nations Association, it is clear that FIDE is about uniting and not excluding Federations.

Ms. Paridar from Iran comments that she is not against having new members on board, but if those Federations which are the IOC members should decide about the IOC subjects.

Mr Dvorkovich remarks that the IOC rules and regulations have various levels and some are strictly followed by all Federations, members of the IOC and recognised Sports Federations, like the anti-doping regulations and Code, but the membership criteria allow more liberties for the recognised Federations. The IOC also have recommendations which either should be followed or followed with reservations.

Mr. Skehan draws the attention of the delegates to the difference between the motion in 6.1.3a. and 6.1.3b. which proposes to take voting rights from 24 existing Federations. He stresses that the proposal in 6. He adds that the Constitutional Commission had no objection to submitting these proposals to the FIDE Council or the General Assembly.

Mr. Dvorkovich confirms that the FIDE Council does not recommend to the General Assembly to approve the proposal in 6.3.1a. As for the second proposal, it is about applying a just approved rule. We cannot wish well to some Federations and at the same time exclude them from our family. He underlines that he personally and the FIDE Council is strongly against this proposal to exclude some National Federations, even if the Constitutional Commission finds it ok to be included into the Agenda.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados comments that it is not possible to retroactively exclude Federations on the basis of a newly accepted rule. IOC and FIDE have been created when some countries did not exist and therefore the rules for entry have been amended to the existing format. He adds that he does not think the Charter has foreseen anything for such situations as with the Isle of Man. There are some territories in the Caribbean which are in the same situation and some more study is required. We should find a way to rightfully include such territories. He cautions that it can open a Pandora box and we may not like this.

Mr. Pein from England thanks Mr. Dvorkovich for decisive rejection of the proposal to exclude several FIDE members. He repeats that the IOC does not retroactively exclude members. He also suggests that should these proposals be rejected now, hopefully they will not resurface again next year, as last year something similar has already been rejected coming from the same Federation, Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Boxall from Jersey informs that they are one of the potentially affected Federations if these proposals would be approved. He further comments that the Papua New Guinea mentioned that the Constitutional Commission did not object to their proposal regarding the deletion of the word “new” in Article 9.4. He further quotes the next report of the Constitutional Commission dated 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 on the same issues where the Commission advises the FIDE Council and the General Assembly not to approve the proposal as it might create misunderstandings.

**The General Assembly approved to reject the proposals of the Papua New Guinea Chess Federation in respect of the proposed changes in the FIDE Charter, regarding Associate Member Federations and Membership.**

## **6.2 Constitutional Commission's report**

## **The General Assembly approved the Constitutional Commission's report.**

### **Section 7- FIDE Calendar**

#### **7.1 FIDE Chess Olympiad 2026**

Following the bidding procedure which ended on May 31st 2022, the following valid bids have been received:

- Tashkent, Uzbekistan

The President of the Uzbekistan Chess Federation, Director of the Youth Affairs Agency of Uzbekistan, Mr A. Sadullayev welcomes the General Assembly delegates, introduces rich history, infrastructure and chess resources of the country. He invites everyone to Uzbekistan.

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks Mr. Sadullayev for the presentation and a delicious plov party.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados asks what major international air hubs are connected with Uzbekistan and what is the plan about hotels.

Mr. Sadullayev responds that the main hubs are Istanbul and Dubai, and Tashkent and Samarkand have direct flights with many countries, including the USA and many European countries. He assures that by 2026 the destinations number will increase as the country is developing its tourism and political and economic situation is stable. Regarding accommodation, the choice is up to FIDE: Tashkent or Samarkand.

Mr. Dvorkovich comments that during his recent visits to Uzbekistan he was amazed by conditions created for conferences and forums there. He confirms that the FIDE inspection shall visit both proposed venues following the approval of the General Assembly and will most likely find all answers to the questions and then will make a suggestion for a better venue.

Mr. Kouatly comments that for him as a history aficionado, it would be great if the venue is Samarkand, to go there and see the historic monuments of the golden period which would give an incredible touch.

Mr. Bruce from St. Vincent and Grenadines asks what the steps will be for those countries and Federations that do not have yet diplomatic relations with Uzbekistan, especially the Caribbean.

Mr. Dvorkovich responds that the letter of guarantee stipulates solving of such issues and hopefully this will mean an e-visa or visa upon arrival.

Mr. Sadullayev concurred and said that the Government letter is a guarantee and is about the reputation of the country and everybody is prepared to create comfortable and convenient solutions for as many countries to come to the Chess Olympiad 2026.

Mr. Sadullayev adds that the dates for the event should also be considered, not to have an event during hot seasons.

Mr. Adeyemi from Nigeria inquires what solutions will be proposed to those countries whose itineraries make them arrive or depart earlier or later the official arrival/departure dates.



Mr. Sadullayev responds that the Organisers will be working in a close cooperation with the FIDE management but generally the Government of the country is very eager to have this event and will for sure facilitate the issues.

Mr. Tolbaev from Kyrgyzstan assures the delegates that based on his personal experience, if you travel to Uzbekistan for an event, you immediately become a VIP guest and the hospitality is amazing, especially when the event is under the personal patronage of the President of the country.

Mr. Wijesuriya concurs and says he cherishes very warm memories of his travels to Uzbekistan and Mr. Turdialiev's hospitality.

Ms. Sorokina from Australia thanks Uzbekistan for a great presentation. She comments that as the one with the experience of preparing an Olympiad bid, it is advisable to consider no visa entry to the country which will be highly appreciated. She also cherishes great experiences about hospitality and safety in this country and opines that it is important that after the Olympiad in Europe in 2024 it is important to organise one in Asia.

### **The General Assembly awarded the organization of the Chess Olympiad 2026 to the city of Tashkent, Uzbekistan.**

Mr. Sadullayev expresses his gratitude for the unanimous support and assures that the President of the country and its government will create all conditions for the players, officials, delegates and all who will come to Uzbekistan and have unforgettable experiences.

Mr. Dvorkovich expresses his personal gratitude to Mr. Turdialiev for his work for many years.

### **7.2 FIDE Major tournaments 2022/2023**

Mr. Dvorkovich informs that there are several tournaments to be organised: Women Candidates matches, with the first part held in Monaco. The venue for the 2<sup>nd</sup> group shall be identified. There are 4 locations for the Women's Grand-Prix events 2022-2023, and this year we hope to have the World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship most likely in Abu Dhabi.

Regarding 2023, there will be also Grand-Prix events, World Cup for which there was an oral proposal from the South Korea, but no official bid has been received. FIDE will also organise the Grand Swiss tournament at the Isle of Man, both for men and women and again, hopes to have the World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championships at the end of the year. There will also be a Women's World Championship match after the end of the Candidates' events.

Mr. Dvorkovich adds that the preparations for the next World Chess Championship match have also started, and possible locations are being discussed with potential interested parties.

### **7.3 FIDE Chess Olympiad 2024 presentation**

Mr. Dvorkovich informs that the Organising Committee has been formed and we hope that it will be another success story. He wishes that all the Continents will be in a position to organise Chess Olympiads in the future.

Mr. Szabo from Hungary presents the Budapest short information and invites everyone to Budapest. He promises that the Organising Committee will be working with FIDE and continental associations in close cooperation.

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks Ms. Szabo for his presentation.

## **Section 8- Online Chess**

### **8.1 Online tournament projects**

Mr. Dvorkovich informs of the major online events and projects where FIDE is participating or is going to participate, including Virtual Olympics where FIDE is very close to sign an agreement with the IOC regarding chess participation.

## **Section 9- Continental Associations**

### **9.1 Report of Continental Association for Europe.**

Mr. Azmaiparashvili presents the ECU report. He informs the delegates about successful elections of his tickets to a new term, with 44 votes in favour and 2 against, and 3 invalid votes from 49 participating countries. The ECU General Assembly was attended by the FIDE President, Deputy President and other officials. He adds that it was good that the Belarus Chess Federation attended the ECU Assembly, and there were negotiations between the ECU and them regarding existing sanctions. The motion to lift all sanctions against Belarus and Russian Chess Federations was voted in the ECU Assembly where the majority of Federations voted in favour of the previous decisions to keep all sanctions against these two Federations.

Mr. Dvorkovich congratulates Mr. Azmaiparashvili on his re-election as the ECU President.

### **9.2 Report of Continental Association for Americas.**

### **9.3 Report of Continental Association for Asia.**

### **9.4 Report of Continental Association for Africa.**

Mr. Ncube presents his report and informs the General Assembly that on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August Ms. Tshepiso Lopang has been elected as the first female Continental President, having received a massive support within the continent. He expresses confidence that the team and continent are united and there will be a very positive term ahead. He congratulates Ms. Lopang and her team.

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks Mr. Ncube for his work and contribution and also congratulates Ms. Lopang for her election as the ACC President.

**The General Assembly noted Continental Reports and wished good health and success to Mr. Jorge Vega and Sheikh Sultan bin Khalifa al-Nehyan.**

## **Section 10- Miscellaneous**

### **10.1 Missing President 1939-1946**

Mr. Dvorkovich informs that the Historic Committee made an investigation on that. The FIDE Council resolved to publish all the documents and see this subject of interest in chess and historic communities but not to take an official decision until this discussion is over.

**The General Assembly approved to task the FIDE Council to finalize the issue in respect of the missing FIDE President Mr. Augusto Muro (ARG) for a period 1939-1946.**

## **10.2 Letter from German Chess Federation**

Mr. Krause from Germany addresses the General Assembly and asks to make an exception for Ms. Paehtz and support the motion of the German Chess Federation. He gives a short summary of her achievements as the best German female chess player. Her GM title application has created a great momentum in Germany, but it was rejected by the FIDE Qualification Commission. It is a very difficult situation for Ms. Paehtz.

Mr. Dvorkovich adds that the reason for rejection was that one of the norms was not correct as there were not enough titled opponents, and the mistake was made by the pairing officer of the tournament when he made a report and by the Chief Arbiter of the event who signed the report and sent it without proper checking. Then Ms. Paehtz asked another IA category A arbiter unofficially, who also confirmed this norm, but QC rejected the title. From the psychological and moral perspective, a player should not be responsible for the mistakes of the officials, but strictly according to the rules, the Qualification Commission is right.

Ms. Sorokina from Australia comments that on the one hand, she is an arbiter category A and knows that all are human, and on the other hand, she is a player and realises how difficult it is to make such norms. FIDE confirms this information and posted this application and some officials confirmed this application in correspondence which makes it official. She calls on the delegates to make an exception for Ms. Paehtz.

Mr. Kouatly supports the German President's proposal and Ms. Sorokina. He says Ms. Paehtz is a fighter, and it is not her personal mistake and requests the delegates to understand the issue from a human point of view.

Mr. Dvorkovich says this is a good lesson for FIDE that norms for titles should be checked within a reasonable period of time, to be sure that the norms are valid.

Mr. Jankovic from Croatia supports the case of Ms. Paehtz adding that this is the year of Woman in Chess and we have to agree to the proposal of the German Chess Federation.

Mr. Esau from South Africa comments that he understands the sentiments. They have had a similar case in the Continental Championship and the case was rejected.

Mr. Dvorkovich says he feels for the players who should not be responsible for the mistakes of arbiters or other tournament officials. He says there is a need for a systemic approach. Hopefully there will not be many cases like that.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados comments that the South African case was at length discussed at the meeting of the Qualification Commission in Chennai which was not well-attended. He supports Mr. Dvorkovich's proposal as a fair, saying that a player should not suffer from mistakes of others. He also proposes that FIDE moves away from paper-based norms as the rules can be automated and registered. He requests that the Council moves in this direction.

Mr. Dvorkovich supports this proposal and says this will be a necessary step which has already been touched at the meeting of the Qualification Commission in Prague.

Mr. Sani from Nigeria proposes that all documentation regarding such cases should be made public for the delegates.

**The General Assembly approved to revert the matter in respect of a GM title for Ms. E. Paecht (GER) to the FIDE Council to seek a systemic solution allowing to resolve such cases.**

### **10.3 FIDE Awards**

**The General Assembly approved the title of Honorary members to Messrs. S. Bouaziz (TUN), J. Vega (GUA), V. Hort (GER), A. Tolentino (PHI), K. Jungwirth (AUT).**

### **10.4 Other matters**

Mr. Khodarkovsky makes a proposal to move the issue of non-participation of Russia and Belarus teams to the authority of the Council and the Council will appoint a competent working group that will investigate and collect all information on the documents on positions and decisions of the IOC and other major sports organisations and the Council at its next meeting will discuss this and consider this matter on the grounds of research and investigation of this working group.

Mr. Dvorkovich says he personally has an internal conflict of interest and will not actively participate in the discussion. He will otherwise follow the decision.

Mr. Lputian from Armenia says he plays chess all his life and organises FIDE events. His idea was that FIDE is to help chess players and develop chess. He opines that restrictions of any chess players are not helping FIDE. FIDE should only engage itself in helping chess and developing chess. FIDE should defend chess players and there should be no restrictions, we should improve the world throughout chess. He says FIDE is one family and we should do our best to stay out of politics. We should be friends and work together. We should only think about chess players and chess development.

Mr. Tolbaev from Kyrgyzstan suggests that the General Assembly should express its opinion which might help the FIDE Council in its further dealings with the IOC.

Mr. Pein from England supports the proposal to put this matter in the hands of the FIDE Council. He disagrees that it is constitutional that the matter is put for a vote as it has not been announced in advance. He requests the working group to be mindful of the IOC declaration of February 28, 2022, which should be aligned to as closely as possible.

Mr. Herbert from Barbados supports Mr. Pein and also replies to Mr. Lputian that this was the argument FIDE used when there was an issue about the South Africa and the right thing was done then and he is confident that the FIDE Council will do the right thing now as well.

Mr. Dvorkovich comments that the comments from the floor show the picture and that the FIDE office will prepare the Minutes of this part of discussion right away and then the working group will start working.

**The General Assembly approved to mandate the FIDE Council to further explore and decide on the matter of non-admission of the Russian and Belarusian teams to FIDE events.**

**Closure**

Mr. Abundo says there is a tie in the Oceania Zone 2.3. 3-3 and one of the solutions will be another vote to break this tie. If there is another tie, the Continent will be asked to break it.

Mr. Dvorkovich thanks all the General Assembly for the active participation in the FIDE Congress and General Assembly and we are one family. He thanks the FIDE Council members while the new Council will take over.