

**FINAL REPORT*****Regarding the Bulgarian Chess Federation Issue Concerned*****Directed to:** FIDE Council

**From:** Erald Dervishi  
*ECU representative in accordance with February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, FIDE Council Decision*

Daniel Florea  
*FIDE Special Envoy in accordance with February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, FIDE Council Decision*

**Object:** Final Report regarding the *Bulgarian Chess Federation Issue Concerned*

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Date: October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023**Dear sirs,**

Referring, the situation concerned the Bulgarian Chess Federation, toward a plausible long-lasting solution, below you will find e detailed and final report on the last developments:

**I. On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023,** FIDE Council decided: “1. To nominate a “FIDE special envoy” authorized by FIDE to contact and liaise with all relevant stakeholders, to assume information and deliver a report about the current legal and factual situation in Bulgaria; 2. To assign Mr. Daniel Florea, a Member of the FIDE Constitutional Commission, as “FIDE Special Envoy”. 3. To instruct Mr. Daniel Florea to prepare the first report with evaluation of the current situation not later than March 10, 2023. 4. Following the suggestion of the European Chess Union (ECU), to invite Mr. E. Dervishi, the ECU CEO, as the ECU representative to jointly work with Mr. Florea on the matter and contribute to the reporting.”

**II. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023,** Following, different consultations, meetings, communications and share of opinions with each and almost all the main Bulgarian chess stakeholders, Mr. Erald Dervishi - *ECU representative* and Mr. Daniel Florea - *FIDE Special Envoy* prepared and sent to the FIDE Council for its approval, the Common and Agreed Positions / Conclusions regarding the Bulgarian Chess Federation Issue Concerned, and proposals toward a sustainable, final and long-lasting solution;

**III. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023,** FIDE Council decided: “CM1-2023/45 - To note the report of FIDE and ECU representatives regarding the situation with the Bulgarian Chess Federation and support their suggested way forward. To ask for the progress report and Constitutional Commission’s advisory opinion regarding the Bulgarian chess before the next meeting of the Council.

**IV. On June 16-17, 2023,** Mr. Erald Dervishi - *ECU representative* and Mr. Daniel Florea - *FIDE Special Envoy* had a visit trip in Sofia, where we had the pleasure to get separate Meeting/s with all the main Bulgarian chess community and stakeholders, and a round table of all of them – June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, including a separate meeting with the new Bulgarian Minister of Sport – June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023;

V. **On June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Round Table** of the Bulgarian Chess Federations and other stakeholders present **decided<sup>1</sup> as follow:**

1. Creation of a Provisional Committee, until the new elections of the Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team;
2. The Provisional Committee, will be composed in an odd number of 7 members as below:
  - ✓ Mr. Daniel Florea, FIDE Special Envoy
  - ✓ Mr. Erald Dervishi, ECU Representative
  - ✓ Mr. Ruslan Toshev, as a representative of Bulgarian Chess Federation 1928
  - ✓ Mr. Georgi Gradev, as a representative of Bulgarian Chess Federation 1964
  - ✓ Mr. Kiril Georgiev, as a representative of Chess Federation Bulgaria
  - ✓ Mr. Atanas Kurtenkov, as a representative of Association Bulgarian Chess Federation
  - ✓ Free Spot (whenever they will decide to join the process), as a representative of Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022<sup>2</sup>;
3. The main duties of this Provisional Committee will be to:
  - a) Officially and temporary represent the Bulgarian chess community in its relationships with FIDE and ECU, and to temporary exercise the ordinary administrative duties of Bulgarian Chess Federation, until the new elections of the Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team;
  - b) Duly implement the agreement reached, according to FIDE Council Decision CM1-2023/45, April, 4<sup>th</sup> 2023;
  - c) Take all the necessary measures regarding the organization of new joint elections;
4. The new joint elections will be organized strictly in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation framework, and it will be all accepted and fair elections of the new joint Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team, in accordance with FIDE Council Decision CM1-2023/45, April, 4<sup>th</sup> 2023.
5. All the Bulgarian active Members (Clubs, main Chess Players and main Chess Stakeholders) will have the right and will be involved in this process;
6. The new joint elections will be organized and take place **no later than the end of September 2023.**

VI. **On June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023,** The Provisional Committee of the Bulgarian Chess Federation held the first Zoom Meeting, whereas among other things, unanimously decided to hold joint elections for a new President and Executive Committee members of the Bulgarian Chess Federation **on September 24, 2023 (Sunday) in Sofia, Bulgaria,** and the Bulgarian chess community will be informed about the date of the elections as soon as possible.

VII. **On June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023,** FIDE Council decided:

1. To create a Provisional Committee until the new elections of the Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team.
2. The Provisional Committee to be composed in an odd number of 7 members, led by FIDE Special Envoy and ECU representative in accordance with FIDE Council Decision dated February 21st, 2023 and with 1 (one) representative of each of the main Bulgarian active chess federations.
3. The main duties of this Provisional Committee will be to:

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<sup>1</sup> Except the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022 - **The firm position of the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022<sup>1</sup>** was as below: i. The granting of the License to the Bulgarian Chess federation 2022, by the Ministry of Sports in November 2022, was product of a lawfully process; ii. The situation on Bulgarian chess is normal, the chess activities in Bulgaria were visibly improved in the last months, and most of the annual nation chess calendar was duly realized; iii. Most of the active chess clubs operating in Bulgaria are member of the Bulgarian Chess federation 2022<sup>1</sup>; iv. The Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022 is open to collaborate with all the other chess federations and stakeholders, and who wants, they are welcome to join the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022, which is the already licensed one by the Ministry of Sports; v. They deserve to be part as a member of the International Chess Organizations – FIDE and ECU; vi. Therefore, they don't see any reason why they should be part of the proposed new joint elections process.

<sup>2</sup> A representative of the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022 will have the right to join the Provisional Committee at any time (until the new joint election will be held), and the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022 and its member clubs will have the right to join at any time the new joint election process

- a) Officially and temporarily represent the Bulgarian chess community in its relationships with FIDE and ECU, and to temporarily exercise the ordinary administrative duties of Bulgarian Chess Federation, until the new elections of the Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team;
  - b) Duly implement the eventual agreement reached, according to FIDE Council Decision CM1-2023/45, April, 4th 2023;
  - c) Take all the necessary measures regarding the organization of new elections.
4. The new joint elections should be organized strictly in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation framework, and it should be all accepted as fair elections of the new Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team, in accordance with FIDE Council Decision CM1-2023/45, April, 4th 2023.
  5. All the Bulgarian active Members (Clubs, main Chess Players and main Chess Stakeholders) should be involved in this process;
  6. The new joint elections should be organized and take place no later than the end of September 2023.
  7. To note all decisions of the Provisional Committee approved at Committee's meeting dated June 21, 2023.

**VIII. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023<sup>3</sup>; July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023<sup>4</sup>; July 11<sup>th</sup> 2023<sup>5</sup>; July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023; July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023; August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023; August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023<sup>6</sup>; September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023<sup>7</sup>**; The Provisional Committee of the Bulgarian Chess Federation held other nine Zoom Meetings, whereas took different decisions regarding the organization of the new joint elections that were organized strictly in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation framework, and were all accepted (*at least from a dominant majority*) and fair elections of the new joint Bulgarian Chess Federation Leading Team, in accordance with FIDE Council Decision CM1-2023/45, April, 4<sup>th</sup> 2023

**IX. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023**, the joint elections for the new leading team of the Bulgarian Chess Federation (*for the President and the Executive Board Member*) were held in Sofia.

**On the electoral General Assembly of Bulgarian Chess Federation 64, participated 47 clubs out of 52 with the voting rights.**

The elections were technically very well organized and conducted fully in accordance with the Bulgarian laws and the Statute of BCF 64. The participation of the clubs having voting rights was very high, and the entire process took place in a very positive, moderate and constructive atmosphere.

**Mr. Milen Atanasov Vasilev** was the only candidate eligible for the position of the **President of the Bulgarian Chess Federation 64**.

**His ticket was composed of the following 4 candidates:**

1. Mr. Bogomil Ivanov Petkov;
2. Mr. Borislav Georgiev Atsev;

<sup>3</sup> On the Provisional Committee Meeting of July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, it was decided that the joint elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 will be formally organized under the legal umbrella of the Bulgarian Chess Federation 64.

<sup>4</sup> On the Provisional Committee Meeting of July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an initial and potential full list of Bulgarian Active Clubs (98 clubs) was adopted by the Committee members, and the Committee Secretariat started immediately notifying each of them regarding their right to actively participate on the electoral process. Here we would like to precise and underline that after a carefully verification held by the provisional Committee, **it resulted that the real list of active clubs in Bulgaria is no more than 72 Clubs**.

<sup>5</sup> On this Meeting the "Regulations on Assembly and Elections (24<sup>th</sup> September, 2023) in the Bulgarian Chess Federation" was adopted as well.

<sup>6</sup> On the Provisional Committee Meeting of August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, **the full list of 52 clubs having the right to participate in the elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023**, was approved and published.

<sup>7</sup> On the Provisional Committee Meeting of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the list of candidates (for President and Executive Board Member) eligible to stand elections on the Elective Assembly of the Bulgarian Chess Federation 64 on September 24, 2023, was approved in accordance with Article 22.7 of the Regulations on Assembly and Elections.

3. Mr. Metodi Kirilov Stoynev;
4. Mr. Kaloyan Mateev Mateev.

**Mr. Milen Atanasov Vasilev and his ticket (main management team) were unanimously voted and elected by all the members present on the General Assembly.**

Also, elections took place for the **remaining 6 positions of the Executive Board Members**. There were **16 eligible candidates**, as follow:

1. Rosen Petrov Ilchev;
2. Petar Georgiev Arnaudov;
3. Miroslav Nikolaev Mitev;
4. Simeon Asenov Stoichkov;
5. Minko Kostadinov Shishkov;
6. Georgi Lozanov Chernev;
7. Nikolay Nikolov;
8. Dimitar Dochev;
9. Blagovest Vakrilov;
10. Stefan Tomislavov;
11. Todor Todorov;
12. Milen Atanasov Vasilev;
13. Bogomil Ivanov Petkov;
14. Borislav Georgiev Atsev;
15. Metodi Kirilov Stoynev;
16. Kaloyan Mateev Mateev.

The General Assembly elected the **following 6 Executive Board Members**:

1. Rosen Petrov Ilchev;
2. Petar Georgiev Arnaudov;
3. Miroslav Nikolaev Mitev;
4. Simeon Asenov Stoichkov;
5. Minko Kostadinov Shishkov;
6. Georgi Lozanov Chernev;

Immediately after the conclusion of the voting process and the election of the new elected team, the Executive Board of Bulgarian Chess Federation 64 had a very short meeting, whereas decided unanimously **to elect Mrs. Antoaneta Stefanova as the Honorary President of BCF 64, and as the Delegate to FIDE and ECU.**

**X.** After the conclusions of the electoral General Assembly, the legal representative of Bulgarian Chess Federation 64 presented the formal legal request and all the alleged and necessary legal documents to the Bulgarian National Agency of Registration of Non Profit Organization, aiming the registration of the changes in the leading team.

**XI.** Immediately after the conclusion of the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 elections, all the other Bulgarian Chess Federations involved in this process, sent to FIDE a clear letter of support for the new elected leading team.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Bulgarian Chess Federation 1928 (actual member of FIDE), represented by its President Mr. Ruslan Toshev sent the Letter on 27.09.2023;  
Chess Federation Bulgaria, represented by its Chair of Management Board Mr. Simeon Stoichkov sent the Letter on 27.09.2023;*

**XII.** While the entire process was conducted in a very proper way and fully in accordance with the Bulgarian law and the Statute of the BCF 64, despite the fact that during the electoral process there was not a single complain or objection, one of the clubs (*the only club with very tight connection with the Bulgarian Chess federation 2022 leading team*<sup>9</sup>) participating in the electoral General Assembly, presented a written official complaint toward the Bulgarian National Agency of Registration of Non Profit Organization, therefore blocking the registration of the new elected team in the National Register.

Based on Bulgarian legislation, independently of the substance matter of the complain, and its merit, the registration process remain suspended until the final decision. This decision making process requires at least several months.

**XIII.** Because of these procedural impediments, the new elected Bulgarian Chess Federation leading team decided to register a new legal entity that is totally independent and impartial from all the other chess federations in Bulgaria.

This new legal entity was duly and legally registered in the Bulgarian National Register of Non Profit Organization **on 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023.**

**The name of the new legal entity is “Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation”.**

**The management team of the Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation is exactly the same as the one elected by the Bulgarian Chess Federation 64.**

**All the 47 clubs participating in the elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, plus 6 new clubs are already member of the new legal entity “Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation”.**

**XIV. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the new legal entity “Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation” presented its application for the membership in FIDE.**

**XV. The Bulgarian Minister / Ministry of Sport<sup>10</sup> has been duly and officially informed in details by the Provisional Committee of the Bulgarian Chess Federation regarding all the above mention decisions, developments and actions taken.**

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### **Conclusions**

The process initiated by FIDE in collaboration with ECU on **February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**, and the roadmap defined by the **FIDE Council Decision of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**, toward a suitable, all accepted (*at least by the dominant majority of Bulgarian clubs, stakeholders, and chess community*), and long-lasting solution, **has brought the desired results.**

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*Bulgarian Chess Federation, represented by its President Mr. Athanas Kurtenkov sent the Letter on 26.09.2023;*

<sup>9</sup> It look very likely, that the only reason this club become member of Bulgarian Chess Federation 64, and participated in the elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, was to file the complain immediately after the elections with the purpose of blocking the registration of the new elected team in the Bulgarian National Agency of non profit organizations.

<sup>10</sup> On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Bulgarian Ministry of Sport publicly released a press declaration regarding some questions of a local media.

The elections of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023 have been fair, transparent, and democratic. The dominant majority of the Bulgarian clubs, stakeholders and chess community was present and active part of this electoral General Assembly.

The new elected President **Mr. Milen Atanasov Vasilev, the new elected honorary President Mrs. Antoaneta Stefanova**, and the new elected Executive Board Members of Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation are respected personalities among Bulgarian chess community, and they fully represent the dominant majority and unification of Bulgarian chess stakeholders and chess community interests. Not only the 47 clubs who's participated in the joint elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, but other new clubs join recently the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation in a very short period of time. Now there are 53 out of 70-72 Bulgarian real active clubs, which are members of the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation.

Seems that, many other clubs will join the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation, if FIDE and ECU will explicitly support and assist the new elected team.

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**The main and actual issues concerned - toward the full membership of Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation as a member of FIDE and ECU.**

1. Unfortunately, the Bulgarian Chess Federation 2022 and its President Mr. Vasil Antonov decided not to be part of the unification process initiated by FIDE in collaboration with the ECU, and therefore its member clubs (*around 22 clubs*) didn't participate in the Joint Elections of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

This federation still insists in its firm position, and continuously is attacking the whole process throughout official letters, statements, social media, etc. Moreover, there were many evidences, that this federation in a way or another was exercising pressure to its member clubs, not to be part of the process, and not to join the Elections of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

2. The Bulgarian Ministry of Sport until now, didn't took a clear and official position in regard of the already initiated process and the joint elections of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We still don't know if the Bulgarian Ministry of Sport officially will recognize this process and the Elections of 24<sup>th</sup>, of September, and therefore if will grant / issue the national license to the new elected team, and to the Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation in compliance with the Bulgarian legislation.

Officially (*and unofficially*), the Bulgarian Ministry of Sport representatives have somehow expressed their position (*in a reticent and contradictory way*), that the they cannot interfere and participate in this process, and therefore issue the license to new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation and new elected leading team, **until it will be a clear decision of International Chess organizations on this purpose.**

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**Considerations / Recommendations**

Dear Sirs,

Referring, to the above information on this report, having present that **the prominent role of FIDE and ECU is considered very important** by the main Bulgarian chess stakeholders, and its position very welcomed from the dominant majority of Bulgarian chess community...

**...with the support of FIDE Council, in order to succeed, we recommend You the following:**

1. **To openly support and recognize the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation and new elected leading team**, because they represent the dominant majority and unification of the Bulgarian chess stakeholders and community;
2. To officially and temporary transfer, from the Provisional Committee to the new **Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation and new elected leading team** the powers and rights to represent the Bulgarian chess community in its relationships with FIDE and ECU, and to temporary exercise the ordinary administrative duties of Bulgarian Chess Federation, until the FIDE General Assembly of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Therefore, the mandate given by the July, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023 FIDE Council Decision, to the Bulgarian Chess Provisional Committee might be considered successfully concluded;
3. **To continue the contacts and efforts with the Bulgarian Ministry of Sport - directly by the FIDE high representatives and/or throughout the "FIDE special envoy" Mr. Daniel Florea, and ECU representative Mr. E. Dervishi, – in order to encourage the Bulgarian Minister / Ministry of Sport to move and act in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation in the aim of issuing the license to the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation and new elected leading team, before the FIDE General Assembly of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**  
For this reason, an official and courtesy Letter of Congratulation / Recognition from FIDE President to the Bulgarian new elected President and new elected team seems to be considered more than necessary and welcomed;
4. **To explicitly support the full membership of the new Bulgarian Sports Chess Federation in FIDE (and ECU) in the FIDE General Assembly of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

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Attached to this Report, You will find:

**Annex 1** - FIDE Council decision of February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023;

**Annex 2** - Common and Agreed Positions / Conclusions of Mr. Erald Dervishi - ECU representative and Mr. Daniel Florea - FIDE Special Envoy, regarding the Bulgarian Chess Federation Issue Concerned;

**Annex 3** - FIDE Council decision: "CM1-2023/45, April, 4<sup>th</sup> 2023;

**Annex 4** – Agenda + Minutes of the Meetings, of June 16-17, 2023, visit trip in Sofia of Mr. Erald Dervishi - ECU representative and Mr. Daniel Florea - FIDE Special Envoy;

**Annex 5** – Letter of Bulgarian Chess Federation President Mr. Vasil Antonov "RE: Common Report issued by Mr. Erald Dervishi (ECU representative) and Mr. Daniel Florea (FIDE Special Envoy)", dated June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, directed to the FIDE President Mr. Arkady Dvorkovich;

**Annex 6** – Letter of FIDE Legal Director, Mr. Aleksandr MARTYNOV dated June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 "Response to Your Letter June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023", directed to Bulgarian Chess Federation President Mr. Vasil Antonov;

**Annex 7** – FIDE Council decision of June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023;

**Annex 8** – Regulations on Assembly and Elections 2023 (final);

**Annex 9** – Initial and potential full Bulgarian Clubs List;

**Annex 10** – Bulgarian Ministry of Sport Press Release - 4 July 2023.

**Annex 11** – Letter from the Minister of Youth and Sports to FIDE and ECU - August 2023.

**Annex 12** – Progress Report to FIDE Council - Erald Dervishi + Daniel Florea - Bulgaria Chess Situation - 28 July 2023.

**Annex 13** – List of Clubs approved to participate at the Electoral General Assembly of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Annex 14** – Minutes of Electoral General Assembly - 24 September 2023.

**Annex 15** – Letters of Support to FIDE by the Federations involved in the process – 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2023.

**Annex 16** – Congratulation Letter of Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili, President of ECU to the new elected President – 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2023.

**Annex 17** – Invitation Letter of Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili, President of ECU to the new elected team – 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.

**Annex 18** – Invitation Letter of Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili, President of ECU to the new elected team – 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.

**Annex 19** – *Minutes of Bulgarian Provisional Committee Meetings of: June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023; June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023; July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023; July 11<sup>th</sup> 2023; July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023; July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023; August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023; August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023; September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.*

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Thank you for your kind attention,

**FIDE Special Envoy**

**ECU REPRESENTATIVE**

**Daniel FLOREA**

**Erald DERVISHI**