

Minutes

Chess In Schools Commission

16 October 2011, 15:00-17:00

Chairman: Ali Nihat YAZICI (TUR)

Secretary: Kevin O' Connell (IRL)

Attendances:

Makropoulos Georgios FIDE , Alexander Kostyev (RUS), Uvencio Blanco (VEN), Herman Hamers (NED), Kaloumenos Michalis (GRE), Bill Hall (USA), Sitale Tshupo (BOT), Martha Fierro (ECU), Emellia Ellappen (RSA), Dina Chen (TRE), Ruth I Haring (USA), Sophia Rohde (USA), Borg Geoffrey (MLT), Theodoros Tsorbatzoglou (GRE), Russell Smith (TRI), Glek Igor (GER), Kuzmina Tatiana (RUS), Beatriz Marinello (USA).

Commission Chairman Ali Nihat Yazici opened the meeting by noting the important contributions made by past Chairmen Palladino and Blanco and thanking FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov for appointing him to the post.

The success of federations can be defined by numbers – members and income. This leads us to combine two objectives and two questions:

1. How to promote Chess in Schools to maximize numbers?
2. How to make the system generate money for the national federations?

Our answer has been to introduce the CIS100 projects, starting in Slovakia and Slovenia. We know that we will make mistakes in this process, but we will learn from our experience and next year we hope to add another ten or more project countries. After that, we look towards a global explosion.

We enormously appreciate the action of Kirsan Ilyumzhinov in Al Ain, when he took personal responsibility to finance the project.

Deputy President Makropoulos took the floor and spoke of the important investment that FIDE is making, committed to EUR 105,000 a year for three years, plus all the other essential costs of the web site, translations, management and so on, taking the total up to about EUR 250,000 a year. The objective, using the CIS100 model, is just to get back that investment so that it can then be recycled to other federations.

Mr Makropoulos continued with two important points:

1. Mikhail Gorbachev has agreed to be Patron of FIDE Chess in Schools. This is excellent news and is sure to open many doors.
2. The FIDE President has found a significant Russian sponsor and a contract is expected to be announced at the Executive Board. The sponsorship is for \$1,000,000 a year. A quarter of the sponsorship will be spent in Russia and the rest on Chess in Schools developments elsewhere. It is expected that we will be able to support about 30 federations with material and about 12 with CIS100 Projects.

The Deputy President concluded by stating that we had begun with small countries with little or no organized chess in schools, but now we can look to bigger federations.

The Commission Chairman thanked Mr Makropoulos for joining the meeting. He and the Commission Secretary then described the details of the CIS100 Projects and Student Membership. Mr Yazici mentioned that the Turkish federation will be funding (EUR 30,000) its own distribution of posters, prepared for the CIS100 project, to 100,000 schools throughout Turkey, in the expectation of getting 25,000 Student Members – a total income of EUR 250,000.

The joint proposal of the International School Chess Union, Turkish Chess Federation and our Commission was discussed. It needs elaboration, but the Commission was strongly in favour of it being accepted as a “FIDE School Chess Olympiad Festival” to commence at the 2012 Istanbul Olympiad.

The Commission Chairman described the importance of developing chess within higher education. We need chess scientists for the future. “Professor Doctor Grandmaster XXX” to head up academic departments devoted to chess. Making it evident that even if a player fails to attain the GM title, chess can be an academic career. The Russian State Social University, working with the Moscow Chess Federation, is developing a chess module for their Physical Culture and Sport degree (Annex 27d). The Chairman outlined the agreement between the Russian State Social University and Hacettepe University, Ankara. The first fruit of the exchange agreement will see three Turkish chess players go to Moscow to undertake a four year course for the Bachelor’s Degree of *Physical Culture and Sport (chess specialization)*, under a bursary from the Moscow institution (an initial first year language course being funded by the Turkish federation). This is a step on the way to making chess a true profession.

Mr Blanco spoke about the need to have titles for CIS teachers. The Commission Chairman indicated the need for a clear description and for further discussion with the Trainers’ Commission, perhaps leading to the DI title coming under the wing of CIS.

Mr Blanco also spoke to Annex 40 (requesting that FIDE should initiate the process before UNESCO, of official recognition of *Chess as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*). The Commission Chairman spoke in support and endorsement, but pointed out that UNESCO matters are for the President and those assisting him in approaches to UNESCO.

The Commission Chairman mentioned that FIDE had been asked why FIDE does not cooperate with the Kasparov Chess Foundation on chess in schools. The Chairman read out an email he had sent to Mr Kasparov, because Mr Kasparov had invited him to make a private business. The Chairman stated that this is not possible, since it would involve a conflict of interest. In his e-mail to Mr Kasparov, the Chairman invited Garry Kasparov to work under the FIDE umbrella. In answer to a question from the floor, the Chairman added that what the ECU President is doing with the Kasparov foundation is not transparent, it being under a foundation account. By contrast, FIDE, as a public institution must operate in a clear and transparent way. Therefore, although FIDE respects Mr Kasparov and his initiatives exploring chess in schools as a private business, the Chairman stressed that our job is public business, more like a charity.

The meeting concluded by approving the Chairman’s report (Annex 27) and the update (*CIS100 is born – it’s twins! – Annex 27a*). The Commission unanimously approved the request to the Executive Board formally to adopt FIDE Student Membership and Student Ratings, as previously supported and approved by the last two Presidential Boards.