



Report of the FIL General Secretary

August 1, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

First and foremost, I wanted to thank you once again for the honor you have entrusted in me as the General Secretary of the FIL. I have enjoyed working along side our new President Einars Fogelis. We have spent a lot of time together representing the FIL both virtually and in person since the time of our election last November. I am also very appreciative for the collaboration with our Executive Board and our Executive Director, Christoph Schweiger. Together, we have faced many tough decisions, and have steadfastly done what we believe to be in the best interest of the FIL.

This past season has been perhaps the most challenging in the history of our sport. Never has the sporting world been so disrupted as it has been during the Covid-19 Pandemic around the World. The sport was not alone during this difficult time as ALL sports were impaired. And the unfortunate fact is that we are still dealing with it as we enter the pre-Olympic season leading up to the Olympic Winter Games in Beijing, China.

As challenging as the upcoming season is, I am confident we are prepared. This past season, a detailed and comprehensive Hygiene protocol had to be developed from scratch. Last summer, when the Pandemic was ravaging the world, the Executive Board went to work along with our Executive Director and Senior Staff to develop a plan to institute a sweeping series of countermeasures against Covid-19 in order that we

could hold ALL of our World Cups and World Championships. I want to thank VP Thomas Schwab for generating our first draft of the Hygiene plan. This plan including having to make painful decisions, such as relocating World Cups from Korea and the United States, along with the World Championships from Canada, to tracks in Europe. This enabled the FIL to create a bubble environment to protect the athletes, coaches, officials, and other key personnel from the virus with regular testing continuously. To institute this plan, our Executive Director assumed the role of Hygiene Manager and stayed with the Luge Bubble the entire season, our Directors of Sport and Technology, Marie-Luise, and Christian worked tirelessly to set up and implement new protocols through out the season. Over 4000 covid tests were administered with less than 10 coming back positive. This is a tribute to the planning and the execution by the all the people that I have mentioned. In the end, all World Cups and the World Championships were held successfully.

We can now say that the season was a success and quite an achievement, especially under the circumstances, but it would not have happened without the complete cooperation and compliance with the plan, from ALL of you, the National Federations. It was with your essential support of this plan that it worked, and I thank you for that. I would also be remiss if I didn't thank you sponsors, TV partners, agencies and supporters for the unwavering support this last season and now turning toward this upcoming season.

As we now look to the future, the 2022 Beijing Olympic Winter Games are now in our sights now less than 5 months out, and importantly, we have now finally been able to schedule our International Training Weeks and a World Cup race this coming November. By all reports, the sliding center in Yanqing, China is spectacular and the Organizing Committee-BOCOG is well-prepared to host and execute the Games. We have had numerous virtual meetings with BOCOG and the IOC in preparation of these Games. We were able to send a delegation to include our Executive Director, Sports Director, Technical Director, TV Coordinator and other key figures for an on-site inspection and meetings with our BOCOG Counterparts to begin making final preparations for the training and actual competition for the 2022 Games.

In July, by an invitation from the IOC, President Fogelis and I traveled to the 2020 Tokyo Summer Games. We were there for 8 days, and it was an excellent opportunity to observe all the comprehensive countermeasures that were put in place by the Japanese Organizers and the IOC. I want to congratulate Tokyo 2020, the IOC, and our Summer IF counterparts for a successful and inspiring Games.

This coming important season has also required comprehensive planning due the on-going pandemic. Once again, the FIL has had to re-direct World Cups from North America and Asia to Europe. As you all know, the Fil has secured a Charter flight to get our Luge family in and out of China working closely with our BOCOG colleagues. Leading up to and through the Olympic Games in Beijing, the FIL will do everything we can to keep our Luge Family safe and a successful season, culminating with the Olympic competition in February of 2022. This also means continuing the close cooperation with our colleagues and friends at the IOC. They have been side by side with us throughout this pandemic and will continue as such through the Games.

This coming Olympic Season will undoubtedly require the tremendous focus and resources of the FIL. But we must also keep our eye on the future. President Fogelis has continued to press forward with our Strategic Plan-Slide 2026. Since the new strategic plan was approved last November thanks to all of you, we have started its implementation. The Executive Board has now approved working groups to begin implementing the Plan, many of you are involved with those working groups. Major themes such growing our footprint more globally, implementing a new media strategy, connecting with the general public, working with the IBSF to make our venue more sustainable, are some of the important tasks that are underway.

Earlier this year, at the IOC Session, the IOC voted overwhelmingly to implement Agenda 2020+5. I encourage all of you to familiarize your self with this initiative for the next 5 years, as the FIL will be working hard to achieve these important objectives. One of these objectives is now a requirement-that all sports must be gender equal by the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympic Winter Games. Thanks to all of you, the implementation of Women's Doubles is underway, and for the first time ever, women's

Doubles with race in the General Class this coming season. President Fogelis has commissioned a Working Group to prepare an application for the IOC for inclusion of Women's Doubles on the program for the 2026 OWG in Milan-Cortina.

In addition, for many years, the FIL has applied to the IOC to place Natural Track Luge on the Olympic Program. We must analyze the previous applications and determine why it has not been accepted on the Program and develop a fresh strategy and application going forward. To that end, President Fogelis has also commissioned a Working Group for that purpose.

Dear Colleagues, this season will have its challenges, but after witnessing the resiliency, determination, and teamwork within the FIL during this past season, I am optimistic that the FIL will have a successful season and Olympic Games coupled with planning for our future. We must stand together and work hard. Thank you all for your support!