

68th FIL Congress  
Großgmain, 20 November 2020

Dear friends, dear Congress delegates,

First of all, in this constantly changing world of COVID-19, I want to express the hope that you and your families are safe and in good health! At the end of the last season, we could not have imagined that in the coming weeks and months we would have to look for new solutions to keep the sport safe, athletes healthy and, among other things, to ensure preparation for the next season.

The new situation forces us to rearrange our priorities, moving towards the main goal - a strong sport and a strong federation in the Olympic movement!

- FIL and the Olympic Movement

Over the past year, we have been working on a number of main topics that are closely linked to the development of our sport and its position in the Olympic family.

The Olympic Games are a unifying link in the chain of 206 National Olympic Committees, national and international sports federations, where there is only one policy - sports policy.

In this context, FIL has been active over the past year in preparation for the next Olympic Games in Beijing 2022. We have actively participated in the meetings of the Coordinating Commission, addressing issues directly related to our federation and luge competitions in Beijing. Successful, and in consultative capacity, cooperation with the BOCOG, AIOWF and IOC, have already given its first results today - the first Pre-Homologation tests on the new track have been carried out together with IBSF. We are currently working to take the next steps towards the Olympic Games - Test event and training week, in which, according to FIL rules, all potential participants will be given the opportunity to try out the new Olympic track.

It is already clear today that the Yanqing Sliding Center is an important venue for luge and for sliding sport in general in the world and especially in Asia. We very much appreciate China's achievements in this area! We clearly see two important values - sustainability and legacy.

During the time together with the IOC and GAISF international federation (IF Forum), very significant topics such as athlete support and youth involvement in sport

were discussed and the reflection of it you will see further in our new FIL Strategy “Slide 2026” presentation. The world is changing fast. Generations, technologies and habits are changing, especially in the virtual environment! Our task is not only to introduce people to sport, but in this case, to bring the sport to the people.

- FIL and Good Governance

In recent years, one of the most important topics of a sports organization has been 'Good governance'. This section is integral to the operation of modern and contemporary sports organization. In collaboration with the IOC and our colleagues at AIOWF (Association of International Olympic Winter Sports Federations), FIL in 2020 worked on the completion of the third AIOWF IF governance questionnaire, where our colleagues in the FIL office, under guidance of Christoph Schweiger, made a great contribution, particular appreciation goes to Dr. Christian Krähe and to FIL Presidium Sepp Fendt and Harald Steyrer!

Overall, this document contains six chapters, Background, Transparency, Integrity, Democracy, Development, Control Mechanisms with 62 sub-themes, to which precise answers and a description of the situation in our federation, were prepared.

For the first time, FIL completed this document in 2016/2017, obtaining an assessment of 64 points. The second time in 2017/2018, 89 points were obtained. In 2019/2020, 124 points were obtained, which places our Federation in the B category. Naturally, our goal is to continue this progress in accordance with the IOC guidelines, improving the operations of our Federation in accordance with modern requirements. We are a service organization for our members in all areas - athletic, organizational, personal and financial!

By developing and adhering to the principles and model of good governance, we create our common image in the eyes of society. I very much appreciate the sports governance consultancy company “I Trust Sport”, in particular Jack Rowland's contribution to this topic.

An important and very extensive part of the daily work is related to maintaining close cooperation with colleagues from other winter IFs. Mutual cooperation, regular video conferences and daily communications are very valuable in the daily work of our Federation and I hope that our experience and contribution to colleagues is just as important!

FIL is one of the first winter IFs to sign a contract with ITA. Last year, we participated in the WADA World Conference in Katowice, which provided valuable information for our future activities.

Last season was rich with World Cup sports events with an outstanding final in Koenigssee. Exciting and top-tier World Championships in Sochi, Winter Youth Olympic Games in St. Moritz, with the participation of athletes from 22 nations, representing four continents. IOC delegation led by President Thomas Bach observed a successful women's doubles debut in the Youth Olympic circuit. This situation proved that things that seemed unreal a few years ago, by setting a clear goal and working purposefully can be fulfilled and can give positive emotions.

Of course, this aspect is very important in achieving gender equality and overall equality in our sport. This topic is currently relevant when working on the YOG 2024 PyeongChang program, also starting active cooperation with the organizers of the 2026 Olympic Games in Milan Cortina.

In this context, we are working together with the Organizing Committee and the IOC, which directly address two globally important topics, Sustainability and Legacy. FIL is also actively working on the position of Natural Track Luge and its integration into the Olympic programme.

Over the past year, we have paid increased attention to our athletes, their development opportunities and safety. Substantial work is currently being done through our FIL team, using the assistance provided by the FIL resources and the IOC Olympic Solidarity program. More detail on these matters will come later in the presentation of our strategy.

The main challenge this season is COVID-19 and ensuring sports under special conditions. Priority number 1 - safety and health of athletes and coaches. "The FIL Protection and Hygiene Protocol" has been developed within the FIL. The working group has done a tremendous job of fine-tuning the activities that will ensure safe training runs and competitions, which is important now, that we don't deprive athletes of their faith and motivation for the future!

I hope and wish us all - safe and strong health, the fulfilment of this and future seasons sports goals.

Since the last congress in Ljubljana, we all together have been devoting a lot of attention and work to the development of the FIL strategy plan "Slide 2026". I am extremely grateful to many of you, dear colleagues, for your selfless work and your

time in drafting this document. Special thanks today to FIL President Josef Fendt, with whom I have had 2 years to serve as Secretary General, and the opportunity to work and learn together since 1994.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all and the main thing I want to emphasize is - teamwork. As IOC President Thomas Bach often reminds - no one is perfect! We are all in the movement and honoring the Olympic values.

Sincerely yours,

Einars Fogelis

Secretary - General