

### Report by the President at the 66th FIL Congress 2018 in Bratislava, Slovakia

Ladies and Gentlemen, sports enthusiasts:

In reviewing the activities of the past year, I would primarily like to touch on the detailed reports in the FIL dossier from our Executive Board members, heads of committees, and experts, as well as a few other topics.

However, I would first like to again bring to mind our most recent, thoroughly enjoyable Congress in Constanta, Romania where we celebrated our 60th anniversary as the FIL. The high point of the last sports season was of course the Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Korea. All of us bore witness to highly successful luge competitions that were unsurpassable and yielded many unexpected results. Our athletes' representative and Executive Board member, Chris Mazdzer from the USA, won a silver medal, the first Olympic medal in men's singles for the USLA. With Alex Gough (bronze) and the Team Relay (silver), Canada won Olympic medals in luge for the first time. And the Austrian Olympic champion in the men's singles, David Gleirscher, qualified at the last moment for the Olympic Games in the national team. These are all stories that provide a narrative for the sport and give it life. More stories and all of the results can be found in our newest edition of the FIL magazine which is also available here at the Congress.

Our sports facility, the Alpensia Sliding Center, has developed into a very attractive track with the assistance and supervision of our track construction experts from both international federations, the FIL and IBSF. In an article in a major German newspaper that is increasingly taking the Olympic Games to task, we read: "The bobsleigh and luge track in PyeongChang with key positions that demanded the all of even top nations offered two highly exciting weeks in every competition and came out the secret champion of the Olympics." Such positive commentary is of course music to our ears.

Especially because we are eager to reuse our Olympic sports facilities, it is unfortunate and incomprehensible that the Korean government, or whoever is responsible, has not provided a legacy plan, even though the IOC and international federations have requested one for years, apparently to no avail. We are one of the few international sports associations that, since 1976, still uses nearly all of the Olympic artificial bobsleigh and luge tracks for competitions. Regretfully, there is no organization or association in Korea with which we can talk about future competitions on the Olympic track in PyeongChang. This is unacceptable and violates the spirit of the Olympics. It is understandable that this has been criticized by the public and media. However, I strongly reject the accusation that we, the international associations, are responsible for this situation. We were prepared to continue using the PyeongChang Sliding Center for competitions, especially since the next Olympic Winter games in 2022 will take place next door in China. However, the conditions must be right, and the track must be operated properly with trained technical personnel.

The Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang were thrilling and everyone responsible for them gave their best, yet we remain highly disappointed with regard to our failed efforts to reuse the track.

Nonetheless, there was more last season than just the Olympic Winter games; all the normal activities of our sport continued apace and were again highly successful overall. Athletes from 31 nations from four continents participated in a total of 31 FIL competitions in artificial track in the general class. There were 16 FIL competitions in the junior class. It is a bit unfortunate that only four event organizers were prepared to hold a Junior World Cup. The media and TV presence was also very positive.

A large portion of successful sports activities in the FIL were associated with our proven development programs in FIL schools, FIL Teams I and II, partner programs, track training vouchers (last a season witnessed a record of 15,000 vouchers), and many other supportive efforts. In this regard, I would recommend reading the extensive report by our Development Manager, Ioan Apostol.

Unfortunately, Ioan has decided to vacate the position for private reasons. This is regrettable; he was a highly effective and reliable member of staff for 16 years.

Nonetheless, we accept and respect Ioan's decision and wish him all the best in the future.

Ioan will however still be participating in luge as member of the Romanian Luge Association.

We will be revising all of the FIL's developmental programs and realigning the focus in some instances. Furthermore, this department will be under the management of the Vice President for Sport in the future.

I would also like to note that we celebrated our 40 year anniversary of the World Cup series in the preceding 2017/18 season; the first FIL World Cup season was in 1977/1988.

Unfortunately, this was not sufficiently advertised and recognized.

In any event, we also celebrated major anniversaries for our sponsors:

- *15 years with Eberspächer (at the World Cup in Igls with the head of the company Mr. Peters)*
- *25 years with Viessman (at the Olympic Games in PyeongChang with CEO Dr. Viessman who was also personally present)*
- *30 years collaboration with the FIL helmet manufacturer, Uvex (at the World Cup in Königssee with Mr. Birnbaum)*

I would also like to note our decades-long collaboration with the agencies Infront (currently with BMW) and RGS (Rudi Größwang). I would like to express my thanks to Christoph Mauer, who will no longer be directly responsible for us at the Infront agency in the future.

Happily, we have already concluded contract extensions with all of the above. This importance of this cannot be stressed enough since it is always a good thing to have such reliable partners over so many years in an unceasingly challenging market. The term “partner” is frequently used lightly in the world of marketing. However, in the case of our FIL partnerships, this term describes a genuine mutual relationship based on trust. A sponsor magazine wrote in a recent edition: “The FIL has extremely reliable sponsors”. This continuity also springs from the reliability on the part of the FIL. This is important to everyone since the income from our advertising contracts is reinvested in the sport, and this is what allows luge to carry on.

A major portion of the success of our last sports season was due to our event organizers. It is gratifying that we have organizers who invest their passion and experience to develop attractive programs to accompany exciting competitions. The level of our events has climbed another notch, and for the first time, nearly all of them have reached the top category. This is all very welcome, but it costs the FIL increasingly higher organizational subsidies. I would like to take time at this juncture to thank our evaluation committee for their meticulous and challenging work.

Last season, we were able to satisfy a wish that has been frequently expressed: we had an FIL fanfare composed by an orchestral composer from Boston. We will be using this fanfare for all official FIL competitions in the future. Thanks to our Vice President, Claire, for her successful efforts in this regard.

We have expended a great deal of effort for years to keep the FIL, the national federations and all their bodies free from scandal, and I am proud to report that our efforts have been successful. We aggressively seek to maintain all necessary standards and ethical rules. In this regard, all of us who are involved in sports of whatever type bear a clear responsibility for sports to remain credible in the public’s eye and to keep free from a negative image. Much to the contrary has unfortunately occurred, and we must pursue every avenue to keep the reputation of sports from being further damaged. We at the FIL are therefore committed to a “no tolerance” policy toward every type of unethical behaviour. Against this backdrop, we developed our own ethics code last year and established the post of ethics officer and an ethics committee.

Anti-doping measures are also part of this effort. For the first time, we in the FIL were confronted with this issue last season. The doping scandal in Russia and related matters did not leave the FIL untouched (McLaren Report, the Oswald Commission of the IOC). We had to satisfy the stringent requirements of WADA which required major organizational effort. It

would take up too much time to describe in detail all of the resulting negotiations and procedures. However, I can confirm that we satisfied all the legal requirements and completed all negotiations with our legal commission. I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the Chairman of the Legal Department, Dr. Christian Krähe, to the Executive Director, Christoph Schweiger, and Stefanie Biermaier who bore the main responsibility for caring out all the tasks. WADA recently informed us that we have fully satisfied the WADA code up to this point in time. Nevertheless, an additional workshop with WADA has been announced.

As you already know from press releases, we have submitted requests to the IOC for the inclusion of new sports disciplines in the Olympic program. These would be artificial track for women's doubles and sprint competitions, and natural track luge. We have already had numerous meetings with the IOC Sports Department and with the Olympic Committee from Beijing. The IOC Executive Board will reach a decision taking into account proposals from the IOC Program Commission.

We have undertaken great efforts to develop natural track luge, especially in consideration of the request to the IOC, and to make natural track more popular. From my vantage point, things look promising. I would now like to address a few matters from the excellent report by Evi Mitterstieler on the current natural track development program (which also can be found in the Congress dossier). The FIL tour bus outreach was again highly successful, and it is highly commendable when top athletes such as Patrick Pigneter become actively involved. A larger coaching staff successfully managed the individual development programs which, happily, caused the number of participants in natural track races to increase (in particular youth and junior luge). All FIL races were able to be held even though two World Cups had to be postponed due to weather; a location could be found in each case. I think that natural track luge is developing well, although it remains to be seen if it has developed enough for to be included in the Olympic program.

As all Olympic international federations, we face ever greater challenges. The inclusion of international federations in discussions and decisions in the IOC, Olympic committees, etc. continues to increase. Our responsibilities are becoming more and more challenging and demanding. The professionals in the international federations are subject to increasing demands. However, we do not view this as a negative thing, and we will rise to meet these challenges.

In this regard, I would like to touch on just a few topics:

Good governance: We take good governance very seriously and have had to issue any number of position statements (for example on organizational structure, statutes, voting rights, gender equality on staff, transparency in various areas, etc.). I would like to thank our legal advisors, Dr. Christian Krähe and Norbert Hiedl, who have dedicated many hours of their free time together with our Christoph Schweiger to address this subject. After being

scrutinized by a relevant agency, we are evaluated and invited to answer questions. An exhaustive procedure, and we are up to the challenge.

Gender equality: The IOC has asked the international federations to have an equal number of women and men actively participate in the Olympic Games. Since we have more male athletes in our Olympic disciplines, we will either have to cut some of our men or add additional women. As part of a compromise, we will be introducing the new discipline of women's doubles at the next Youth Olympic Games in 2020 with the approval of the IOC. In order to realize this, we developed a new standard double sled in collaboration with a well-known sports equipment company. In the coming 2018/19 winter season, we officially launched the women's doubles in the Youth A sports calendar as a new World Cup discipline. Given the current level of enthusiasm, we can count on relatively large interest on the part of our national federations in this new event. Whether or not this event will be included in the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Peking or in the 2026 games lies in the hands of the IOC.

A major challenge for everyone is the EU General Data Protection Regulation that has recently taken effect.

All sports organizations both inside and outside the EU are affected to the extent that they save or forward data on citizens living in the EU. The aim is to protect private data. However, this will direct off a great deal of time and energy from the work of the FIL. For example, the written approval of all athletes whose biographies appear on the website or the FIL media guide must be obtained beforehand in writing. Violations may be met with heavy penalties.

All of these additional requirements are highly burdensome to the administration of the FIL. Starting July 1, we will be hiring temporary workers to prepare us for our new FIL office in our new attractive facilities. We opened the new FIL headquarters in September of last year and are currently finishing up the exhibition rooms (which primarily arose from the initiative of our General Secretary, Svein Romstad).

In conclusion, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all sports enthusiasts, all the national federations, my Executive Board colleagues, the expert commissions and department heads, as well as the entire FIL office team under the management of Executive Director, Christoph Schweiger, for their positive and trustworthy collaboration.

Our General Secretary, Svein Romstad, of many years with whom I have worked closely, amicably and confidently for 24 years will not be running for office for professional reasons. After many years of being president, it is my desire to provide input and support in pending changes to the FIL, and I therefore have decided to again run for the office of President one more time. It would be my great pleasure if I can count on your support tomorrow in the elections.

Thank you very much for your kind attention; our departing General Secretary, Svein Romstad, will now be presenting his report.