|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **International Correspondence Chess Federation**  **General Secretary Report to Congress** |

August 2016

Dear ICCF Delegates, Officials, Players, and Friends,

This year has been quite busy in the background implementing the many changes approved by the 2015 Congress in Cardiff. We have been focusing on implementing changes and updating documentation. We focused on updating our documentation and enhancing the web server with increased functionality and security features in response to feedback from many players and delegates.

**Membership**

This year sadly, I am recommending the suspension of Tunisian Federation (Zone 4) for 2+ years of non-payment of member dues. As our Finance Director noted in his report, despite receiving several reminders, the Federation for Tunisia has yet to make any payment in respect of fees for 2014 and 2015. Following Article 17 of the ICCF Statutes, I am recommending that the membership of the Tunisian Federation now be suspended (voting rights and tournament entry entitlements will be withdrawn and restored only if and when outstanding fees are paid). Should these charges remain unpaid by the time of the 2017 Congress, then the Tunisian Federation may be expelled.

Excluding the recent transfer of Austalia from Zone 3 to Zone 4, this means that Zone 4 has experienced a drop of 25% in Federation membership (this would be the equivalent of Zone 1 losing 9 Federations!), and the number of active players with a fixed rating has dropped from 1.7% to 1.4% of the total ICCF players.

The practice of preparing and submitting proposals by delegates and officials in advance of Congress is working quite well. A record number of 56 proposals were submitted by ICCF delegates and officials (although 13 were subsequently withdrawn based on comments). Delegates are encouraged to review the proposals and comments provided before Congress to be better informed before discussion and voting. The Congress minutes, while quite hefty, have provided an entirely transparent view into not just the Congress activities, decisions, and voting, but visibilities into the year-round work our officials do on behalf of ICCF.

**Agenda**

The Congress agenda is attached. Some highlights to note:

• Two agenda items have been added. Number 6 will be a review of the 2015 Congress proposals, their present status, and brief comments.

• Because some proposals were deferred last year, three Working Groups were formed to examine, analyze, and make recommendations concerning the deferred proposals. Agenda item 7 allows each Working Group chair a brief opportunity to describe what his working group was tasked to do, what they did, and recommendations derived from the group’s work.

• Day 3 lunch – our Marketing Director was able to arrange for a ChessBase demonstration! Because of our jam-packed schedule, we decided to make Day 3 a working lunch with the optional Chessbase demonstration in the Congress hall for those that wish to attend.

**Online Voting**

**Important Reminders**

• Please review Appendix 1 to this document carefully. Delegates - even if you plan to attend Congress in person and vote, you must still review and make your selection to do so online, for each proposal, before the deadline. If not, your vote will default to Option 1 (abstain), and you will not have a vote in Congress. This goes the same for those delegates sending a delegate designee.

• Please review the proposals carefully. Because the votes are secret until Congress, I have no way of knowing if you have made a selection of each proposal. If you miss a proposal, please remember, the default option (Option 1) is abstain.

• When the voting window closes at 23:59 Webserver time on August 8, 2016, there can be no more changes, additions, deletion, or revisions to the voting selections. No exceptions.

**2017 Congress**

We are delighted to have two proposals to host the 2017 Congress – one from the Indian Federation to be held in Bangalore, India and the other from the Bulgarian Federation, to be organized in Sunny Beach, Bulgaria. We have received preliminary proposals from each, and we look forward to hearing further details about the locations, venue, dates, and costs before voting.

Sincerely,

Michael Millstone, PhD

ICCF General Secretary

**Appendix 1**

As approved by the 2015 Congress (Proposal 2015-012), new online proposal and voting systems have been implemented. While the concept of proxies remains, the process for the proxy (delegate designee) nomination has changed. This message further clarifies the new process.

Starting July 5, 2016, all online approved proposals will become open for online voting; all ICCF delegates will be able to see the following five options under each proposal:

1. I have not yet discussed this proposal with my federation, and I do not yet have an opinion.

2. I have discussed this proposal with my federation, and I vote FOR the proposal.

3. I have discussed this proposal with my federation, and I vote AGAINST the proposal.

4. I would like to participate in the Congress discussion about this proposal, and I will decide how to vote following this discussion.

5. My proxy (or delegate designee) will participate in the Congress discussion about this proposal, and I trust him or her to vote in the best interests of my federation.

**Option 1 will be selected by default if no selection is made. Note, this is the equivalent of not voting and an abstention will be recorded.**

• If Option 1 is selected by the delegate, there will be no vote cast for this proposal by the Federation, and the delegate, delegate designee, or proxy will have no vote in Congress.

• If either Option 2 or 3 are selected, then the vote will be automatically cast, and the delegate, delegate designee, or proxy will have no further vote on this proposal at Congress.

• If either Option 4 or 5 is selected, the delegate, delegate designee, or proxy will have the opportunity to vote in person at Congress.

Online voting will be closed 7-days before the opening of Congress (August 8, 2016). Votes cast will be secret until the completion of live voting for that proposal.

**Important note**: If you select Option 4 for any proposal (the delegate will attend), then you may not use Option 5 (delegate designee or proxy) for any of the remaining proposals. Correspondingly, the opposite is also true -- if you select Option 5 for any proposal, then you may not select Option 4 for any of the remaining proposals.