



The President's report

Time to review progress – December 2019

The end of the year is always a good time to take note of progress made. This year ends with strong images from the World Championships which were a great success, whether it was Rhythmic Gymnastics in Baku, Azerbaijan, Artistic Gymnastics in Stuttgart, Germany, or Trampoline Gymnastics in Tokyo, Japan.

This upcoming new year marks the final year of my term as President. I would like to review the main objectives we had set ourselves and take stock of both the progress and efforts still to be made.

Visible progress at the World Championships



Group All-Around award ceremony at the 2019 World Championships in Baku (AZE)

The World Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships in Baku, in September, demonstrated a new approach to presentation. A mascot was used to entertain spectators while they waited for the scores to be displayed. It may have been too much for some, but I think the attempt to improve entertainment was very successful.

I must admit that I have never seen such an exciting World Championships as the Artistic Gymnastics



IOC President Thomas Bach presenting the gold medal to Simone Biles (USA) in Stuttgart (GER)

World Championships held in Stuttgart in October. The venue was packed from 9:30 in the morning, even during qualifications. Congratulations to Germany! Thomas Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), was present on the last day and remarked on how exciting he found these World Championships.

The World Championships in Trampoline Gymnastics in Tokyo were another pleasant surprise in terms of attendance. Tickets were sold out for the last days. The Worlds were held in the venue for the upcoming Tokyo Olympic Games, and for an inaugural event, I think we fully achieved our goal. I also see it as the beginning of a new era for Trampoline.



The Ariake Gymnastics centre in Tokyo (JPN) was full for the finals of the Trampoline World Championships

These were the last World Championships in which Horst Kunze acted as President of the Technical Committee, and we were pleased to witness the results of the work he has carried out over the years. I would like to express my most respectful gratitude to him for his great contribution to Gymnastics.

These three World Championships also saw several federations win medals or reach the finals for the first time in their histories. This is a sign that Gymnastics is progressing and developing in many parts of the world.

Encouraging collaborations



Carlo Yulo (PHI) won the world title in the Floor Exercise in Stuttgart (GER)

One notable first win was achieved by a talented gymnast from the Philippines, Carlos Yulo, who won the gold medal in the Floor Exercise at the Stuttgart Worlds. I met him eight years ago and allowed him to come and train in Japan. The experience he acquired has enabled him to get to where he is today.

At the World Championships, the competition between the men's teams of Japan, China and Russia was tight and nerve-racking, which has not always been the case in the past. These teams, on my advice, had participated in joint training in the previous months, which led to this fierce level of competition.

Strong federations support developing federations. And the strongest federations can always learn something from other well-established ones. This is a trend we have seen more and more in recent times. We must encourage the organisation of joint training camps. We also still need to review the Academy programme.

A more attentive FIG

A revision of our practices has been conducted at several levels. First of all, I want the Congress to be an opportunity for all federations to voice their opinions. We want to avoid a situation where some national



The Executive Committee members visiting a Gymnastics school in Masaya (NCA)

federations, for financial reasons, are unable to participate in the General Assembly, and to that end we have decided to cover the travel expenses of one representative from each federation.

The Executive Committee has also become more proactive now that one meeting per year is organised in developing federations: in Cameroon – for the Presidential Commission – and in Benin in 2017, in Fiji in 2018 and in Nicaragua in 2019.

For the first time, a Women in Gymnastics Commission has been established in the FIG, which has allowed progress in terms of gender equality within the organisation.

A "President's round table" has been organised during all World Championships, with the goal of giving more importance to the opinions of coaches, judges and gymnasts.

In order to improve communication between the FIG and the continental federations, we are testing a system of internships within the Federation. We began this process by appointing a development officer for Africa and presently exchanges between Africa and the International Federation are easier.

A more active presence within the IOC

Gymnastics is well represented in the Olympic movement. I am now an IOC member, and I am also invited every year to take part in the Olympic Summit, which brings together the main representatives of the Olympic movement. Finally, I am also a member of the Council of the ASOIF, the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations.

This allows us to make our voice better heard and to understand the new directions set by the IOC. In a world where the emergence of urban sports is leading to increased competition between all sports to be part of the Olympic programme, nothing is ever certain. We have, unfortunately, seen this with the arbitrations that the IOC has made for the programme of the 2022 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal. We must understand that the future will not be a simple repetition of the past.



IOC Session in Buenos Aires (ARG) in 2018

More revenue from marketing

Three Japanese companies - Fujitsu, Pasona and Tokio Inkarami - became our sponsors this year, and the Russian bank VTB continues to renew its partnership every year. These new contracts have enabled us, among other things, to donate significant amounts to the organisers of the World Championships.

The funds donated must be used to improve our Championships, particularly in terms of sports presentation and entertainment. By organising more attractive events, we will be able to better showcase the stars of our sport and to generate more interest from fans. With more entertaining events, we can attract new partners and increase our marketing revenues even more in the future.

Regarding equipment manufacturers, we have observed that the drop in equipment prices has become widespread from all suppliers.

Innovation and popularization

Our sports calendar has been enriched with new events. We now have World Junior Championships in both Artistic and Rhythmic Gymnastics. We also have Parkour as an outdoor sport.

Our objectives also include broadening our base. We are working on a new project called "Gymnastics - a life adventure", which is led by Margaret Sikkens Ahlquist. It is driven by the principle that Gymnastics is the basis of all sports and can be practised by everyone, at all ages. Gymnastics can thus play a social role, helping to reduce healthcare costs.

After attending the World Gymnaestrada this year, I am convinced that Gymnastics represents an even larger market than football. Unfortunately, we are not able to quantify the number of people – from children



Opening ceremony of the World Gymnaestrada in Dornbirn (AUT)

to the elderly - who practise Gymnastics for the simple pleasure of it. Our challenge is to increase the number of member federations.

There are also some new features for the Tokyo Games. We will have a new type of gala that will serve to highlight the magic of our disciplines, an improvement on what we had in Rio. This gala will introduce fans to our non-Olympic disciplines, such as Gymnastics for All, Acrobatic, Aerobic and Parkour. I want the world to see the appeal of these sports. In addition, for the first time we will have a Gymnastics House to promote all aspects of Gymnastics.



The Gymnastics House project planned for the Olympic Games in Tokyo

Justice and ethics

Minimising the risk of judging errors and favouritism remains a top priority. In this area, an important step has been taken in Stuttgart. For the first time, the judging support system developed by Fujitsu Limited was officially used in competition as an additional tool for confirming difficulty scores on four apparatus in case of inquiries or blocked scores. We are also stepping up our efforts in Rhythmic Gymnastics.

In terms of governance, we have made enormous progress with the establishment of the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation. It has dealt with 28 cases this year in one of its areas of expertise (safeguarding, discipline and compliance). Unfortunately, frequent new cases continue to cast a shadow on sport. We must spare no effort to win this battle.

To conclude

In all the areas I have mentioned above, we have made significant progress. We could not have done this without your support and cooperation. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart and wish you very happy holidays and a wonderful new year.