



The President's report

Congress - General Assembly, December 2018

Dear All,

I would like to explain the work and efforts that the FIG has been engaged in during the past two years. The FIG has embarked on many reforms in this time.

1. Four-year-term

Firstly, I will explain how a four-year-term should proceed. Time goes fast. It is important for us to share our action plan with the Gymnastics family. Our term is four years. For 48 months, we have to keep going forward. Twenty-four months, which represents 50% of our term, have already passed. We cannot waste any time. Let me confirm the schedule from this point onwards. Our activities in this cycle are focused on carrying out what we had already decided in the last cycle. Our next mission is to propose and decide what we will do in the next cycle, from 2021-2024.



The first half of 2017 was spent solving the problems from the previous cycle. And in the latter half of 2017, we analysed the problems we had had in the past.

Then at the 2018 Council in Istanbul, we proposed the plans and vision for the new cycle. And at the 2018 Congress in Baku, we made our proposals for the new cycle.

At the next Council in 2019 in Saint Petersburg, we will propose all necessary changes to the Technical Regulations to allow all concerned to adapt and ensure we kick off smoothly in 2021.

2. The new ambassador system

We are in an era of transition. If we do nothing, we will die out like dinosaurs. We must try something new. And I do think the culture of trying something new has started. The most successful example is the new ambassador system for the World Championships.



The Ambassador Commission, in collaboration with each respective LOC, has chosen the ambassadors. Many famous former gymnasts like Ms. Nadia Comaneci and Ms. Alina Kabaeva have served as ambassadors, and attracted significant media interest, acting as role models for local young people as well as the participating athletes. In this way they have contributed to the excitement and success of these Championships.

3. Meetings of the Presidential Commission and EC in developing countries

With the support of the EC I proposed organising meetings of the Presidential Commission and EC in developing countries.

In 2017, a Presidential Committee meeting took place in Cameroon and an FIG EC meeting in Benin, both in Africa. In Benin, the Sport Minister promised us that he would make Gymnastics a compulsory activity in children's school education.



In 2018, those same meetings were held in Fiji. Gymnastics has put down roots in Oceania.

The Oceania Gymnastics Union has been founded and the Congress in Baku agreed on the necessary Statute changes to include it. The FIG finally now has five Continental Unions, making us the equal of other leading IF's.

From now on, our aim is to be more active. Through the FIG's visits to developing countries, Gymnastics in those countries is starting to grow steadily. It is important to act; discussions alone do not carry any value. We must help each other.

4. Internship and development programme

The internship and development programme for our different continents has started. We have begun with Africa where, in consultation with the President of the Continental Union, Mr. Ali Zaater, and the South African Gymnastics Federation, we will train and employ Mr. Tseko Mogotsi as Development Officer for Africa.

He will have the opportunity to work closely with FIG staff and visit Lausanne with its many IF's and the IOC. If this development programme, which I have started in Africa, is successful I would like to expand it to other continents.



5. Sport should contribute to international peace

I visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (PRK) for the first time as the FIG President. The media asked me why I went there. As a Japanese citizen, I am legally prohibited from going to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The answer is simple. Gymnasts from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, from the Republic of Korea, from Japan, indeed from any other country and region, are all my gymnasts. They are my sons and daughters. The country is in a very difficult situation with political sanctions being imposed on it. I just went there to help my children who are in such a difficult situation. It's a parent's duty and there cannot be anything wrong in doing that.



My policy is that sport must be independent from politics. The FIG Presidential Commission meeting will be held in Pyongyang (PRK) in January 2019.

One of the roles sport should play is to contribute to international peace. Gymnastics is the base for all sports and the king of sports. We in Gymnastics are engaged in international peace through our leadership.

6. The Women in Gymnastics Commission

The FIG Women in Gymnastics Commission was launched. Gender equality is common practice in the world and one of the main goals of the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020.



Why is gender equality important? Again, the answer is simple. Why should we only use half of the humans' potential, creativity and intelligence? Girls and women are as invaluable in our sport as are boys and men. This fact must also be reflected in our governance structures. It is crucial for us to include women's view points and experiences across our policies and activities if we want to keep our sport relevant and develop it further.

I am very happy that the 2018 Congress in Baku accepted all the proposals made concerning gender equality with much more than the required 2/3 majority.

7. Introduction of judges' academies

As for judges, discussions over the introduction of judges' academies have started. This would be in addition to the coaches' academies which we currently have. Currently, the number of judges on each continent is not sufficient. I wonder why judges' examinations are organised only once every four years. Why not every year? When I was pondering this question, Ms. Elizabeth Cameron Smith, President of the South African Gymnastics Federation, proposed that we consider judges' academies. I think it's a good idea. We will soon start discussing this proposal.

8. Possible inclusion of Team Gym

The discussion about the possible inclusion of Team Gym, or a similar competitive event, within the FIG has begun. The European Team Gym Championships in Copenhagen (DEN) in 2020 will be open to all FIG-affiliated Federations and serve as a test event. Depending on the number of participating Federations we will consider whether to include Team Gym within the FIG or not.

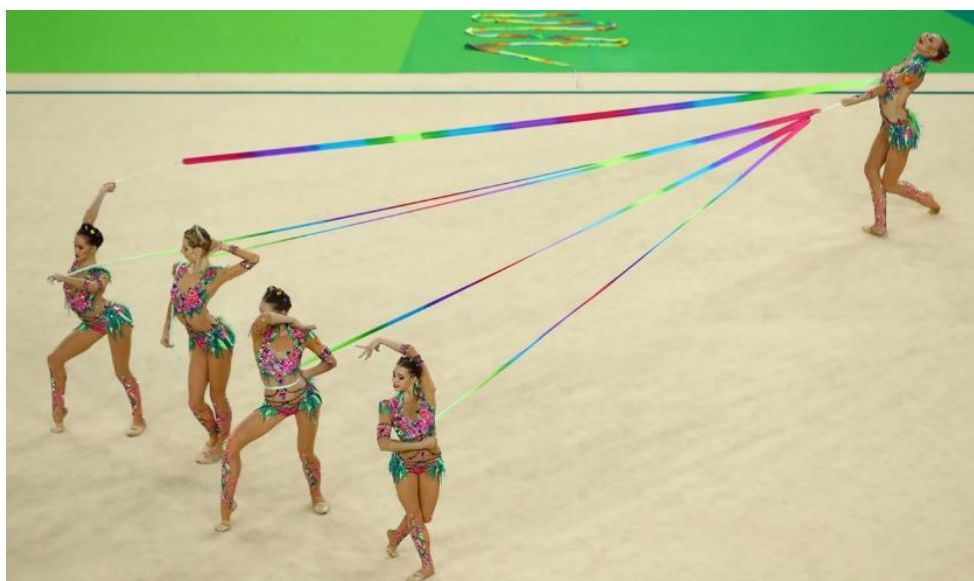


9. Innovations made to the rules of Rhythmic Gymnastics

The other point I want to touch upon is about working groups. Many working groups have been established to inspire innovation. One of the examples concerns the innovations made to the rules of Rhythmic Gymnastics.

How many of you can understand the scoring when you look at Rhythmic Gymnastics performances? When I ask the TC members how they think about this situation, they see no problem at all. The situation is not limited to Rhythmic Gymnastics. All other TCs also say it's no problem when I ask them the same question. The answer to whether it's a problem or not does not come from the Gymnastics community, though. The answer from people outside our sport is the right answer.

Ask someone who is a non-Gymnastics person if they can understand the rules of Artistic Gymnastics. How about Rhythmic Gymnastics? Everyone outside of Gymnastics says they don't understand. This is the answer. No one outside can understand the judging in Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics and our other disciplines. With this situation, our sport cannot develop.



This time, we will renovate Rhythmic Gymnastics, not revise its rules. By inviting people from the media and IT to join the discussion, we will consider external opinions. By doing so, we will try to make good rules that we don't have to change so often. If it's successful with Rhythmic Gymnastics, we will consider renovating Artistic Gymnastics and the other disciplines too.

10. Junior World Championships

The Competition Commission has had its own active discussions and made some positive proposals. It has been decided to organise the Junior World Championships in 2019 as a test.

Győr in Hungary for Artistic Gymnastics, and Moscow in Russia for Rhythmic Gymnastics have bid to host the events. I would like to offer our thanks to the Gymnastics Federations of Hungary and Russia for their cooperation.

Almost all other sports organise World Junior Championships and they are successful at developing junior athletes. I believe that the Junior World Championships will succeed.



11. Qualification system for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games

Next, there have been active discussions about the qualification system for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. How many of you can explain clearly the qualification system for Tokyo 2020?

If the Gymnastics family cannot understand the system, there is no way the media can understand it. This qualification system which the media cannot understand is proof that our qualification system is too complicated. We need a qualification system which everybody can easily understand. Being simple is the best. For the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, we will aim to create a simple qualification system.



12. World Championships change of format

The next topic is the issue of the World Championships being too long. Its qualification sessions start at nine in the morning and finish at 10 at night. Each Federation stays at the World Championships for at least two weeks. If we include the period for the time difference adjustment, they may stay at the World Championships for three weeks.

In future, we will have more gymnasts from Africa and Oceania. We cannot continue with the current system of World Championships. We must take countermeasures.

We are planning to change the competition format and to limit the participation to the World Championships through the Continental Championships. This will improve the marketing value of the Continental Championships.



13. Expansion of the advertising space

The next topic is marketing. I proposed to expand the advertising space on the gymnasts' uniforms. Until today, the space has been too small for advertisements to be recognised.

Now, the space permitted has become larger and gained in value as a result. I believe that this makes it easier for gymnasts and their Federations to get sponsors in each country and region.



14. New sponsors

Regarding FIG sponsors, we have found new sponsors and partners. Until now, the FIG's sponsors were VTB, Longines and the Cirque du Soleil only.

In 2018, we entered into a sponsorship agreement with the Japanese company FUJITSU for a period until 31 March 2020. From now on, we will build a cooperation with FUJITSU in the field of information and communication technology (ICT).

In addition, we will enter into a contract with another Japanese company called PASONA which operates in the field of human resources. PASONA will become our sponsor because they are interested in the FIG's new activities including its new discipline, Parkour.

The additional revenue generated through marketing activities will be used for development and other projects decided by the Executive Committee. As for the Congress, the FIG will continue to pay expenses of round-trip airfare and accommodation for one representative from each Federation in good standing. The money from sponsorship deals will also be spent on such expenses.

15. Parkour as the FIG's urban sport discipline

I touched on Parkour when mentioning marketing, and would now like to elaborate on this topic. In recent years, each Gymnastics federation has been working hard to develop top elite athletes. They have been focusing on the Olympic stories. Because of such efforts, Gymnastics gained the position of one of the three strongest sports in the Olympic Games in London and Rio.

The downside of this is that because we focused so much on producing top athletes, we lost many leisure gymnasts. Many young people chose Dance, Cheerleading and Parkour rather than Gymnastics.

The Gymnastics population in several of our member Federations has not increased. This phenomenon is not limited to Gymnastics. Many young people have walked away from the sports in the Olympic programme, and they are attracted by high-impact sports such as those in the X Games. We must keep our eyes on the changes happening in society.

Those IFs who felt it was a crisis became actively engaged in Urban Sports and Beach Games. They turned to 3 x 3 for Basketball, Futsal for football, BMX for cycling, Breakdance and hip-hop for Dance, Skateboard for Rollerskating, Beach volleyball and Beach handball. They have been very successful. I made a proposal at the Congress to introduce Parkour to the FIG as an urban sport and the proposal was approved. The three host cities and dates of the 2019 World Cup series have been decided.

I have already received interest from member Federations wishing to organise the 2020 Parkour World Championships. I want to develop Parkour as the FIG's urban sport discipline.



16. Showcase performances during the Tokyo 2020 Olympics

I am thinking of another new idea for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics which will be held in my home country. I want more people around the world to realise how wonderful the sport of Gymnastics is. Many people from all around world come together at the Olympic Games.

I am trying to create an opportunity to showcase performances of Acrobatic, Aerobic and Gymnastics for All at the time of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. In the past, there have been IF houses open during the Olympics, such as the Volleyball House and the Judo House. In fact, it is difficult for people who visit the Olympics to find a place to rest. I plan to open a house that brings peace and comfort to the Gymnastics family. I want to place the Gymnastics House in the square where we will show the performances.



17. Technical Committee Presidents

The nomination of the TC members was already on the agenda and discussed at the previous Congresses in Tashkent and Tokyo. At these Congresses, the former President made two proposals concerning the TC Presidents.

He proposed that:

- it is not necessary for the TC Presidents to be EC members.
- TC Presidents and members are selected by nomination, not by election.

This was because if a person has a strong position in election, it does not necessarily mean he or she has strong technical knowledge or a good sense of ethics.

In this situation, I made several proposals. My policy is to put the right people in the right place. I want to clarify their functions first.

First of all, let's clarify the TC Presidents' functions. The TC Presidents' job is management. In order to carry out this job, they need the EC's support. Therefore, I think that it is good for the TC Presidents to remain EC members.

Then, the next question is, who is the most appropriate person in the world to become a TC President? To decide this, I think an election by the Congress is the most appropriate way. Therefore, my proposal is that TC Presidents are elected by the Congress and remain in the EC.



18. Technical Committee members

The next question is about TC members. Again, we need to clarify their jobs first. Their job is to make and modify rules, to educate and develop judges, to supervise judges during competitions, to manage competitions and to evaluate judges after competitions. We must choose the right people who are capable of doing this job. And these members must work together as one team under each TC President. Therefore, I proposed the selection of TC members by nomination, not by election.

In nominating TC members, we could run the risk that they are nominated by the TC Presidents alone. As already mentioned, the TC Members will be nominated by the EC. Following the principles of good governance a Selection Commission will evaluate the candidates, respecting eligibility and selection criteria. The Selection Commission shall be composed of the newly elected President, three Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General, the Technical Coordinator and the Technical President concerned.

Unfortunately, this proposal did not reach the required 2/3 majority at the Congress in Baku. However, we will have to adhere to the principles of good governance as determined by the IOC. Discussions in this matter will have to continue and the outcome will be proposed to the next Congress.

19. Gymnastics Ethics Foundation

I must share another item of bad news with you: the United States Olympic Committee has initiated a procedure to revoke their recognition of USA Gymnastics. One of our strongest federations in the world is at risk of losing the recognition of its NOC. However, the tragic facts which led to this situation are not a problem that only concerns the USA and USA Gymnastics. And what is worse is that harassment cases continue to spread across the Gymnastics community all over the world. At this moment in time, the media and the public too often relate Gymnastics to harassment.

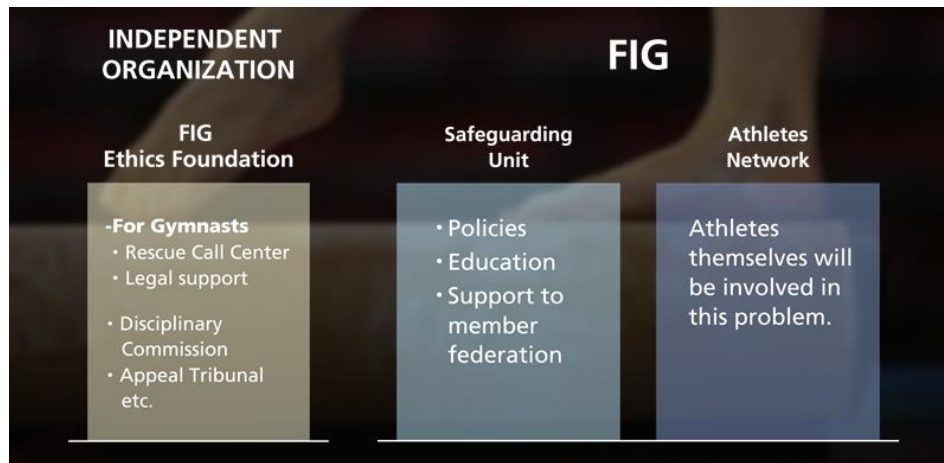
We must get away from this image in the global sporting community. We must put a stop to this negative chain reaction.

Gymnasts are our sons and daughters. Without gymnasts, Gymnastics federations in the world have no place to exist. The highest priority in our mission is to protect our gymnasts.

Since I became FIG President, I have been putting all my effort into finding solutions to this problem.

I proposed a concept of three pillars including the creation of a Gymnastics Ethics Foundation to the Congress. The 2018 Congress in Baku approved this proposal and made all necessary changes to the Statutes, the Code of Ethics and the Code of Discipline with the required 2/3 majority.

The FIG duly established an independent Gymnastics Ethics Foundation with three pillars as a countermeasure.



Of the first pillar, the FIG has invested in and established the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation. This Foundation will consist of experts and lawyers. In the Foundation, a “Help Desk for athletes” will be put in place. The Help Desk is accessible for athletes from anywhere in the world. Athletes can consult with the Help Desk over any form of harassment. The FIG will not be informed of those reports. The information will be kept confidential. Even the FIG President cannot intervene.

Once a report is made, the Foundation will perform the necessary fact-checking through a case management group and will decide how to proceed. Depending on the outcome, the case will be referred to an existing safeguarding organisation in the respective country or dealt with by the Foundation’s Disciplinary Commission, or will be submitted to the police.



This is an inverse approach of what was done before. In the new system, the punishments based on the common sense of society will be imposed first, and only then will any punishment based on the common sense of the sporting community follow. In almost all mistakes we make, the common sense of the sporting community is different from the common sense of society. I think that it is necessary for us to adapt the common sense of the sporting community in order to follow society’s common sense.

Administration is managed by the FIG, legislation by the Congress and jurisdiction is within the new Gymnastics Ethics Foundation. Those three separated powers monitor each other and protect gymnasts and coaches.

Therefore, the Disciplinary Commission and Appeal Tribunal are part of the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation. This is quite natural for a structure of an organisation. The Gymnastics Ethics Foundation will also include a Compliance section monitoring the good governance and ethical principles of the FIG.



Unfortunately, there still exist elements of dictatorship in some parts of the sports community. That is why harassment could occur. Effecting this separation of the three branches and making it common practice will lead, I hope, to the eradication of incidents of harassment.

I think that there will be many reports coming in the first year. But in the following year, the number of reports will decrease to half of those received in the first year. This is because coaches who come to know this new system will start paying attention to their way of coaching. This system itself will deal with the cases and by doing so, it will play a preventative role.

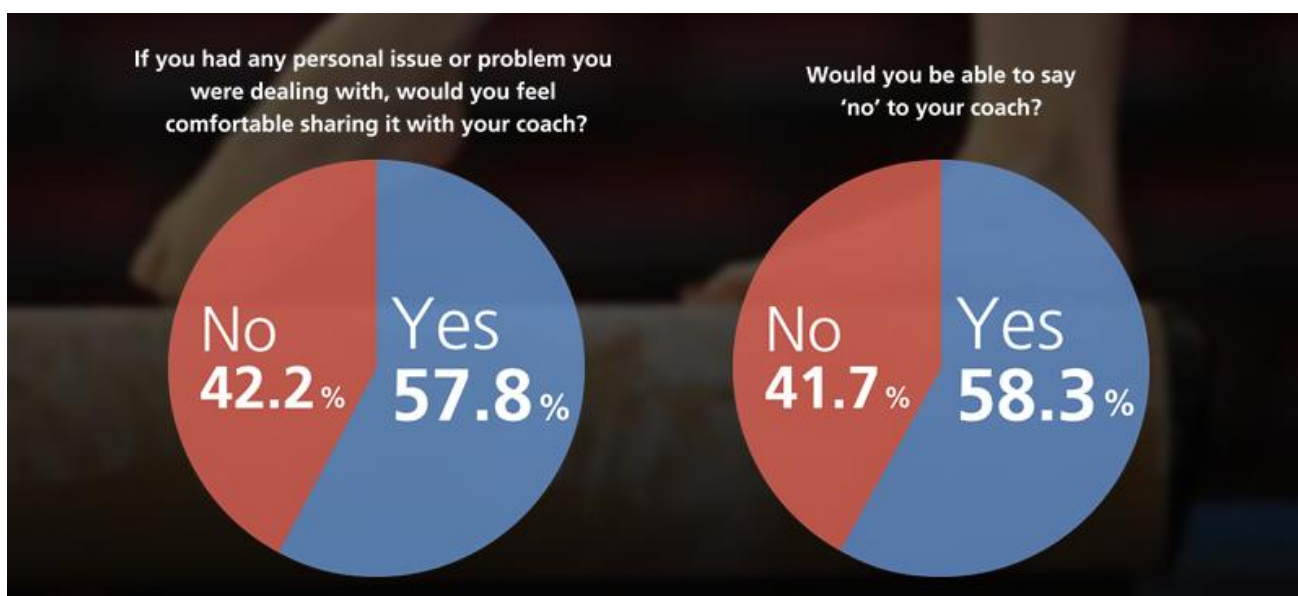
The FIG has zero tolerance for abuse and harassment. It is our goal. This means that we must fight any form of harassment forever. And the FIG will never give up.



Now to the second pillar, which is the educational system. We have been inspired by the IOC's tool kit and will provide information for National Federations in the same way.

Next, let me share the third pillar with you. I believe that this is the pillar which will be the power to change our future. It is the creation of the future by athletes for athletes. I have launched a working group with former athletes. Whenever we have problems, we adults seek solutions. However, I think athletes are the best people to know what is happening on site and I believe that young athletes themselves must create their own future.

They completed the questionnaires we gave them and I have the answers of over 100 athletes. On the surface, 50% of athletes say that they totally trust their coaches. But what about the matters they cannot write in their answers? This hidden part can be measured and seen only by the athletes. There is a chance for us to support this young generation and make the change as quickly as possible. The FIG will entrust our bright future to the young generation.



20. New FIG Secretary General

To conclude my report, we will have a new Secretary General. Mr. André F. Gueisbuhler, our current Secretary General, retires at the end of 2018. As for his successor, Mr. Nicolas Buompane, the current Deputy Secretary General, will become Secretary General. The Congress has decided to nominate Mr. André F. Gueisbuhler as an Honorary Vice President. On behalf of the Gymnastics family around the world, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and respect to Mr. Andre F. Gueisbuhler. He has been supporting the world of Gymnastics for the last 30 years as an FIG staff member.

I worked with André over the last 24 months. By working with him, I found out what kind of job the FIG Secretary General fulfills. This job is much tougher than you may imagine. It is not a job you can always do with a smile. Sometimes, the Secretary General has to take unpopular decisions. I had many opportunities to take part in global sports conferences and I found there that he is highly respected and valued in the global sports community. I became an IOC member because I had Andre-san's support. Thank you so much Andre-san.



In fact, before I conclude my report, I have one last thing to report. I became an IOC member on 9 October. Many of you congratulated me. But I think it should be the opposite. I must congratulate you. I did nothing. The FIG was established in 1881 and everyone in each Federation has been devoted to working for Gymnastics. These efforts - your efforts - have been recognised by the IOC. This is the reason why the FIG was given an IOC Member. I just happened to be your President.

That's why I want to say the following to you, as FIG President: I offer my thanks to you for the efforts you make every day. As a result of such efforts, you, not me, have gained the position of IOC member.

Congratulations!