

88th FIDE Congress
Executive Board meeting
Goynuk, Antalya, Turkey
13-14 October 2017

MINUTES

1.

Mr. Makropoulos said that in [Annex 1](#) is the decision of the Extraordinary Presidential Board, Athens, April 2017. He also said that all of you have received the letter from the FIDE president dated 4 October and because of the letter he asked to reconfirm the decision of the Presidential Board.

Executive Board unanimously ratified the decision of the Extraordinary Presidential Board.

1.1. Report of the Deputy President.

Deputy President G. Makropoulos reported to the Board.

Mr. Makropoulos said I would like to say that after Baku we had successfully organized, probably the best World Championship in chess that we have organized, ever in New York. And it was on a very high level organized with great success in media and internet. I think Mr. Merenzon, will refer later to specific numbers. And I remind you that this was an idea of Kirsan to organize this championship in New York. And it was very pity that at the end he was not able to go there. He said that few days before the event; he tried, and they stopped him. I was there but I tried to avoid going to the opening ceremony or to the closing ceremony. Other officials from FIDE, they have represented FIDE in these ceremonies. When I was there, I tried to keep a very low profile for one reason. I didn't want to downgrade the importance of Kirsan on that period because we were giving a fight, first of all, to protect our Organization of the fact that Kirsan has been under sanctions, but at the same time, we didn't want, of course, Kirsan to leave FIDE, and we didn't want Kirsan to be insulted from all these... that were going in our family. I will refer to this later in my report.

Then we had Women World Championship in Tehran. You remember that we faced a lot of criticism because we organized the Women Championship in Tehran, because of the problem for non-Muslims, I can say, for hijab. On this, I will tell you my personal opinion that I believe is really the opinion of most of the people in FIDE. We should support the traditions of the different communities that we have in FIDE. We are one family. If we try to isolate one country, one of our members because of this kind of traditions, I don't believe that we're going to help this country. I don't believe that we're going to help the unity in our family. We should keep an open dialogue with these communities that have a different understanding about several things. We should make our criticism. We should listen to what they say. For me, this is the right thing to do, but we should never think that we should isolate one federation, one of our chess members community because of such problems. And I can remind you that there were many other countries in the past that were, let me say, conservative in those things, but because we tried, and other sports tried, and they tried by themselves to open in the

community this communication and this dialogue, the situation improved very much. So today there are no such problems. So keep in mind this, we should not be blind. We should be open, and we should try always to help the different communities that we have in FIDE, and we should be able to understand their own views about several problems. And we should respect what they believe. Another case, of course, it's obvious it was a great success, however we faced criticism, but it obviously was a great success. And I personally can say that whenever we would get proposals from Iran that they are ready to organize events on such a high level, I would not be against it. And I would try to do exactly what I explained to you just now.

In FIDE Grand-Prix, we have introduced a completely new format that we will wait to see, to evaluate the whole cycle after the last tournament that we have in November. We believe that the idea is good with these Swiss tournaments. We'll see how the final results would be, and we will come back, of course, here to discuss if we will continue this system if we think that was success or we will have to make changes.

Another event that was a great success was the general match United States versus the rest of the world that was organized in St Louis with the cooperation of the United States Chess Federation, the famous chess club in St Louis, and FIDE. I was there with Jorge, and I can say that I was very much impressed from the level of the organization and the level that this club itself is organized. It is really something that other countries, other clubs, they should see, they should copy. And I believe really that FIDE has to win a lot from the cooperation with such organizers. For me, it's really important to try to keep open our relations with United States, with Russia, China, India, with everybody who can really contribute a lot to chess. And we know very well that, unfortunately, for several years we have several problems with these relations. The fact is that United States today are opening the doors; they are ready to host FIDE events. For me, this is a big improvement, and we should really keep trying to cooperate. United States is a great chess market, and FIDE and chess will get many benefits from the relation and the effort to have championships there.

One of the most important efforts that we have to do in the last period... it was, despite of the problems that we were facing, to try to keep the stability in our organization. The truth is that it's not easy. We face really serious problems that I have to refer to them, but what I want to say is that for me, all these problems, they were not political and they were not personal because many times it has been an effort for these problems to be presented as political problems between the people or personal problems. I would like to remind you that in Baku, in General Assembly, there was an effort to go to a voting against Kirsan Ilyumzhinov being president in FIDE under sanctions. It was not clear what exactly the people that had the initiative to present their proposals were looking for, vote of non-confidence, whether they were going to go farther to force Kirsan to resign. We stand by Kirsan, and we make it clear: we understand that the sanctions are a big problem that we have in FIDE, but we don't believe that this Organization should insult Mr. Ilyumzhinov by trying to force him to resign. We don't want this. We're not looking for this, and at least few people there, they made it very clear. I can remember myself, Jorge Vega, Israel Gelfer, that we made very clear that what we believe is that Kirsan should not run to the next elections. And maybe on that moment there were people in the meeting that were thinking that we don't believe really on this, and we say we are expressing this view because we just wanted to protect Kirsan on that moment. The truth is that we really believe this. And we have to make a big effort the next months to convince Kirsan that he should not run. I think Adrian can refer to the problems that already we have faced with our banks and our insurance company in Switzerland, and the situation, of course, it can be worse in case that Kirsan is the president because now we have stopped

everything, all the efforts in Switzerland to take out our accounts from the banks there, because we have explained that Kirsan is not a part of the decision making procedure, that he is not involved in the business of FIDE, he's our president only. And somehow we convinced them that they should not insist. But the truth is that if Kirsan could win these elections and comes back, they will believe, all of them, that we were cheating them, that we were lying to them, we are not serious organization. Immediately they will kick us out. So all these months we were trying to convince Kirsan not to run, to find an alternative. Somebody else could. We had even discussions about the possibility that Mr. Filatov could run. We had discussions even one year and a half about such a possibility or somebody else from FIDE, even from another country. Unfortunately, we could not reach an understanding that this is what we should do in FIDE. Kirsan really wished very much that he should run at least for one more term.

And this has a result... to go to the meeting in March this year, end of March. All of you have received the Minutes of the two meetings that we had in March and April. So not to go into details, but I suppose you have read the minutes, and you know what happened in Athens. Unfortunately, there was a fight when we had a disagreement, but Kirsan should not use the board to resolve personal issues that he had with Agon. And then we faced the unpleasant situation that Kirsan, made a statement three times that he's resigning. Maybe I can admit really that I was over necessary hard in my statements there and in my arguments, but really I was feeling that I could not support something which is not according with my principles. I think everybody knows here that I'm one of those that nobody can buy. I know that in elections many times it was discussed, even in the last elections. OK guys, you are making offers to everybody. Why are you not making offers to Makro? And the answer is because we know that we cannot buy him. And this... many years is this situation. So I was hoping that Kirsan, also knows this. I cannot go to such a situation. And then, of course, when we finished the meeting, and Kirsan went back to Russia, and we published his statement that he's resigning, and we called for an extraordinary meeting, we faced another situation that Kirsan, he was informing the media that Americans are behind, Garry Kasparov, that we are working for them. Nigel in the beginning, then me, then Zurab and I don't know who others... we have a deal, probably, and we are working for Garry and America (USA). Something very bad, very sad, and it has nothing to do with the truth. And of course, we published in FIDE website what was the truth. I informed Mr. Filatov that this is the truth. There are the minutes. Please, if you want, you can send somebody to check. We have the tape also.

So, after this Kirsan came to the second meeting in Athens. He apologized for all this, let's say, I don't want to say "lies", this wrong information that he had given to the media and for me, to the authorities also, because also officials have been informed about the situation. We reached the decision which we have confirmed just a few minutes ago. And we thought OK, now this is finished, we can go to an easy life, we can continue working. Elections are after one and a half year, we can really be able to continue talking with Kirsan to convince him that what he was trying to do was wrong. But unfortunately, this is not the truth.

I believe that things became worse because in that moment, he thought OK, he had to attack on a personal level several of us, especially those he knew that we don't agree or that if somebody was possible to run against Kirsan. Then he was thinking that he should attack. I had a discussion with Lewis Ncube in Athens. I told him, OK, I don't know, for us it's a principal matter. It's not the point who is the president who can bring the money today. FIDE is first for us. It's not how much money the president can bring for Africa, for Russia, Central, Latin America. The principle is that we should protect this organization. And at that moment I said, OK, I don't know, maybe

Azmaiparashvili can run. He's the president of Europe. If he wants to run, if he finds some small amount of money for travelling expenses for his serve to visit federations, he can run. We are going to support him. The truth is that was not really my mind that this is what we were going to do. For me, it was one of the possibilities. In two days, we received a letter, an email from Kirsan saying that Zurab, he promised two million dollars before elections for promotion of the Olympiad and for development for the federations. And from these two million finally he's not going to give what he has promised, two million dollars. You know why I'm referring to this? Because for many months now we have received such letters, and I have decided not to answer to any letter of Kirsan because I was feeling that I should not increase the level of the fight. For me, this is a room we should say our opinions openly, we should criticize each other, and not Facebook, not internet, not such kind of letters and such accusations. That's why I am referring to this point because maybe the people, they don't understand why I choose to refer to these points. Because I never have answered to these letters and I have been provoked to answer. And maybe people think that I have not answered because there are no answers. But there are, of course, answers, and unfortunately, the answers are very strong. So, Zurab was accused that in Tromso he had promised two million dollars but he never gave to the federations. The truth, of course, is not this. The truth was in some statement that Georgia is going to spend two million dollars for promotion and development. And I don't know how many hundreds they're spending for promotion, but the real bit was 1.2 million euros for tickets, to support the federations, and above this we had agreed that they would pay 0.5 million euros for development. 1.7 million on that moment when we agreed, it was over 2.1 million dollars. And Georgia, they paid these. They are doing this. So I could not understand why Kirsan was accusing Zurab that he's not paying this money. At the same time, Kirsan promised at the elections, on the last day of the elections when Garry was promising ten millions for FIDE, Kirsan increased the offer, 500,000 for Africa today, and today 20 million euros for FIDE. Of course, he never sent anything. At least, Zurab is sending the money. Georgia is paying this money. And then what is important for me is that in Chengdu, at the presidential board meeting in China, Kirsan signed a contract with Georgia. He signed there for these 500,000 euros. He didn't ask two million because this was never an existing number, this was never a bid. So the contract with Georgia, and we have the contract here, by the way, it has been signed by Kirsan in China and refers to 500,000 euros. So why did he make then an effort to create all these stories? Beside of this, from these 500,000 that was for development, and Adrian in his report is going to give details about this money we have received-I think, 300,000 by now and 200,000 more we will receive this and the next year. It was the question why we spent about 46,000 to support the individual European women's championship which has been organized in Georgia. And this was an event that it was supposed that the previous administration of Europe had to find an organizer, Mr. Danailov. He didn't succeed, so when Zurab became president, they had no organizer. In Chengdu, in the meeting, this was discussed. Israel remembered very well when Zurab referred to this point, and nobody had an objection. I and Zurab, we have discussed this before the meeting, to support with 46,000. I, Zurab, and Kirsan before this meeting we agreed to support with 46,000 the Georgian federation from their own money. And today Zurab was accused that somehow he was taken care for this championship and that this was not the original idea of the 500,000 euros. So, the only difference for me is that Kirsan had not the same reaction in Chengdu as he had recently because in Chengdu, of course, Zurab was a friend of Kirsan. Today he was looking at him as an opponent. And he was trying, for me, wrongly, to defame his opponent.

After this I can say that the treasurer faced the same kind of effect to defame him. I don't know if it was Kirsan personally or Berik. Adrian will refer to this. But they were talking with the president, the new president of the Swiss Chess Federation trying to convince him that Adrian is doing a very bad job in FIDE. And you know what the situation is. Adrian, I can say, from the moment when we realized that for years we were presenting wrong budgets in FIDE, is the one who actually succeeded today to bring back the situation where FIDE has plus. And we're hoping by the end of next year that we would come to situation when FIDE would have plus two million or over. So, if somebody is doing his job and he's doing a good job, I don't understand this effort to speak with people and say, "Oh, this guy..." It's horrible. Very bad job.

I can say that there are worse than that. There are personal threats; personal threats against people; personal threats against Geoffrey Borg that his visa would be cancelled in Russia; his residence in Dubai would be canceled because Kirsan has high relations there. And, of course, when Geoffrey speaks with Kirsan, and says "OK, Kirsan, but I cannot understand why you're going to this level". Kirsan says, "No, it's not me. It's Russia behind me. Putin." In many things, ugly things, Russia is behind, it's not Kirsan who is pushing this. And of course, the Russian President. And I can say that this is completely wrong. For me, this is the worst. And Andrey Filatov, I'm telling you that this is very bad because this is very bad for your country, this is very bad for your federation, this is very bad for your president. Because I personally believe that Russia has nothing to do with these ugly things, and President Putin has nothing to do with these ugly things. And really I'm expecting from you to stop this kind of propaganda. And if you cannot alone, we are here to help you. And if you don't need our help and you don't want, we will do it for you. It is not possible that we are creating here a political fight against Americans, against Russians, against presidents, Obama, Trump, Putin. I'm sure they have nothing to do with our family and our federation.

I can say also that we face a lot of insulting comments and threats against the executive director, Nigel Freeman. But we have faced another problem which I don't know, Polina, we have distributed these copies? I have distributed a packet like this concerning "Chess in Schools" project in Russia. The first time that I realized that something is going wrong in Russia with "Chess in Schools" project that was supposedly supported by FIDE was when I had been asked to sign a letter to Vice Prime Minister, one of the Vice Prime Ministers in Russia, Mr. Dvorkovich, ex-President of the Russian Chess Federation. We were informing him that we are very happy with the cooperation, we have so long time, and we were asking him to approve a project for "Chess in Schools" for the Railways because I think he is the Chairman of the Board of Directors there or something like this. I said why I should? When we had this cooperation? Why I should sign such a letter for Mr. Dvorkovich? What is the project? We did not know anything. And I was afraid that somebody was trying to involve Mr. Dvorkovich to this business that money would be paid but not to FIDE, to another organization that they have set up there. And of course, I refused, and we discussed this in the previous board one and a half year ago, and I saw Andrey was really surprised and angry that he didn't know anything. And later, of course, we got an answer from the Railways that they have rejected this project. But at the same time, we've got many other contracts to local governors asking for support for "Chess in Schools" project. And we have asked the Russian Federation, "What is going on?" Do they know? Because we don't know anything. Because the argument was that "This is a project approved by President Putin, and here is FIDE to implement this and pay the money to this charity or local foundation, not to Russian Federation or FIDE." And of course, Andrey Filatov until now, didn't answer if he knows anything. Silence, I believe he's shocked like us. This is the problem. The man, he doesn't want to think

that he has to give an answer here.

Another effort to show that we are doing bad things in this organization, was a letter of Kirsan to FIDE asking in August how much money I have spent from FIDE for this year for traveling? Because Kirsan is thinking that I'm spending the money of FIDE to travel for the elections. So I give you the numbers, the money we dispensed one year before elections last time like now for Kirsan and Berik because they are traveling together and the year of the elections. So, 2013 we spent for the traveling of Kirsan 212,000 euros. For Berik, 65,000 euros. In 2014, we spent for Kirsan 184,000 euros, for Berik 75,000 euros. Together they both spent around 550,000 euros in these two years. Up to August FIDE spent for me 12,000 euros. It's ridiculous, the effort to defame somebody because you think that he's spending money when you were spending a fortune before the elections, and now you're targeting, trying to find the reasons. I don't understand this. 12,000 euros has spent FIDE for me up to August. Few thousands more up to now because I traveled to Tbilisi for the World Cup, Romania for the European Youth Championship, and here, Turkey. It's not possible that by the end of the year that I will spend even one third from Berik was spending in one year. And what an effort to make an attack!

But you know, there worst for me in all these accusations is that it has become personal and on a very low level. There are rumors that they're spreading and discussing with people, and unfortunately, people are coming to us and they're telling us. Discussions in Africa, discussions here. Makro is spending the money of FIDE for his personal medical treatment. I'll tell you what is true and what is a huge lie here. The truth is that everybody knows that in 2014 I had a serious problem, I had to make an operation, and still know I'm one of those who need a treatment because, unfortunately, cancer is not something that you can escape in one day. So, Kirsan, what he did in 2014 when he heard, before elections, that I was in the hospital? He did something very good really: he sent 100.000 dollars to FIDE and he said, "this money is to take care of Makro's needs and treatment." And FIDE opened an account, and up to now FIDE is using this money. They pay directly the hospitals or doctors. Kirsan., this is the letter that you signed on that period to FIDE. It's from the archives of FIDE. And for me, Kirsan did something nice that today has turned into something very ugly: that he never paid this money. And they say, no, no, no, Kirsan, he never paid this money. Kirsan paid for his first operation. I don't know, ten years ago, when I had heart problems. Something that was so good and so nice, you know, has turned to a really very ugly thing. And really I believe that this is not Kirsan. I cannot believe that this behavior is Kirsan's behavior. And among the people that are running for him, I don't believe even that this is Abundo. Because he knows the problems that we had with Campo, and how we helped, how Kirsan helped also. But there are all the other little parrots that are running around Kirsan giving all these lies to the federations, to the people, trying to make some money of Kirsan, spreading all this mud around in our family. And you know them, you have seen them here. You heard from their mouths what I say the stories and probably other stories that I don't know. But this is something that we should stop. Because Kirsan, if one year before the elections you had reached this level, for me, this is the bottom. What are you going to do tomorrow? Are you going to threaten our lives? Our families? Our friends? And Russia would be behind this, and President Putin would be behind this? We should stop this. And we should stop here immediately. And we should isolate those that are distributing these lies. Our delegates, I'm telling you openly, you should spit on the face when they're coming to you. If they want to come with these lies, ask them to come when we are in front of them because they are cowards. In front of us they never say anything like this. Because I'm telling you, with papers we can prove everything from what they say.

Now. I really believe, Kirsan, that we should find a way to continue our life, stopping all this. You should control these people. Don't listen to them. Don't adapt their stories because you think that they can help you. You cannot win votes with these stories, Kirsan. You will lose elections badly, and in any case I believe you're going to lose, but you will lose badly. Kirsan, you have a history in chess. You will lose your name in chess. And everybody knows here that you are maybe the most important president whom we had in chess. You have helped so much our sport. You helped, clubs, federations, even when you are exaggerating the numbers of your foundations. Even with this, we know that you have spent huge money for chess. I know very well, dozens of millions. But why now you are doing this? And these little people, Kirsan. First of all, they cannot help you, are unable to help you. If the team that you are running for the election is this, it's a disaster. But worse, Kirsan, they don't have principles. These people don't have principles. And I know that you have. That's why I am very surprised with this situation. I will not say anything more. If you want to make any comment, if you want, gentlemen, to ask me anything about the accusations that you are telling to the people not in front of us, ask us here so everybody can listen. Is there anybody who wants to speak?

Mr. L. Ncube said before we discuss the entire communication between the members of the Presidential Board should be made available with regards to the Georgian money, original letter from President and responses from Messrs. Siegel and Azmaiparashvili and a letter from Mr. Ncube. He wanted to refer to his letter as the EB members are not aware of this communication.

Mr. Makropoulos said the Annex will refer to the numbers. He said he was not sure if we can circulate this but hope we will be able to do this.

Mr. Ncube said the report of Constitutional Commission also touches on this.

Prof. A. Siegel said first he had to add the information regarding the Swiss bank where FIDE has its account. He said it is a real problem with Kirsan on this sanction list. He did not want to comment as he had no information, whether it is correct and fair that Mr. Ilyumzhinov is on the sanctions list, but he sees the fact that he is on this list. He said he did not want to comment on the policy of UBS bank whether it is correct and fair that they are a bit more than nervous that FIDE President is on the sanctions list. He said that in the past the Swiss banks were known for receiving money from anywhere and they did not ask the sources, so since they have got quite a few problems in the past, now they are a little bit nervous these days, maybe they are nervous too much, we do not know. But what we know is that they wanted to kick us out. And his experience in Switzerland that the UBS is a rather nice bank, there are some banks that would have kicked us out immediately, but they are aware now that Mr. Ilyumzhinov is on the sanctions list and they are reluctant to keep us. The same refers to the insurance. We have to decide, we have to face the problem. He said we have heard quite a lot in the report of the Deputy President and he said he had experienced some issues which had not been very nice. There were accusations against Mr. Azmaiparashvili, Mr. Makropoulos and me personally, and it was very hard for him on a personal level. He said he stood for FIDE, tried to work for FIDE, with Kirsan in the past, and such accusations came to him out of the blue, and questioning. You know that such questionings are close to statements, whether there are financial anomalies or fraud. And then it was the last straw – I am doing what I can and I do not need such accusations. He said this is not the right way and therefore he proposed to the

Executive Board in the interest of FIDE, we request Kirsan Ilyumzhinov not to run in the next Presidential elections. He requested a secret ballot vote.

Mr L. Ncube said Executive Board has no power to request someone not to run. It is against the Statutes. Tomorrow they will ask me not to run for Africa, Mr. Azmaiparashvili not to run for Europe.

Mr. Borg said the issue is very deep and we said earlier there were personal threats. He said he had a seven-hour meeting with Mr. Ilyumzhinov and lots of things were discussed. We tried reconciliation between the team, but now we are on the stage like we are in a divorce court. The things are not good, the things are actually very bad, we need to underline it. In one week there were lots of allegations, lot of empty words, lots of threats, lot of friendships being broken, because election is not a positive thing when people start threatening each other. So let's be very clear, because it was not a positive week, with friendships being ruined. The motion is very simple, and it could have been much harder. We do not want to embarrass Kirsan. We all respect Kirsan and what he has done for chess. We had several Board meetings and even in Baku we all stood up and defended him accordingly that is why the motion is worded as it is. Many motions can be passed, the motion here is very clear and it is a polite message: Kirsan kindly consider properly not to run in the next elections. Nobody is telling him not to run, and it is his choice at the end of the day. If he wishes to continue and to run, it is his choice. But we are telling him, please consider. Now it is coming from the Executive Board. In Baku we stopped this, we have had interventions of several delegates who pleaded to President, please check your conscience, do this, do that. Prof. Siegel is asking for a motion and I second it, I have no problem seconding it. The main thing is we are asking: Kirsan, please do not run. It does not mean, he cannot contribute or continue to contribute to FIDE or continue to work for FIDE. We can find many ways of working together. He said the current situation is not positive. He supported Mr. Makropoulos who said that many things are not happening because Kirsan is controlling them, as everyone knows Kirsan's heart and everybody knows that Kirsan respects FIDE very well. And that is why we are asking him please not to run. Mr. Borg said it is very clear, and Mr. Ilyumzhinov can decide what he wants and he has already decided what he wants. He said they have had so many meetings with him where we were telling him that this is not good and he had accepted this. He said Mr. Ilyumzhinov wants to run as he believes internally that he can still contribute to FIDE.

Mr. J. Vega seconded the proposal of Prof. Siegel.

Mr. H. Bond said from Canada's perspective, you are suffering from "intrigue fatigue" and if this motion can help us in getting on with FIDE work, he is in favour. He suggested to President Ilyumzhinov: if you love us, you must set us free.

President Ilyumzhinov said that the elections will take place in September 2018 in Batumi at the General Assembly. Officially the campaign starts three months in advance, when a ticket is submitted and a person declares himself a candidate. Officially the announcement should be made that a person is running or not running, three months in advance. Therefore there can be many candidates, and not only among those who are present here.

He said he understands everything said by the members of the Presidential Board. He respects all said by Prof. Siegel and Mr. Borg, he understands the concern and he is

also concerned but he has always defended the FIDE interests. The amount of his current travels is not more or less that during previous years, and he would like to underline that all his trips are in connection with the chess propaganda.

If you take any country he goes to – be it Mongolia, Costa-Rica, Zambia, Zimbabwe – I meet with the leadership everywhere, make TV presence, popularize chess, speak at press-conferences, and no elections were discussed.

Yesterday we spoke a lot with those present here, with my Vice-Presidents, and I fully agree with their concerns. I do not see any critical in the continuation of their work, to continue my travels, to speak about people, children, to give simuls, to bring manuals and chess boards as gifts.

Of course you can make a motion and vote for it so I am forbidden to run in the FIDE Presidential elections. But why to vote, if I can refuse participating myself? Why to force me to do so? We are here in a democratic process. I hope the situation in the USA will also be clarified. I am under sanctions of one Department in only one country, member of the UN and FIDE. Tomorrow any other country, a ministry - of fire-fighters, finances, economics of Mongolia – Andorra – other countries, will announce that someone of the audience is under sanctions. So will this mean that this person will have no right to run for the parliament, municipality, international organisations?

I am not in prison, officially I was not accused in any point by any court, Prosecutor of the USA, FBI, CIA. I replied to all their questions in London, Paris, Zurich, Moscow. I showed them my 40 passports and 1500 trips abroad, I wrote an official letter to the FBI director, so I am checked at polygraph, and invited to Washington.

I came to London on purpose last year, as there is a FBI branch in London, to be tested at polygraph, to be interrogated. They refused. I wrote a letter to the US President, to be invited, and asked him – if the USA is a democratic country, please invite me and listen to me. If I am wrong, if I violated the US laws, I am ready to go to prison. I am ready to go to prison for truth. But if the US Dept of Treasury is wrong, they have to apologise to me – this was my only request.

A month ago I wrote a letter to D. Trump. I am grateful to the USA President, and there have been several hearings on my case in the US Department of Treasury in the USA, in their Administration. Among those who was invited to this Congress, is my representative, a US lawyer, who was ready to reply to all questions about the hearings, which were held in the Dept of Treasury and the US President's Administration.

As you know, last May we had a Presidential Board in Moscow, and Candidates' tournament. One of the EB members present here could not come to Russia because he was on a sanctions list of one of the Russian Ministries. I wrote an official letter to the President of Russia, and the head of this department and I succeeded to lifting of the sanctions from this person.

I have recently visited several African countries, and there all their Presidents, all members of the governments and parliaments are under the US and UK sanctions. But despite this, the members of these countries work in the international organisations, and are heads of banks. Therefore I am as a Russian, am under sanctions.

In 2004 may of those present here, participated in the Presidential Board and World Championship in Tripoli, Libya. Libya was under sanctions, the chess players who played there, received money from people under sanctions – son of Qaddafi, ministers, members of the Libyan Government, who sponsored the event, financed our World Championship where R. Kasimdjnov won.

In March in Tehran we organized the World Women's Championship (as Mr. Makropoulos mentioned), but despite the fact that Iran is under sanctions, despite their ministries were under sanctions, we received the money and organized the championship there.

My lawyer Robert Amsterdam insists that the hearings are open, so that I could make a speech in the US Congress and the US Senate. I am ready to travel to the USA, to buy a ticket, so I wrote about it to the US President. Therefore the sanctions policy carried out by several countries, is past, Stone Age.

This is not only about me – this is about many citizens of this world. When I meet Presidents of countries, Presidents of international organisations, they tell to me:” Don’t give up, fight against this administration, fight against the US Department of Treasury”.

I have sent to all of you the list of points as basis for my inclusion in the list of sanctions. It includes only the Guardian publications and other Internet-publications. Therefore I am open to come and reply to all their questions. And as I was told yesterday, the invitation has arrived to the US Embassy in Moscow, and I hope that I will be able to visit Washington soon.

As for my participation or non-participation in the FIDE elections, I should be the one to announce. This is my personal decision and my right, to participate or not in the elections. Maybe we can take a joint decision, and agree who we will all support, right here. But I do not want my rights to be violated or limited, as a Russian citizen, as one of persons who work in international organisations.

When I travel to countries, I represent not only FIDE, I represent Kalmykia, where I have been President for 18 years, Russia where I have been a Parliament member several times. If I had been such a terrible person, a dangerous person, I would not have been received by Presidents and Prime-Ministers of many countries.

Therefore, if I hurt anybody, made some mistakes, please accept my apologies. But all my work since 1995 for 22 years has been transparent and all of you have witnessed everything what I have done. I was spending my time, my health, my fortune, money not to promote myself, but to support and develop our chess, our country.

Once again I would like to underline – if it is necessary, I will decide myself which I will take on my time – to resign, to run or not to run in the elections. I am asking you not to force me. If you want, I will think, and can make an announcement myself – we discussed this yesterday. But give me some time. I think all I have done during these 20 years – give me a right to deserve a decent treatment and to request this.

I thank you once again for your concern and for your speeches. I understand you were speaking sincerely, therefore I am with you. But allow me to take a decision on my own.

Mr. Makropoulos: Kirsan, listen to me. Please let me clarify the situation as this is the truth we are all confused by Geoffrey’s “bad” English). In fact, nobody is asking you not to run and that you cannot run. There is no such a motion. Nobody is telling Kirsan that he cannot run. There is no such motion. Mr. Filatov, please pay attention here as well.

Our motion is – we are asking Kirsan, please think of not running.

Our proposal coincides with what Kirsan said – Executive Board wants to make a motion and ask Kirsan to think of not running.

He will decide himself after that. And then he will decide and say, thanks, when he decides, - I will run, or thanks, you are right, I will not run.

The proposal is not to tell him him not to run.

Mr. Ilyumzhinov apologized and said that he misunderstood.

After several speakers (Messrs. Abundo, Filatov, Turdialiev, Ncube) expressed their views, Mr. Khodarkovsky spoke in both English and Russian to explain the situation.

Mr. Makropoulos ended the discussion.

Messrs. I. Gelfer and H. Bastian were appointed scrutineers.

Mr. Gelfer announced the results of 59 secret ballots cast as follows:

In favour of the motion 37

Against the motion – 20

Abstained – 2

Mr. Azmaiparashvili said he was addressing all Executive Board members. He said we are facing a situation which was described by Mr. Makropoulos quite well. You all know how much Kirsan Ilyumzhinov contributed to chess. He said it was a pleasure to work with Mr. Ilyumzhinov as one always had known there is a friend and there is always contribution to chess. However we all know that we reached a situation where some important decisions need to be made for the future, how to proceed, how to develop our sport and to develop our organization. Mr. Makropoulos mentioned me as a little target for Mr. Ilyumzhinov as Mr. Azmaiparashvili thought of maybe running in the elections. He said that therefore probably Mr. Ilyumzhinov during his two previous visits to Georgia did not contact Mr. Azmaiparashvili. He said to Mr. Ilyumzhinov that he is in his heart, and asked to call him next time Mr. Ilyumzhinov is in Georgia, so that they will eat together and he said that Kirsan has his phone number, I do not want to lose this relationship and I want to keep my friendship with many of you and Mr. Ilyumzhinov, whatever his position is in FIDE. Mr. Azmaiparashvili said that he wanted to clarify the situation about himself. He said there was not a rumour but some people approached me in my country and outside of Georgia. That the Olympiad and Congress will be in Georgia, and you could use this chance to declare your candidacy to run for the FIDE Presidency. Mr. Azmaiparashvili said he as a chess player, analysed the situation regarding this matter and he had several reasons why he rejected. First priority is ECU, he said he likes this organization, this structure, work with people in ECU, everything is clear and he has clear advice and respect this. We have a lot of projects with my team and they are still on-going. Mr. Azmaiparashvili said some projects were successful and he said he declared he will run in the next ECU elections. It will be up to the ECU delegates to support or not. He said he had been thinking about the future of FIDE. He said as Mr. Makropoulos mentioned there had been many discussions with Mr. Ilyumzhinov, what will be best for FIDE. Maybe Mr. Filatov could be a candidate, and other people, who will be trusted by our delegates, up to now that I understand there is no solution so far and we can face the situation even politically, there will be more fights than today. He said we have to think about the future and who will lead our organization. First of all this person should be with principles and he should stand on his principles. In all the years I have been in FIDE as Vice-President or member of the Board, with all what Kirsan has contributed to chess, I can see one gentleman who has principles and who you cannot buy, which is very important in our world. Some people think they can do whatever they want and they can buy anyone. He asked Mr. Makropoulos to seriously think to run for the FIDE Presidency in 2018 and he will support his candidacy.

Mr. Makropoulos said he would keep trying to convince Mr. Ilyumzhinov not to run. He also said we have several good candidates in this organization and it is not in his priority to run for FIDE President, but we will see, he is not saying no to Mr. Azmaiparashvili's proposal. He thanked Mr. Azmaiparashvili for this but said we have one priority to convince Mr. Ilyumzhinov not to run and to find some common understanding of this problem.