

The General Secretary

Mr. Makropoulos started the discussion on the issue of the General Secretary. He said that the General Secretary couldn't cooperate with many members of the Board. He said that the second problem is that the General Secretary does not really understand the work in FIDE and he does not like to listen to the arguments when they are presented to him by other Board members.

Mr. Makropoulos said that there are members of the Board who are supposed to be in the Secretariat more often as their expertise is necessary. He said that sometimes there are some unsatisfactory results because there is nobody who supervises the work properly. But it is clear that General Secretary does not really work and does not know the work at all. He gave an example when the General Secretary mixed World Chess Championship Committee, created as a separate body, and World Championship Cycle Committee, which used to be part of the Chess Events Commission. The Deputy President repeated that the General Secretary had said the Continental Presidents have important work to do, but FIDE as a body also has important tasks to perform and if we want to move to a professional organisation, it is not enough just to rely on the Continents' work.

He said that recently the General Secretary had produced many proposals. The aim of all of them was to eliminate the powers of President and also to eliminate the powers of many active members of FIDE Board. The comments by the Board members show that they know 10 times more than the General Secretary. If General Secretary's proposals are accepted, we shall have a weak President. He called the claim of Mr. Tabbane for fair continental representation, a false democracy.

Mr. Makropoulos invited the Board members to read the comments of Mr. Mazouz, which clearly state that, if these proposals are accepted, FIDE will be in chaos.

He said that if the General Secretary is trying to create chaos because of his political ambitions to run for the FIDE Presidency in 2006, he has to step down and create the chaos outside of the Presidential Board.

Continental President for Africa N. Elhaj informed the Board that General Secretary was pressing the Libyan Federation at the Arab Chess Union Congress not to support the FIDE President and not to organise the World Chess Championship. He said that it was an especially difficult period, as at the same time Mr. Elhaj was organising the meeting between the leader of Libya and the FIDE President. Mr. Elhaj said that in the future he does not want to deal with General Secretary because Mr. Tabbane is fighting against Mr. Elhaj in his own country. He also said that Mr. Tabbane is acting against chess in Africa and everywhere.

Mr. Makropoulos said that Mr. Koya is one of the active people who is contributing a lot and he needs to be properly briefed on the situation. He said that Mr. Tabbane's

goal is to fight against each member of the Board personally.

Vice President Z. Azmaiparashvili said that he couldn't even comment on the information from Mr. Elhaj as this is to be considered not only as a fight against Libya, or the FIDE President, but as a fight against chess as a whole.

Mr. Tabbane said this is really ridiculous, as he loves chess. He said that Mr. Elhaj did not say the truth. He denied the information about the incident in Egypt.

Mr. Elhaj confirmed that he was not personally in Egypt but that Mr. Tabbane talked to the Vice President and the President of the Libyan Federation and they even informed the FIDE President themselves during the latter's visit to Tripoli. He also said that the President of the Libyan Federation was very upset with the action of the FIDE General Secretary.

Executive Board member I. Gelfer once again thanked the President for the offer of the job as Executive Director in Halkidiki, but he realised that there were some problems, which could affect the President and FIDE. Mr. Gelfer expressed his support for this new proposal of the FIDE President that he felt would solve some of the problems. Mr. Gelfer replied to Mr. Koya saying that the full proposal on the distribution of the functions will be presented to the Board members long before the General Assembly. Mr. Gelfer also said that it is high time FIDE should start operating as an organisation that is not dependent on one person, even one so generous as the FIDE President.

Vice President M. Sand commented on the assumption made by Mr. Tabbane that these 3 people suddenly appear because money is involved. He said that he can make more money with his legal work at home, so from the financial point of view it is stupid to devote time for FIDE. However, he said that he had made this choice to devote his time to FIDE. He said that everybody except maybe General Secretary knows that in many cases his legal services are asked for and his contribution is generally regarded as valuable. He said that when FIDE has the work to be done, the best people must be chosen. Mr. Sand said that the General Secretary has a lack of style, he insults the people in the Secretariat. He finds it difficult to cooperate with the members of the Board, which each of them had experienced. We all see the obvious lack of understanding from the General Secretary's part on how FIDE is working and how the democratic decisions are taken.

Mr. Sand said that FIDE has reached a point where some of the tasks must be taken from the General Secretary and placed on other people. In his opinion, the decision should be taken now and we cannot wait until General Assembly. Of course General Assembly can have its say, as they will assess whether this was the right decision or not. But the tasks are here now, somebody has to work now, and the current General Secretary does not have these qualities. Mr. Sand said that Mr. Tabbane has reached the point where he should resign from his position and work and if he has the ambition,

run for the FIDE presidency in the future. In case Mr. Tabbane chooses not to resign, Mr. Sand will put forward a motion for no confidence.

Mr. Kutin said that Mr. Sand had already said many things, which he wanted to say. He said that some people do not understand that we are in emergency, we have to move now. It is six months before the General Assembly will meet. We are in the position where we have to act now and he thanks the three gentlemen who are giving their time for FIDE.

Mr. Azmaiparashvili said that during the Bucharest meeting everybody was worried about the future of FIDE, and it was felt that all members of the Board had to be more productive and show their activity. He said that even now some Board members act when it was very dangerous for their lives. He said that some people are really risking their lives for chess. He said that he knows that Mr. Sand, Mr. Jarrett, and Mr. Gelfer work very hard. He also thanked Mr. Elhaj for all his work. He asked what Mr. Tabbane had done for chess. Mr. Azmaiparashvili supported Mr. Sand's proposal for the no confidence vote.

Mr. Selivanov said that Mr. Tabbane has to take courage and pass his functions to the people who are ready, willing and able to work. He said that it is unacceptable that a high FIDE official creates problems against the FIDE activities.

Mr. Tabbane said that if the proposal of the President is accepted, the office of General Secretary is pointless. He asked the FIDE President for an audience.

Mr. Makropoulos said it seems that Mr. Tabbane never reads the Statutes. He said that the President is responsible for the Agenda and the Minutes of the General Assembly and since the time of Mr. Campomanes, the President has also been responsible for the Agenda and the Minutes of the Presidential Board and Executive Board. Mr. Makropoulos said that when he used to be General Secretary, the President was preparing all these documents. He said that Mr. Sand, Mr. Gelfer and Mr. Jarrett saw the draft Agenda while in Athens and the idea was to send it to the Board members in advance. He said that the fight with Mr. Tabbane about the Agenda results from his ignorance of the Statutes.

Mr. Al Hitmi said that the routine work of Mr. Omuku should be replaced by the three gentlemen. He said that the job of General Secretary is a political job, and the decision of replacement of Mr. Omuku is not linked to General Secretary. Accordingly, we have to justify how we will process with the issue of the General Secretary. Mr. Al Hitmi supported the proposal regarding the office.

He said that in case Mr. Tabbane resigns, there will be a need to have elections to his position, but if he stays, he stays.

Mr. Sand insisted for Mr. Tabbane to announce whether he is resigning, taking an absence of leave or if he wants to continue as General Secretary.

3.5. The vote of no confidence.

Mr. Sand proposed the motion of no confidence against the General Secretary.

Mr. Campomanes said that we should not escalate the confrontational attitudes and we should talk before the meetings, so the meeting does not have any heated debate at the personal level. He advocated this attitude to the whole Board.

Mr. Tabbane said that he is elected by the General Assembly and asked for the explanation of this proposed vote.

Mr. Sand said that such a vote is a message to Mr. Tabbane and he himself has to draw the conclusions.

Mr. Tabbane said that he had a frank conversation with the President and he thanked the President for this. He said that if he is General Secretary today it is because he was elected in Bled, and the ticket was made by the President. He cannot be elected for the next period if his Federation does not nominate him and the President has no more confidence in him. He said that in Article 12 of the Statutes, that there is a vote of the General Assembly following the recommendations of the Ethics Commissions. He said that he has 2 bosses, the first one is the President and if he loses the confidence of the President, there is a procedure, but he has the obligation to be loyal to the President. In the event that his position changes, he has to go to the Federation and his Government and ask what he is supposed to do, to sue or to resign. He said that the Board is asking him to leave, because he has a different opinion than the other members, and the Board has a very poor understanding of the democracy. The FIDE President has to provide General Secretary with a letter about the loss of confidence, and then we have to go to the General Assembly. He said that the Board is trying to infringe the Statutes, but this is not new, as in many cases the Board often comes to a decision that does not care about the Statutes.

He said that the proposal is coming from Mr. Sand, who used to create problems in the Board after Paris 1995 and now he is trying to kill him as he tried to kill Mr. Crisan, President of the Romanian Chess Federation. He said that the position of M. Sand is not legal in the Board, because his nomination is not legal. He said that the modification of statutes does not come into the effect before the closing of the General Assembly and this modification cannot be applied before the next General Assembly. He said that he did not want to attack this decision as he is in the team of the President and support the President and respects him.

He said that if Mr. President gives him authorization to attack this decision of Bled, he will do so. His decision depends on the President but in the view of the General

Secretary the vote of no confidence is illegal.

Mr. Al Hitmi said that Mr. Sand was nominated and he is practicing his work for more than one year and why do we start to question and challenge this now?! He said that Mr. Tabbane cannot judge the status of Vice President M. Sand; he can judge only the work and the activities.

Mr. Vega said that he is totally against the vote of no confidence against any member of the Board.

Mr. Makropoulos said that it is true that in the past, we really had many fights with the people who used to belong to the team of B. Kouatly, but the fights with Mr. Tabbane started before Messrs. I. Leong and M. Sand were appointed as Vice Presidents. Mr. Tabbane was against the decision of the President to enter into an agreement with them before the elections of 2002. Mr. Makropoulos said that it is not incidental that Mr. Tabbane attacks Mr. Azmaiparashvili, who was also nominated by the President as Vice President and that Mr. Tabbane is blackmailing the President saying that he will attack the Bled decision, if the President gives him the authorization to do so. He stressed that in this way Mr. Tabbane is attacking the elections of the Bled General Assembly.

Mr. Makropoulos said if the President wants to have Mr. Tabbane, it is his personal decision. The problem is that nobody in the Board can work with Mr. Tabbane as he is always trying to create problems. He said that if the President tells him to work with Mr. Tabbane, he will do it, but it is clear that nobody can work with him.

Mr. Sand said that there are 3 choices: confidence, no confidence and abstention. Only Board members vote. And Mr. Mazouz from the Verification Commission does the counting.

Mr. Azmaiparashvili said this vote is not a decision, but just an expression of opinions.

The secret ballot had the following result: no confidence – 8; confidence – 3; abstention – 1; invalid – 1.