

Chess in Schools Commission

3 September 2012, 09.00-13.00

Chairman: A.N. Yazici (TUR)

Executive Secretary: K. O'Connell (IRL)

General Coordinator: Anna Burtasova (RUS)

<p>Present: C. Abou Nemui (LIB), A. Abdi Hasan (SOM), C. Abundo (PHI), E. Akhiwu (NIG), Amarnath (IND), C. Amura (ARG), F. Andrade (ANG), B. Aziz Madani (ALG), O. ali Barre (SOM), R. Barrera (ARG), J. Berglund (GUA), U. Blanco (VEN), H. Bond (CAN), K. Bonham (AUS), S. Bukambaeva (KGZ), D. Buthali (BOT), E. Celi (URU), T. Corfe (ENG), G. Debessu (ETH), L. Ebbin (BER), G. El Sahhar (EGY), V. Fcuma (ANG), G. Font (HUN), L. Garcia (ESP), F. Guadalupe (USA), Z. Gul (TUR), R. Hari Joshi (NEP), D. Hatmisari (INA), J. Hau (SWE), A. Herbert (BAR), S. Jayamal (SIN), D. Jordan (GER), K. Jungwirth (AUT), E. Jaureguiza (URU), B. Jones (GUA), C. A. Kaber (SWE), H. Karimi (IRI), A. Korobeinik (EST), A. Kostyev (RUS), R. Kumar (IND),</p>	<p>G. Kweku A-Dadzie (GHA), G. Lau (MAS), I. Leong (SIN), M. Lorea (ARG), S. Lputian (ARM), S. Maboneza (RWA), L. Mazouz (ALG), Y. Mazurenko (UKR), D. Mei Fang (TPE), A. Menassie (NIG), A. Mongielle (ISV), K. Msukwa (MAW), S. Muradian (USA), M. Murphy (ISV), R. Mwansa (ZAM), P. Nimityongskul (THA), M. Pilinci (ALB), R. Pinchas (ICSC), S. Reuben (ENG), T. Rich (USA), H.-H.Riedel (MAL), R. Rivello (ITA), E. Price (RSA), S. Polgar (USA), M. Sani (NIG), B. Singh (IND), T. Sitale (BOT), R. Smith (TRI), M. Smith (ISV), O. Solakoglou (TUR), K. Stephen (UGA), H. Tian (CHN), T. Tsozbatzoglou (GRE), J. Vega (GUA), M. Visco (ICSC), D. Vrhovnik (CRO), A. Wijesurya (SRI), M. Zouaoui (TUN), A. Zuieva (UKR), M. Zumbado (CRC),</p>
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1. The commission meeting was opened by CIS Commission Chairman Ali Nihat Yazici. He thanked Kirsan Ilyumzhinov for the trust he had shown in appointing him Chairman and thanked the CiS team for its hard work through the year. He thanked our global sponsor, Rosneft Oil Company, for their support in 2012 and expressed the hope that it might be increased in 2013.

He expressed pride in the 'perfect partnership' with Slovakia and Slovenia and their 250 schools (soon to be 450) taking part in the project. We will go on with smaller federations.
2. Krakow minutes (2011 Congress, Annex XX) were approved.
3. The Chairman's Report (Annex XX) was approved.
4. Executive Secretary Kevin O'Connell presented the Update since the Chairman's Report (see Annex XX). Much material has been produced this year, including 18 Premium Magazines (or 'newsletters'), and 8 newsletters for SMs all in 9 languages, our Handbook, English versions of the first two Class books by Dr Kulaç and many promotional items.
5. The meeting was presented with our monthly internal report of 1 September, prepared by General Coordinator Anna Burtasova (see Annex XX). Some of the numbers may seem low but this is a reflection of the delays experienced in fully implementing the system. It is now fully functional and we look forward with confidence to the new school year. Chairman pointed to the significant fact that this is the first time in history that FIDE is sending funds to our federations.
6. We then reviewed the reports received from Councillors, Members of the Commission and others. These can be found in the Reports section of our cis.fide.com web site.

There were many other verbal presentations during the morning (see item 9).
7. Leontxo Garcia, the highly experienced journalist of *El Pais* presented his lecture *Chess – Best Gym for the Mind & 10 Reasons to Promote Chess*. This can now be found at cis.fide.com and we recommend you show it to your potential sponsors and those authorities considering the implementation of chess in schools, higher education, prisons and other social contexts.

Highlights of the presentation: Why do so few chess players suffer from Alzheimer's? (about 0.001% instead of 8-10% of the general population). Studies show that chess may prevent, and for sure delays brain ageing. As life expectancy increases, Governments are confronted with the financial burden of taking care of elderly people unable to take care of themselves. The answer to this is to help people delay mental ageing through chess.
8. The first CiS Chess & Education Conference (August 30) was a big success. Chairman pointed out that we are not only concerned with chess in school (and pre-school), but also in Colleges, Universities and other institutes of higher education.

We must start to prepare research on the technical side of chess and train coaches in huge numbers. We must work to make chess teaching a profession and some work has already been done in this area by Kostyev in Russia, by Blanco in Venezuela and in Turkey. University level research is needed not only on the educational benefits of chess but also on chess as a sport. The Conference keynote address by Prof. Caner Açıkada, probably the number one sports scientist in Turkey, was noteworthy in this area.

9. Russell Smith, President of Trinidad Chess Federation, spoke about the work there to get chess into all 500 schools. The idea is that chess will be taught to students at University for four years; in the long run it is these University graduate teachers who will be teaching chess in the schools. The CIS Commission is preparing a syllabus that can be used immediately in the schools and which will be followed in parallel by the University trainees.

CiS member Roberto Rivello, Italy, thanked the Chairman and the Executive Secretary for their contributions to the *Chess and Mathematics: Learning by Playing* conference in Turin. Many activities were started in Turin in 2005 in the run-up to the 2006 Olympiad there and these continue, with much interest in scientific research. He referred to the first cooperation with INVALSI (the Italian National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System) - a controlled research project involving some 2,000 8 and 9-year-old children attending primary schools throughout Italy. He expressed the wish to coordinate an international team of researchers – well-known professors from different universities. He apologized for the small number of Italian student members and expressed the desire of the Italian federation to join the project.

Chairman replied that the present number in Turkey is also very small. This is a function of April not being a good time for the TSF to start and that Turkey would start to promote the scheme this autumn.

FIDE General Secretary, Ignatius Leong, President of the Singapore chess federation, said that we had the biggest attendance of any Commission. He emphasized that FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov never forgets to discuss Chess in Schools when visiting any federation, resulting in doors opening that would otherwise be closed to us. The President had successful meetings with the Minister of Education in Thailand and top Government officials in Laos.

FIDE Hon. Vice President Kurt Jungwirth, Austria, thanked Commission Chairman Ali Nihat Yazici and Executive Secretary Kevin O'Connell for their visits to Vienna which had given a kick start to school chess in the capital. The Vienna authorities are now looking for chess teachers and 80 new schools will soon have chess courses.

Jesper Hall, Sweden, made a report on the S4An social project in Sweden. This project involves 22,000 children, about a quarter of all Swedish ten year olds and 400 schools are covered. Jesper spoke about organizational matters in detail, confirming that it is much easier to train teachers to teach chess than training chess players to teach. He provides chess training for school teachers; the competition system contributed to the overall success of the project big time: the social tournament system makes every individual member of the class a very important part of the team, no matter their level of play. He has contact with 3 different universities, one of which started their first chess teaching programme this spring.

Councillor Ravindra M. Dongre gave a report on CIS projects in India, where both Gujarat and Tamil Nadu have made chess a compulsory subject. In Maharashtra there are now 100 schools involved and it is hoped that chess will be made a compulsory subject in the near future. India's 28 states have been divided into 6 zones and the AICF is now appointing Zonal Coordinators. The biggest problem they face is the lack of trainers to train the teachers.

Ex women's world champion Susan Polgar, USA, shared her experience of teaching chess in public schools and University centres since 1996. She related the remarkable story of

Brownsville, Texas, famous for the way in which chess snowballed to involve 5,000 children in this socially difficult town of 250,000 people, improving their academic performance, their confidence, their social skills and their life opportunities.

She placed special emphasis on the importance of paying attention to chess in the Colleges, not only for very young kids in schools.

Chairman thanked her for a very nice report and acknowledged that chess in higher education for some years. Chess scholarships are good, but creating chess academics, real chess sport scientists is even more important. Chairman asked Ms Polgar to help us and to contribute in this area and she gracefully accepted.

Margaret Murphy, USVI, shared her thoughts on CIS in her country. The goal of USVI federation is to increase the number of members in CIS Student Membership.

CIS Councillor Alexander Kostyev, Russia, reported on the work that is being done in the Russian State Social University in Moscow. The RSSU has organized school tournaments for teams of boys and girls since 2005 and the winners get a free trip to World and European school championships.

The Social University is preparing chess trainers of a high category, the diplomas are recognized in European countries, and foreign students can receive grants for education. RSSU graduates have several publications on chess methodology to their name. There is a special program for the disabled, too. During the annual Moscow Open in February, tournaments for students and pupils are held.

Chairman expressed his opinion that the number of such Universities should be increased.

Continental President and CIS continental coordinator for Africa, Lakhdar Mazouz reported on CIS in Algeria and Africa in general. A CIS100 project has begun this year in Algeria. A lot of African federations want to widen their chess activities through CIS. 7 other federations will soon join CIS.

Gihan El Sahhar from Egypt reported on CIS in Egypt. In 2006 an agreement with the Ministry of Education was signed but then the Minister changed. Since then the general situation in Egypt has been very difficult. There are promises from the President of Egypt and the new Minister of Education that the project will start next year.

GM Smbat Lputian summarized the results of CIS Project ongoing in Armenia. The President of the Armenian chess federation is also the President of the country and this contributes a lot to the development of chess in Armenia. Besides, chess is very popular in Armenia and most of the governors and other administrative bodies know and like chess.

The federation started from organizing school Olympiads that are now going for 7 years. After that chess became more respected in schools. CIS Project started in 2008. A group of 12-13 educational experts and 7-8 psychologists worked for 8 months and the results were published. During this time they prepared 1400 teachers to be able to give chess lessons in schools. Educational materials for 4 years of chess education were prepared: class books, work books, teachers' manuals and a psychological syllabus. Chess is now a compulsory subject in the school curriculum for 1-4 years of education. A study to establish the benefits of the program is being made - a benefit for the whole world.

Hadi Karimi, Iran, made a brief report. He has been collecting information and the experiences of others during the meetings of the CIS commission since 2006. In 2006-07 Iran had a pilot CIS project in Ceyhan, 50 volunteer trainers participated. Each pupil in Iran has 1.5 hours for sport per week in school. The federation wants to include chess in this activity and in this way start a CIS project in Iran. Hopefully, this will happen in 2013. At the moment the federation works in the footsteps on the Armenian model, preparing books and materials. Another important part of the project is studying chess using the Internet. Software is prepared. The third part of the program is the official university degree of chess trainer. This has been developed using the experience of the Turkish federation and Russian State Social University.

A newcomer to the CIS commission, Marco Zumbado, Costa Rica, noted that the chess federation of his country would like to start a CIS Project.

Esteban Jauregizar, Uruguay, reported on the CIS project that was started in 2000 in his country, considering chess mainly as a cultural heritage with over 15 centuries of history. The goal is to include chess as a compulsory subject. There are 36 chess classes at the moment, all taught by schoolteachers (not chess players) who have been taught to teach chess. A University psychology faculty is evaluating the cognitive impact of the program.

The presentation of Claudia Amura, Argentina, showed the progress of CIS project in San Luis. In 2006 nobody played chess in San Luis which has a small population. Government supported the project and sponsored the program. After 4 years, chess became a compulsory subject. 56,000 children and 70 instructors are now involved in the project which altogether adds up to 1157 classes of chess per week. The Internet is widely used for competitions.

Ghidey Debessu, Ethiopia, reported that the Ethiopian chess federation is very much interested in starting a CIS project and need guidance and information, which the representatives of the federation got during various meetings at Istanbul Olympiad. Main problems: lack of chess instructors and FIDE registered competitions.

Abigail Tian, China, shared the problem of chess in China where other intellectual games are popular, such as Chinese chess and Go, and they compete with chess. One very positive development in 2010-2012 is that many girls want to follow in the footsteps of reigning world champion Hou Yifan and have started to play chess, having her as an idol. 5 million people play chess in China according to research by the Chinese chess federation, which is actually not that many, considering the population of the country. As Ms Tian emphasized, China has a long way to go with CIS but the longest journey starts with the smallest step and there is strong support for this project from the Government and the chess federation.

10. Chairman closed the meeting at 12:58.

Ali Nihat Yazici

Chairman

Kevin O'Connell

Executive Secretary



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