



72nd FIL Congress Lake Placid USA

Report of the Secretary General

Dear Colleagues, I would also like to offer a warm welcome from my side to the 72nd FIL Congress here in historic Lake Placid, which hosted the 1932 and 1980 Olympic Winter Games. I would also like to thank our gracious hosts-ORDA and USA Luge for the excellent preparations for this Congress and for hosting a very successful World Cup race this past season-a long overdue return to World Cup racing to Lake Placid, following the difficulties that were posed by Covid-19. It is also impressive to see the commitment from the State of New York in supporting Luge and the other Olympic Winter sports. As many of you already know, the IBSF will hold its Congress after ours here in Lake Placid, and we will have a cross-over day where the Executive Boards of both Federations will meet on Sunday to discuss common goals for the sliding sports.

Together, we faced some challenges this past season with the double world cups and the unusual weather that brought warm temperature and rain. But through it all, you, the National Federations, and your teams prevailed for a very successful season highlighted by the World Championships in Altenberg and the exciting World Cup Finale in Sigulda. A special thanks to the Latvian Luge Federation for the fun and very entertaining Gala event in Sigulda following the final world cup race. It was a great way to wrap up the season.

I also wanted to highlight the successful Youth Olympic Games held in Gangwon Korea this past season. The preparations and execution carried out by our Korean colleagues were exceptional. Thank you, Ms. Park and the Korean Luge Federation, for your support for this important event. Our FIL team did a great job supporting this event. The Legacy Foundation created after the 2018 PyeongChang Games also continues to play a key role in developing luge athletes in Asia. I would like to thank the IOC Solidarity Department for the annual grants to support developing luge athletes in Countries underrepresented at the Olympic Winter Games. This support was critical to assist athletes in qualifying for the Youth Games in Korea, as a stepping-stone to the Olympic Winter Games.

The FIL continues to build on its commitment to offer a premium product to our traditional television audience and our internet-based programming which is a combination of Live Streaming/FIL Studio and pushing out interesting stories and clips out on the various FIL social media platforms. One of the biggest improvements this past season was the implementation of a new state-of-the-art and entertaining graphics package and technologies with our partners at Chyron and Hego. These improvements will also result in reducing the cost of broadcasting our events as more tasks can be done with fewer people or remotely, as well as meet our high priority, to bring the athletes' personalities and stories to the forefront, and better communicate what is going on during our events with our fan base. Through all of our efforts we saw significant increased views across all our TV audience and internet based social media platforms.

Speaking of Media, I have a short video that I would like to share with you showcasing highlights from last year's season. **PLAY VIDEO**

It is less than 20 months until the next Olympic Winter Games in Milano-Cortina. As pointed out in President Fogelis' report, there is a race to finish the new track in Cortina in time for the FIL and the IBSF to conduct the Pre-homologation in March of next year. This process is critical to ensure that the track meets our safety and technical standards. Your Executive Board

is monitoring this process very closely with the assistance of the IOC Games and Sport Departments. The Head of the FIL Track Commission, Markus Aschauer, is deeply involved, bringing many decades of track construction experience to monitor as well as share advice to our Italian colleagues in the hope that it can be finished in time for the 2026 Olympic Winter Games. As President Fogelis mentioned in his report, Milano-Cortina 2026 is also developing a Plan B in case the Cortina track is not ready in time. It is important to point out that this new track in Cortina will be completed regardless. We certainly hope for the Olympics but in any case, it will be a big boost to the sliding sports in Italy and it give the opportunity for the FIL to hold World Cups, World Championships as well as national and regional events into the future.

The Sport Manager for Luge at the Milano-Cortina Games is our experienced and trusted friend-Normunds Kotans. He is with us here at the Congress and will give you all an update on the status of the Cortina track as well as Plan B during tomorrow's session.

The FIL continues to oversee the implementation of our Strategic Plan-Slide 2026. As you know, many parts of this plan have already been implemented or are now in progress. Tomorrow, you will receive updates from the Chairs of the various Working Groups charged with carrying out this important work. One of those updates is related to our Natural Track and Public Sledding plans for this upcoming season. We are very pleased that the FIL will carry out a strategic effort for a versatile, accessible, and affordable form of luge that connects with the public. This includes offering a luge sled that can operate on snow and ice, is not expensive, and is widely available. The FIL is excited to see this program begin to roll out next season. You will hear more about the initiative tomorrow. It is our goal for the FIL to be a leading International Olympic Sports Federation, operating at the highest level for the sport of luge, and meeting the high standards of good governance.

Since our last Congress, the FIL along with the other Winter IFs have been working closely with the IOC to develop a strategy to sustain the Olympic Winter Games in the face of global warming and increased costs and risks of staging the Games. This collaborative effort has resulted in the IOC and now Milano-Cortina, as well as future Games hosts, aligning standards outlined in the FIL Playbook, to reduce unnecessary expenses at the Olympics. Further, the IOC and the Winter IFs have agreed on a strategy to identify and select future host cities with existing venues, experience in carrying out major sporting events, and favorable/sustainable climate conditions. As you may have already seen in the media, this effort has resulted in the IOC Session, prior to the Opening Ceremonies of the 2024 Paris Olympics, vote to approve-The Alps of France as host for the 2030 Games and Salt Lake City USA as host for the 2034 Games. This will ensure safe, reliable, experienced, cost effective and sustainable Games into the future. The IOC and the Winter IFs will continue to work closely together on other important goals, such as increasing athlete quota which will allow more athletes from more countries to compete in Olympic Winter sports.

I would like to thank President Fogelis and our Executive Board for their leadership this past year, along with our dedicated, hard-working staff. Also, thanks to the IOC for all the support, and all our sponsors and stakeholders. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this past year as the FIL's Secretary General.

Thank you!