

La LETTRE du PRESIDENT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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by Prof. Bruno Grandi, President of the FIG

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A LOOK AT OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN GENEVA

In my humble opinion, the *Gymnastics Week* held in Geneva to honour the 125th anniversary of the founding of our Federation and which hosted the Assembly, technical symposiums and a colloquium was a shining success across the board.

Meeting with technical delegates, a colloquium spotlighting important current affairs such as television and its relationship to sport, marketing and growing ethical dilemmas are sensitive areas that should receive the attention they deserve.

The colloquium followed a debate hinging on crucial technical questions for the seven disciplines. Speakers developed their themes brilliantly and comprehensively; I would like to express my gratitude for their invaluable collaboration.

I would also like to thank Steve McLean for having taken us to the stars! An astronaut and former gymnast, Steve wanted to take a keepsake from his sport into space, associating it with his marvellous adventure. We all had the opportunity to have a look at the *legendary* FIG pennant, come from space to adorn its walls. We saw poignant images from an extraordinary documentary and applauded gymnastic elements executed in total weightlessness. The FIG and gymnastics as a whole have been inspired by an outstanding man.

The official ceremony commemorating our anniversary was held in the presence of International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge, distinguished IOC members, Messieurs Hein Verbruggen and Tamas Ajan; IOC General Director, Urs Lacotte, Olympic Games Director, Gilbert Felli, and International Handball Federation President, Dr Hassan Mustafa. To this prestigious list, I would add our Honorary President and friend, Yuri Titov and Hans-Peter Tschopp, President of the Swiss Gymnastics Federation, and Jean Willisegger who made this historic event possible

The FIG Gala, which I had the pleasure of enjoying with Lifetime IOC Honorary President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, delighted a large audience at Geneva's Arena. To the Federations and gymnasts who supported and worked toward the realisation of such a spectacular show, I would like to extend my warmest thanks.

The anniversary celebration also provided a platform for reflection, consideration and a moment to ponder our future, our ability to make good on our promises and to take up new challenges. The FIG must tighten its ranks and focus on the family of gymnastics, a family in which we enjoy personal rights, but also a sense of duty. A family in which everyone contributes to and strives toward solidarity, and for whose well-being every member invests his or her resources in a spirit of belonging and unity.

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Artistic Gymnastics is a sport which must move forward with the times if it hopes to remain an upbeat, modern discipline. But it must above all remain *artistic*. These are a few of the tasks the Executive Committee hopes to accomplish in the near future:

- New formulation of the contract used with Organisation Committees;
- Continued, significant and positive requests for the Academies;
- Swift establishment of an educational project for judges;
- Promotion of Trampoline with financial assistance to Federations prepared to substantially invest in the discipline;
- A marketing project to be presented in the upcoming months;
- Modifications of the statutes in terms of the division of powers as discussed at the assembly;
- Level 3 brevets for Technical Committee members.

Gymnastics is a demanding sport, which requires extensive training and lengthy preparation. Results on an international level can only be obtained through cultural maturity and well-proportioned experience. This is our first objective: to create a global understanding and knowledge throughout the national Federations in the aim of ensuring the optimal preparation of our athletes.

Before concluding this anniversary Congress, judges showing outstanding work were honoured for their exemplary conduct. In the future, an official act of this kind will become increasingly significant, for these men and women are the pride of the FIG.

With my compliments.

Bruno Grandj,
President of the FIG