

FAI PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I cannot believe that one year has passed since our Madrid General Conference and today here we are in Paris for the 98th GC, which coincides with our centenary.

It's hard to believe FAI is a hundred years old and we have the chance to be present at this historic moment.

The world has changed enormously in the last century, and we can say that in the last 20 or 30 years the pace of change has accelerated strongly, allowing some of our air sports to develop and putting others under threat.

FAI too has major problems to face.

1. evolution of our structure and members
2. access to air-space, and other regulatory matters for our Air Sport Persons

1-a) Our statutes and by-laws are still very much inspired by the original version, although of course some adaptation and development have taken place

The situation of our members' NACs or federations has substantially changed. The financial support they get or got from their governing bodies is more and more difficult to obtain.

Power and money today are in the hands of the organisations that represent the "air sport persons" (APs), as we in FAI define them.

The multiplication of the number of air-sports, certain of them under the full control of the NAC and others not, makes it difficult to control, to support and to organise all these sports.

You all know our sports can only thrive thanks to volunteers and you know too, that it is very difficult today to find people who have the will, the competence and the time, the 3 major elements absolutely necessary to be efficient.

2-a) air space access, regulatory matters. There is no doubt that the spectacular development of the airlines brings problems to our sports and practitioners, especially in the core areas of our developed world.

Unfortunately, this enormous danger is still not fully perceived by many of our pilots and sports people.

There is not enough solidarity among all the air-sports.

I had last year the honour to become your President and I know you expect from the President and the Board guidance, suggestions and proposals on how to solve and

overcome the problems, to allow our members and APs to continue to practise, and to ensure that FAI can view the future with optimism.

Our mission and ambition is to be the World Federation for air-sports.

That means our NACs in cooperation with the FAI Air Sport Commissions have to promote the different sports, to make sure they are all present in the NAC.

Already today, we have quite successful air sports organisations, acting totally outside our member organisations.

Why do they do this? Because they think that we, FAI and the NACs do not bring them sufficient support, and they decide to go their own way.

I will not mention any names, but we all know that is the reality of today.

I appeal to our Commissions to have the sporting code under permanent control, but not to forget the need for different levels of rules for high-level competition and for people who want to compete at a low level, but not necessarily to become one day a world champion.

Our communication is insufficient for our sports in our members' states.

To develop our sports, we need media communication. To get this support, we have to adapt our sporting rules and our environment to make competitions more public-friendly.

Such competitions do exist, but unfortunately most often outside FAI.

I am convinced that this can be done without losing our soul, but some adaptation is absolutely necessary.

I am just back from Albuquerque and I can tell you, I was very impressed to see 750 hot air balloons on the ground, taking off early every morning and followed by more than 10 000 people every day, all making an effort to get up at five or six o'clock in the morning.

I strongly invite our delegates, our NAC Presidents, our Commissions, all those who have the mission, to propose people as delegates in our sporting commissions, to support candidates to the board, and propose delegates from the NACs to the general conference, not forgetting the 3 targets, will, competence and time, as well as a clear vision of where our future lies.

The major change proposed by former President Eilif NESS in Linköping in the year 2000 to replace the council by the EB, got a favourable vote from the general conference. His idea was and is still good in my opinion, to have business-minded people elected, having the famous 3 qualities and good knowledge about sport aviation, bringing forward proposals to the president and the secretary general to be discussed and voted by the board and put on the agenda of the next General Conference.

After having been a member for 4 years, responsible for finances, I must admit that the result achieved has not been as expected.

I am sure that among the participants of this conference there are delegates who feel the same.

It is therefore our common duty to find the resources to change and improve our venerable institution so that there can be a 200th anniversary.

I am sorry to have to say all this, but having been elected president, I feel I have the obligation to put on the table the problems for our future.

After having said this, let us have a look at what we have achieved; as usual a cup can be seen to be half empty or half full, I see it as half full.

Max Bishop will give you details about our centennial celebrations, which are and were very successful all over the world particularly in Switzerland and I am convinced here in Paris.

Various Air Sports Commissions contributed by organising specific events. I express my thanks to all those who were involved.

Special thanks go to Max Bishop and J.M. Badan who did a tremendous job with all the other staff members in Lausanne.

On certain other important objectives we were sometimes handicapped, but after the 15 th of October full capacity is again available in Lausanne.

I just want to mention that we were able to conclude an arrangement with the Aresti family terminating this dispute, which went on for years.

We are close to successful conclusion of a new arrangement with Jean Louis Monnet for the Grand Prix.

I hope that the 3 monthly News Letter gives you a good idea about the general activity of your President. I am naturally in nearly daily contact with the secretary general through mail and often phone.

I would like to conclude and express my personal thanks and in your name to Max Bishop who has done for so many years an excellent and outstanding job with the help of all other staff members in Lausanne.

I am convinced that I can count on your help to lead this old and prestigious lady FAI to a bright future and many more years of successful air sport competitions and events in the world.