

Dear delegates, dear board members, Piero, Silvia, Colin, dear friends,

Last year when we said goodbye in Figueira da Foz most of you promised me 2022 would be an interesting year. I can confirm, you were all completely right.

2022 definitely will be the year remembered for our entrance into the big multisport arena of the ECH in Munchen. The wonderful event at the iconic Königsplatz meant a big step in our continental evolution, as well as for the IFSC.

26 National federations participated in this event and I believe we all witnessed the huge possibilities this event structure represented. The television coverage all over Europe, the crowds waiting outside day after day in the hope to get a last ticket or to get a glimpse over the fence, the different national Olympic Committees that visited,... It was a very special event and I am happy to confirm we will also join this organisation in 2026 and 2030.

Alongside this, we can say that the full competition season was a huge success. Heiko will provide more in detail on this later, but I would just like to thank the 8 different organizing NF's, without you Event Organizers we would be nowhere. So thank you all! Special mention goes to, Austria Climbing and the DAV for the European Championships you both guaranteed.

Further details regarding the sport report I will leave for Heiko later on in this PA so I can focus more on the political side, which unfortunately brings me to Ukraine and our good friends there. The war is still going on, every day people die. Danyil Boldryev, our newly crowned European speed champion, was, together with his girlfriend and his physio, sleeping in my place for some weeks the end of March, beginning of April. It was eye opening and shocking to me to realize throughout our chats what it means to have an apartment in Mariopol, or to have a brother and a father on guarding duty, gun in hand and morning after morning waking up not knowing if those dear family members have survived another night.

When you all elected me as president I thought I would work on having more member federations. I never expected we would have to suspend two members in the first 6 months of my presidency but it is what you did in SLC. You did it right and today is not the day for a change.

The IFSC Athletes commission asked, soon after the decision to not allow the Russian and Belarussian athletes in competition, that we'd look out for solutions to get them back in as soon as possible. On the sportive side it is what we have to do and will do. We have to consider which roadmap to follow to get those sportsmen and women back in. But, not yet, not as long as Ukrainians are dying because of Russian bombs, drones, guns and occupation.

I would like to invite you all to stand and take a minute of silence in remembrance of all the people that have died and are dying, all these victims of war and all the people that suffer oppression, specifically in Ukraine but also worldwide, people, journalists, activists, political prisoners,...

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Thank you

Luckily 2022 had also more positive points. With our new board, Heiko, Zoe, Burgi, Urs, Charlotte, Paolo and me, we decided early in the year to officialise 4 commissions in order to make sure we would work on the action points that are listed in our strategic plan.

- The sport commission continues the work of the former non-official sport department and guarantees our main operations, the events.
- The sustainability commission ensures next steps, after the launch of our sustainability award in 2021, and makes sure we are aware and work actively on this topic which is progressively impacting more and more the daily lives of all who live on Mother Earth. They have also widened their focus from only the ecological challenges to other domains where we need to be careful for our future.
- The Paraclimbing commission got launched to try to develop more this enriching part of our community in Europe and to address the challenges we face at continental and national level.
- And the development commission was needed to work on our growth, defining where we can help you, our member federations, but also where we at continental level, maybe forget to develop ourselves or where we have difficulties to do so.

The officialization of these 4 commissions is our main achievement of the year. With these commissions we can now count 13 different NF's that are actively contributing to the governing work in our continental council. Adding the event organizing member federations, we are in total 16 different NF's that actively made everything happen throughout this year. This high participation level shows that we are strong and I am certain we will become even stronger over the years. The board and myself, will actively look for more opportunities to get all our members involved.

Allow me to make a small side step. At all levels we need this kind of involvement. We need good active commission members, also within the IFSC world. If the athletes have the impression they are not informed or consulted, if there have been problems in the ethics commission, if we want more outcomes from the medical commission, if we want a disciplinary commission to react swiftly,... for all of this we, you need to bring in the good people, people that know what they talk about and that want to contribute in their best way. You are the only ones that can bring in those people, that quality and I wanted to put your attention on this important role we all play in the good and transparent functioning of IFSC.

What else to report on 2022... You all remember that we voted for a budget with more room for administrative support. In the beginning of the year, after some positive negotiations, Mario did leave us because he had some good opportunities elsewhere. Soon we felt the need to urgently cover the lack in the sport-follow-up. We found Alfons Dornauer whom, with his athlete background and being Innsbruck based, could easily take over and guarantee the same work as was being done before. We chose as a board to start with that same basic package, testing first and allowing Alfons to grow in the job. Based upon your reactions and our experiences we can confirm that a positive evaluation has been made and that we are now ready to speed up on the administrative support side. It will definitely allow us to grow more.

If Mario left us, if in the beginning we were a bit slow on the administrative side it was because as a new board we were discovering. We also discovered the interactions with IFSC. The main work for

me as president in 2022 and a recurring topic in each and every board meeting was the balance and the understanding between IFSC Europe and IFSC.

As a CC we need to know what our freedom of action is, what our responsibilities and duties are, where we have authority and how we can interact and cooperate with the world level. All these were not clear in the beginning of 2022 and we are still in the process of clarifying at this very moment.

- It wasn't 100% clear how we could negotiate a contract with office staff, in the meantime that's luckily clarified
- It is not completely clear how much power we have on the European rules, who has the initiative in making the QS for European qualifiers or European games and how the decision process is conceived exactly.
- It is not clear what freedom we have in determining the European calendar.
- If we officialise commissions there is a fear of redundancy on IFSC's side
- We are still not sure if we are allowed to organize officials courses at a continental level
- The planning of our PA on a different timeframe as the IFSC's GA is under question
- Etcetera

The IFSC statutes and regulations are not conclusive on all these points and, interesting for all of you to know, our continental regulations and the strategic plan, both voted by you last year, are not validated by the IFSC EB because they are somehow considered redundant and even conflicting on some points with the IFSC's. It is not that they are rejected, the vote is simply "on hold" while we await a clarification of the continental councils position within the IFSC.

So from December 2021 until April 2022 there was a focus on the statutes negotiations and vote in Salt Lake City. From April 2022 until today we are in negotiation with the IFSC for an agreement, clarifying what we as European council can and should do. Sometimes it feels like we are wasting our time BUT it is the most important thing to do AND it is not that we are standing still in the meantime. We have superb events, we have highly active commissions,... Somehow we are just waiting for these clarifications and once these are finalized we can, at last, shift gears and speed up.

All these seemingly endless discussions, they do help to define more clearly who and what we are and they help IFSC to see a clear pathway for global development. Because it is true that, as Europe, we are leading, we are an example for other continents. Careful, we can also learn from them, e.g. the Asian council has produced some very interesting outputs, but in general we set the bar for the other CC's.

I am happy to report that we have frequent and good interactions with all.

- With Oceania, Naomi, whom most of you know as a strong GA participant in the past, we discuss mostly governance topics at world level and she is good in showing me how different the world is from our European context.
- With Africa, George, we discuss how to help in the development and they watch closely how we function in Europe. Later we will discuss the resolution for their athletes' participation at our events.
- With Asia, Mr Li, the communication is a bit more complicated, due to language and culture, but also here a will to cooperate more closely has been expressed

- With Pan America, haunted by internal challenges, the first contacts with Bob and Diego have been interesting and insights have been exchanged but there still is a way to go.

I am glad we have these intercontinental interactions and I am sure these will bring us inspiration and opportunities. The stronger each CC will get, the stronger IFSC will be and the stronger we as IFSC Europe can become.

Which brings me to the last part of my report, you, our NF's. Because the same principle applies here. The stronger you all get, the stronger we are as a CC and as IFSC. I am happy to see you all getting more active, to have you here with us, in person or virtual, to have you in our commissions, to see you at competitions,...

I am happy to know you will be able to welcome a new member, Iceland, to the family at the GA in Singapore and I hope we can continue our growth and our good work.

I hope that together we can show the world, through our beautiful sport, a new way of being a peaceful, respectful, sustainable way of living beautiful experiences together.

Stronger together.

Thank you!