

# FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES ÉCHECS



GENS UNA SUMUS

Recognized by the International Olympic Committee  
1 Avenue de la Gare - 1002 Lausanne, Switzerland  
Athens office: 9 Syggrou Ave., 11743 Athens, Greece  
Tel.: (+41) 21 5087028, Tel.: (+30) 210 9212047, Email: office@fide.com  
www.fide.com

Zug, May 9, 2018

Dear Members of the Executive Board  
Dear Members of the Presidential Board  
Dear Presidents and Delegates of National Federations  
Dear Chairpersons of the Commissions

Following my letters dated February 12 and 15, respectively, I would like to update you with the past and current situation of FIDE's finances.

As I have announced in my previous letters mentioned above, UBS has accordingly closed our accounts for business activity. The bank gave us a final deadline of April 30, 2018, and by May 1 we were not able to use our accounts. Worse than that, for three days UBS froze our accounts and we couldn't make any payments or withdraw our money. Only last Friday, May 4, did the compliance division of UBS allow us to transfer money. This demonstrates that my warnings in the letters mentioned above were not 'fake news' as some people suggested.

For the past four months we have tried very hard to find a new bank without success. There were several banks who refused to speak to us. Of the few banks which allowed us to present our problem, all refused to open an account for FIDE as long as FIDE is connected with persons on the sanction list of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Thus, pressurized by the imminent closure of the accounts, our lawyers found a solution via a trust company which has taken the money UBS unblocked on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May. Only today were the contracts with this trust company finalised and signed by FIDE and we shall be able to function normally very soon. Of course, we are still looking for a solution with a new bank.

## Current background noise

In the last two days there were some tweets by Nigel Short which claimed (i) that "*the administration, headed by Makropoulos, transferred millions out of the account, before it was closed on April 30<sup>th</sup>*", (ii) then he wondered whether FIDE has a new account or whether the money is under a mattress, and finally (iii) he asked for a confirmation "*that the FIDE millions have (not) been transferred to Qatar, as suggested by Makropoulos*".

I have to admit that I wanted to wait with further news until all our contracts have been signed. However, this flood of tweets with their obviously false and mischievous statements have to be answered now.

Firstly, the tweets mentioned above insinuate some financial irregularities yet Nigel has not asked me to comment as FIDE's treasurer. I am very surprised that Nigel should make accusations without having attempted to make the most rudimentary clarification.

Secondly, in these tweets it was written that FIDE has transferred millions. The interesting point here is that FIDE doesn't have millions (plural) at all. A quick look into the annual balances would have shown this. Once again, a thorough and constructive approach to FIDE's finances looks different.

Thirdly, in the tweets it is claimed that FIDE transferred the money prior to the closure on April 30. This is completely wrong. The money was transferred on May 4th after UBS froze our accounts for three days. There was no alternative but to transfer our money because UBS was not willing to keep our money and we had to consider the possibility and risk that the money will be frozen for even longer.

Fourthly, I won't comment on the ridiculous comments about the use of mattresses.

Fifthly, the money has not been transferred to Qatar. This was never intended, nor was it ever said by Makropoulos. This also is just a far-fetched allegation.

Finally, in my view such allegations are not constructive at a very difficult time for FIDE which we face due to Kirsan Ilyumzhinov's presence on the sanction list of the US Department of the Treasury. Provided it is not just a polemic discussion, I am more than willing to discuss the current status of our financial situation with everyone.

In my personal view, these accusations must be seen against the background of Nigel Short's recently launched campaign for presidency. However, such allegations are very serious and insinuate criminal acts. If Nigel Short really wants to accuse me as the treasurer of having performed such acts, I would appreciate if he would tell me directly and, of course, we then have to bring this issue to another tribunal. Instead of getting information first hand from me he has chosen to accuse via Twitter. The question obviously arises, is this how a potential president should act? Obviously in a pre-election phase, each candidate tries to present himself as the most electable but no one should fall below a certain level of integrity as Nigel Short has done.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adrian M. Siegel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Prof. Dr. Adrian M. Siegel  
FIDE Treasurer