

SAINT-VINCENT
3 rd October 2008

**Dear President of Honour
Dear Companions of Honour
Dear Delegates
Ladies and gentlemen,**

A warm welcome to all of you for the 102nd General Conference in Italy, in Saint-Vincent, in the Aosta Valley.

**Let me give you a synopsis of what happened since our last conference in Rhodes and some perspectives for the future.
I shall start with the World Air Games 2009, which will be held 1 hour's drive from here in Turin in June 2009.**

You will all have the opportunity to visit the town and the main venue the Aeritalia Air Field on the Sunday excursion.

I count on you after this visit to strongly promote the games among your members and invite them to link the games with a visit to this beautiful region.

The follow up of progress in connection with the games was one of our main targets in the last year with regular meetings with the LOC at Turin or Lausanne.

The LOC will make a presentation in St Vincent during this conference to give an up date on the situation 8 1/2 month before the beginning of the games.

The Air Sports Commissions in general did a good job to prepare the rules for the WAG events and a certain number of test events have taken place.

It appeared clearly that multi Air Sports events of this size to be held on only 3 places during one week was a huge target.

Thanks to the LOC, the ASCs and the secretariat in Lausanne, with J. M. Badan as coordinator, I am convinced we shall have a satisfactory multi Air Sports event in Turin next year.

The LOC President, Giuseppe VIRIGLIO will make his presentation later on, giving you an overall view of the preparation, the planned overall outcome, linked in some way to the finances available.

The Turin event showed us clearly that we are still in a learning process in regard to our World Air Games, but we still believe we have an excellent vehicle to bring our sports to a wide public with international

television coverage. Regular improvement with the future games is predictable

Our preparations for the 2009 games have confirmed clearly that close cooperation with a professional organization is necessary and that FAI has to keep more control over the organizers through a revised organizer agreement.

Future success depends on our capability to have a highly professional organization in place looking after a series of games, so that we can implement all the experience we gain at the following events.

RED-BULL AIR RACE

The contract signed last year was prolonged this year. Today, 7 of this year's 8 races have already successfully taken place.

The cooperation between RBAR and FAI is excellent, for the mutual benefit of both.

I have the pleasure to inform you that an extension of our cooperation is in preparation and will be presented to you shortly.

We are proposing that the Red Bull Air Race series will be sanctioned by the FAI, under authority of this Conference.

The supervision contract remains unchanged.

This gives us more visibility to the outside world increasing the popularity of Air Sports.

ATMOS

This project did not advance as expected for different reasons.

There is a new reflection going on to determine clearly how FAI and ASC's could manage this type of product.

FAI central already does a lot of work for different ranking systems for certain commissions and we have to find out urgently how to combine the different needs and models already existing.

Media-TV coverage of our world and continental championships for individual Air Sports.

We have made good progress with FLYING-ACES and a 5 year contract for covering these events is ready for signature.

ASL – Peter Newport

We are still in discussion with ASL, who hired 2 persons who are highly qualified in sporting sponsorship and the drafting of contracts with organizers and sport Federations.

They propose to enter into an agreement with FAI to organize regional multi Air Sport events and future World Air Games in a joint venture, and this is still under discussion.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Max Bishop will give you more details but 2008 has been a good year for all our sports.

The board had 3 meetings in 2008 and 3 telephone conferences.

I travelled quite extensively this year, attending in January 2008 in Wanaka (New Zealand) the 1st regional multi Air Sport event, which can be considered as a kind of rehearsal for future games. This event showed clearly the complexity of such an event in technical, coordination and organisational matters.

A certain member of Commission meetings and Championships were also on the program.

Max Bishop and I participated in the Sport Accord Forum in Athens which has become one of the most important international sports forums, linked in an ideally convenient way with the general assemblies of the International World Games Association, the Association of International Sports Federations, recognized by the IOC and last but not least the GAISF, General Association of International Sports Federations. .

I was invited to represent the FAI at the memorial ceremony for Steve Fossett in Chicago.

A significant number of trips to Lausanne and Turin, as well as some meetings in Paris, in presence of Max Bishop, have to be added.

A daily exchange of mails between Lausanne and Paris, as well numerous SKYPE telephone conversations what a wonderful tool, show you the intensive work between the President and Secretary General.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

As already mentioned last year the workload in the secretariat continues to increase. Everything is getting more complicated and consumes more time.

The fact that we have more contacts and contracts with professional companies obliges FAI to become more professional too.

All over the world, the shortage of efficient and competent volunteers in Sports is becoming a real worry.

That means we have no choice in the future than to find the funding outside of our member fees to hire people qualified to assist the ASCs, the board and the event organizers by taking away part of the administrative burden they have to deal with at present.

Since the year 2000, when the new organisation of FAI came into force, a big step forward has been made.

The changed structure and all the work done even before certain way, this process thanks to all the work done even before 2000, the fact that sports like ours find some interest form sponsors and broadcasters made this possible. ??????

The fact that sponsors and broadcasters are now showing some interest in our air sports in some measure due to all the work that has been done in the last few years, in part even before the reorganisation

It is not easy to navigate between the needs to maintain our traditions and to find the money required to continue the work that this Federation started 103 years ago, when 8 nations inspired by a vision or a dream, maybe both, met in Paris.

I think we have started to get some results and now have to confirm and expand this tendency in the near future.

My second mandate is coming to an end this year. My 8 years on the board, and as your President for the last 4 of them, have been a great pleasure and an honour for me.

I would like to continue for a final mandate if that is your wish, dear delegates, so as to finish and conclude certain projects started a few years ago.

Let me express my thanks to my colleagues of the board, to the Commission Presidents and to you, dear delegates, and last but not least to our staff in Lausanne and particularly to Max Bishop, our extraordinary secretary general.

Let us continue to work together to have the Air Sport persons flying, Championships taking place, new World Records to be accomplished and to do our best that this wonderful Federation still exists in the 22nd century.

Now, dear delegates, ladies and gentlemen, let us have a good and efficient general conference, in the Aosta Valley.

Thank you for your attention.