

IBCA Presidential Board Report, August 2025 – September 2026

Two events shaped the period: the election of a new board at the Congress in Rzeszów in August 2025, and the death of President Jörgen Magnusson in April 2026, less than eight months into the 2025–29 term.

Since then the 1st Vice-President, Piotr Dukaczewski, has chaired the board, and the work has continued without interruption. The World Team Championship was held in Montenegro with 22 countries. Cooperation with FIDE on chess in schools for blind children moved from an idea to a named FIDE counterpart. Serbia was readmitted as a provisional member under a new national leadership. The Technical Commission has a new chairman and a set of accessibility recommendations for chess software.

The Extraordinary Congress on 15 October 2026 will elect a new President. One candidate has been nominated: Marilyn Bland (USA).

In memoriam: Jörgen Magnusson

Dr. Jörgen Magnusson (Sweden), President of IBCA, died in April 2026 after a long illness. IBCA informed about his death in an official statement on 15 April 2026, signed by Piotr Dukaczewski on behalf of the association.

Jörgen Magnusson led the board until the end. He chaired the Executive Board meeting of 7 March 2026, some five weeks before his death was announced, and had undertaken to arrange the Kenyan team's stay at the World Team Championship.

Much of what this report describes began with him:

- **A fairer title system.** His paper *Facing reality for a fair and bright future* opened the discussion on sight categories.
- **Chess beyond Europe.** He worked on the supply of Braille chess sets to South Africa and Kenya, the start of coaching in schools for the blind in Nairobi, and the coaching courses with Aegean University, in which he enrolled himself alongside participants from Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Philippines.
- **An open organisation.** Under his presidency online tournaments were recognised, Congress met in hybrid form, and the first World Rapid Championship was held.
- **Accessible technology.** As chairman of the Technology Commission he started the work with Noctie on an accessible AI chess coach, and the cost of EUR90,000 he paid in full by himself. He also cooperated with DGT on improving the Echo clocks.
- **FIDE.** He opened the contact with the FIDE President that led to the chess-in-schools cooperation.

In his final wishes he asked that the work of IBCA continue with determination and shared purpose. The board has tried to honour that, and extends its condolences again to his family and friends.

Congress 2025 and the election of the board

The Congress in Rzeszów on 23 August 2025 unanimously elected the only ticket nominated, led by Jörgen Magnusson, for the 2025–29 term. 26 of the 38 countries with voting rights were present or represented, and the Congress was held in hybrid form. Seven member countries had nominated the ticket.

Presidential Board

Office	Name	Country
President	Jörgen Magnusson	Sweden
1st Vice-President	Piotr Dukaczewski	Poland
2nd Vice-President	Nikos Kalesis	Greece
Secretary General	Olivier Deville	France
Treasurer	Thorsten Müller	Germany

Other members of the Executive Board, approved unanimously on the President's proposal

Role	Name	Country
Continental Representative, Africa	Johannes Grib	South Africa
Continental Representative, America	Fernando Daza	Colombia
Continental Representative, Asia	James Infiesto	Philippines
Continental Representative, Europe	Mahendra Galani	Austria
Board member	Marilyn Bland	USA

Role	Name	Country
Board member	Kishan Gangolli	India
Board member	Harrison Nyaga	Kenya

Other decisions of the Congress

- **Statute.** The modified statute was voted in; in special cases it allows more than one organisation per country to be a member of IBCA.
- **Exclusions.** Braille Chess Canada was excluded. Serbia's member organisation NSSSS was excluded after the problems around the 2025 Olympiad: financial irregularities and visa refusals that kept several Asian and African teams away. Serbian players kept the right to play individual events under the IBCA flag.
- **New members confirmed.** Vietnam, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Canada (AQJEHV) and Barbados.
- **Discharge.** The outgoing board was discharged unanimously.
- **World Team Championship 2026.** Montenegro's bid was approved unanimously.
- **Arbiters.** David Clayton (United Kingdom) was welcomed as an IBCA Arbiter.

Work of the board

The board met eight times in the period, four times as Executive Board and four times as Presidential Board, all online. Jörgen Magnusson chaired the first five meetings; Piotr Dukaczewski, as 1st Vice-President, has chaired the three since. Minutes of every meeting are published on the IBCA Web site.

Date	Body	Main decisions
13 Sept 2025	Executive Board	Polish Chess Federation and Manos que miran (Mexico) approved as temporary members. Asian Championship 2026 awarded to Pakistan. Committee formed on the two world titles.

Date	Body	Main decisions
8 Nov 2025	Presidential Board	Report on the FIDE Olympiad in Astana and the meeting with the FIDE President. Team appointed to work with FIDE. Nikos Kalesis appointed vice-treasurer.
14 Dec 2025	Executive Board	European Team Championship 2027 awarded to Benidorm, Spain. The 2026 events in Greece moved from Rhodes to Crete.
1 Feb 2026	Presidential Board	Russia remains outside IBCA tournaments. Ukraine's request for financial support for the World Team Championship declined. Work on an IBCA budget proposal.
7 Mar 2026	Executive Board	Serbia readmitted as temporary member and admitted to the World Team Championship. Extraordinary Congress in October 2026 decided. Asian Championship cancelled because of the dispute in Pakistan.
31 May 2026	Presidential Board	Congress date set for 15 October. Deadline of 15 July for countries not in good standing.

Date	Body	Main decisions
11 July 2026	Executive Board	Support for Marilyn Bland's candidacy. Bersan Vrioni (Italy) to chair the Technical Commission. Greenland admitted as provisional member. Pakistan again authorised to host the Asian Championship.
20 Sept 2026	Presidential Board	Arbiters Commission Regulations and Regulations for the Title of International IBCA Arbiter approved for submission to Congress.

Succession

After the President's death the 1st Vice-President took over the chair. At an informal meeting in Petrovac, and again on 31 May 2026, Piotr Dukaczewski stated that he would not stand for the presidency. On 7 March the Executive Board had already decided to hold an Extraordinary Congress during the European Individual Championship in Greece.

Nominations closed on 15 August 2026, 60 days before the Congress as the statute requires. Marilyn Bland (USA) was nominated by Germany, the Polish Chess Federation and France, and is the only candidate; the Nomination Commission confirmed the nomination on 18 August. The Executive Board decided on 11 July to support her candidacy.

Tournaments and events

Four IBCA championships were played in the period as well as two FIDE Olympiads:
World Individual Championship in Poland, August 2025, classic and rapid
FIDE Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities in Kazakhstan, October 2025
Pan-American Championship in Columbia, October 2025
World Team Championship in Montenegro, April 2026
FIDE Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities in Uzbekistan, September 2026

Cooperation with FIDE and development

FIDE. FIDE has welcomed IBCA's proposal to teach chess in schools for blind children, and has named a counterpart to work with IBCA.

Coach training. Around 25 participants from Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Philippines were registered for chess coaching courses with Aegean University.

Africa. Twenty Braille chess sets reached South Africa in 2025; thirty more were ordered for South Africa and fifty for Kenya. Coaching started in two schools for the blind in Nairobi and continues. A WhatsApp group links Zimbabwe, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt and South Africa, and the Continental Representative is planning an African IBCA tournament.

Arbiters. The Arbiters Commission, chaired by Michalis Keramiotis with Klara Vidmar (Slovenia) and Kornelia Tryjanska (Poland), aims to train a new generation of IBCA arbiters. Two regulations, on the Commission itself and on the title of International IBCA Arbiter, are now before Congress.

Outlook

Following the events in Crete, we are left with two continental championships this year; that is Pan-American Individual Championship in Brazil in October and Asian Individual Championship in Pakistan in November.

Team European Championships will be held in Benidorm, Spain, in April 2027.

On behalf of the Presidential Board, I would like to thank everyone for their dedicated cooperation, and I wish the newly elected president success and many wonderful initiatives and ideas.