



International Braille Chess Association

Congress

Hotel "Rzeszow" (**) J. Pilsudskiego 44, Rzeszow, Poland**

August 23, 2025, 10:00

DECISION REGARDING SERBIA

Recommendation for Permanent Exclusion of the National Sports Association of Blind and Visually Impaired of Serbia (NSSSS) as an IBCA Member

This document outlines the presidential board's recommendation to permanently exclude the National Sports Association of Blind and Visually Impaired of Serbia (NSSSS) as a member country of the IBCA. The board acknowledges that such an action is unprecedented in IBCA history and can only be determined by the IBCA Congress. However, this recommendation is based on a series of significant and repeated violations of the IBCA's statutes and its founding principles. The board's decision is not based on a single transgression but on a comprehensive analysis of multiple shortcomings by the NSSSS.

The relevant section of the IBCA statute, paragraph 2.5, states: "The members must acknowledge and observe the statutes, regulations, resolutions and decisions of IBCA. They are also obliged to pay the membership fees and the other IBCA contributions fixed by the IBCA congress at the designated time. Moreover, they are obliged to support IBCA actively in all chess activities."

Failure to Fulfill Financial Obligations

Paying membership and participation fees are mandatory duties for all IBCA members. While the IBCA has shown flexibility for countries with banking system difficulties, these issues do not apply to transfers from Serbia to the European Union. Despite this, NSSSS has consistently neglected its financial responsibilities. For example, NSSSS participated in the 2023 European Team Championship and World Championship without paying its membership fees, which were not settled until late April 2024, along with the 2024 fees. Similarly, for the 2025 IBCA Olympiad, which NSSSS hosted, their membership fee and the Olympiad participation fee were not paid until August 1st, well after the tournament had concluded and only after numerous reminders via email and in person.

Additionally, NSSSS retained the entire participation fee for the Olympiad, which was supposed to be equally shared with the IBCA. Only after repeated reminders did they remit the IBCA's share. NSSSS despite reminders for a month failed to hand over membership fees it collected on behalf of

the IBCA during the Olympiad.

Failure to Fulfill Organizational Duties

When the IBCA appoints a member organization to host an event, it is done through a bidding process where the organizers specify the tournament details. For the 2025 Olympiad in Serbia, the organizers offered an excursion to participants, a common tradition. However, the excursion was canceled without any communication to either the IBCA board or the participants. Participants had paid for this event but never received it, and the cancellation disrupted their daily schedules. The IBCA subsequently fined the NSSSS for misconduct and breach of agreement, but NSSSS refused to pay the fine.

Difficulties with Visas and Compensation

While a host organization does not have the final authority to grant visas, it is expected to actively assist countries that need them. In the context of the 2025 Olympiad, visa applications were a significant problem. Of the seven countries that applied, five were denied. These countries were from Africa and Asia, which is particularly concerning given a 2023 congress decision to specifically promote chess for the visually impaired in those regions. This issue risks undermining years of positive development.

The board believes this problem was at least partly due to poor preparation by the NSSSS. The IBCA president had to persuade the NSSSS to actively work with embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a key responsibility for a host organization. An ideal approach would have been to secure a letter of recommendation from relevant authorities to support visa applications, but it appears this preparatory work was either absent or started far too late. Although the NSSSS president explained that the current board was new and inexperienced, the board's responsibility to hire experienced personnel if needed was not fulfilled.

India was one of the countries denied a visa and lost approximately €2,000 as a result. The IBCA requested that NSSSS compensate India, but NSSSS refused. The presidential board concludes that NSSSS should have been better prepared and must compensate the affected countries. Furthermore, the NSSSS's communication with both the IBCA and the participating countries was unacceptably slow.

Decision of the Presidential Board

Based on these failures, the IBCA presidential board has decided to temporarily suspend Serbia, represented by NSSSS, as an IBCA member. The board also strongly recommends that the 2025 IBCA Congress permanently excludes Serbia, represented by NSSSS, from IBCA.