



Association
Internationale
Des Echecs
Francophones

AIDEF General Assembly 2026

22 September 2024 - Samarkand (Uzbekistan)

President's Report for the 2024/2026 term

Chronological summary of my activities and those of AIDEF during the 2024/2026 term.

- **20 September 2024: AIDEF General Assembly**

The General Assembly of the International Association of Francophone Chess was held at the InterContinental Hotel in Budapest as part of the FIDE Congress. This year's General Assembly was electoral, and I was unanimously re-elected as President of AIDEF for a new four-year term. The Association's members also elected a new 17-member Executive Board.

Tahar Battikh served as secretary of the meeting. He drafted the official minutes of the General Assembly, which were then published on the AIDEF website. A copy was also sent to all our members. Under item 4 on the agenda of this General Assembly, I will invite you to approve these minutes.

- **1 October 2024: 10th Francophonie Games - online technical meeting**

For the first time in the history of the Francophonie Games, chess will be officially included in the competition programme, which will take place in Yerevan, Armenia, from 23 July to 1 August 2027.

Having been appointed Technical Delegate by FIDE, I worked closely with the International Committee of the Francophonie Games and the Armenian Chess Federation to finalise the regulations and supervise the various stages of the selection process leading to the competition.

An initial online technical meeting was held in the presence of Ms Zeina Mina, Director of the International Committee of the Francophonie Games, and Ms Nathalie Demarty, Programme Officer.

This meeting marked the official launch of the first stage of the selection process, known as the "general phase".

- **20 October 2024: 10th AIDEF online chess course**

The tenth online chess course, organised and fully subsidised by AIDEF, was held on Sunday, 20 October 2024, on the Zoom platform. It was conducted by French Grandmaster Gabriel Flom, whom I assisted with the organisation and running of the session.

I launched this series of masterclasses in 2023 with the aim of providing regular three-hour training sessions over several years, organised every eight to ten weeks.

This programme is intended for French-speaking chess players, from beginners up to an Elo rating of approximately 2000. It has two objectives: to strengthen ties within the French-speaking chess community and to help raise the level not only of players, but also of coaches and instructors working in clubs and schools.

As with the previous sessions, participation was entirely free of charge, with all costs covered by AIDEF. To preserve the quality of the interaction, the number of participants was limited to 100.

Gabriel Flom earned the Grandmaster title in 2020 and reached an Elo rating of 2525 in 2021. His experience in top-level competition, combined with his teaching skills, enabled participants to benefit from training that was accessible, practical and in-depth.

Following this tenth session, Gabriel Flom continued to conduct all the courses in this ongoing series. The 19th course was held on 6 September 2026, confirming the continuity and success of this training initiative established by AIDEF.

- **9 November 2024: publication of an article on the benefits of chess**

I published an article on the AIDEF website entitled "Chess: a game with many benefits, from childhood to adulthood". It provided a concise overview of the many cognitive, educational, social and emotional benefits of chess for children and adolescents, as well as for adults and seniors, together with the values of respect, perseverance, responsibility and sportsmanship that the game promotes.

I invite all our members to use and share this work as a tool for promoting chess,

particularly among schools, public institutions, partners, sponsors and any organisation likely to support its development.

Link to the article: <https://aidef.fr/spip.php?article741>

- **29 December 2024: 11th AIDEF online chess course**
- **2 March 2025: 12th AIDEF online chess course**
- **20 March 2025: 5th edition of the "24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz"**

On the occasion of International Francophonie Day, celebrated each year on 20 March in remembrance of the creation in Niamey in 1970 of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, which later became the International Organisation of La Francophonie, I wanted AIDEF once again to take part in this celebration by organising the fifth edition of its "24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz" online marathon.

This event, entirely free and open to everyone, was held on the Lichess platform from Wednesday, 19 March at 14:00 to Thursday, 20 March at 14:00, with a time control of 3 minutes + 2 seconds per move. Participants were free to join or leave the tournament at any time during the event.

This edition brought together 205 players, and the battle for victory remained undecided until the final minutes, with only three points separating the top two finishers.

French Grandmaster Gabriel Flom won with 369 points from 231 games. He finished ahead of French FIDE Master Alban Delorme, second with 366 points from 268 games, while Ivorian Candidate Master Nicolas Cogan completed the podium with 342 points from 251 games.

AIDEF awarded 500 euros in prizes: EUR 250 to the winner, EUR 150 to the runner-up and EUR 100 to the third-placed player.

Beyond the competition itself, the aim of this initiative was to celebrate through chess the values of diversity, fraternity, solidarity and closer ties between peoples that lie at the heart of the Francophonie.

- **16-18 May 2025: French-language "FIDE School Instructor" course**

In cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, I organised a fully French-language online course from 16 to 18 May 2025 to prepare teachers for the FIDE School Instructor title.

This 15-hour course, which included a final examination, was delivered by Denis Lemouton, AIDEF School Education Coordinator and Lead FIDE School Instructor, and Seddik Sidrine, also a Lead FIDE School Instructor. Its aim was to give participants the teaching tools needed to use chess effectively in schools.

It was particularly important to me that this course should be offered in French. In many countries across the French-speaking world, especially in Africa, French remains the language of education, administration and training. Delivering these courses in a language fully mastered by participants therefore facilitated access to the educational content, improved its assimilation and made a lasting contribution to the professional development of teachers and instructors.

This approach was fully consistent with AIDEF's mission: to promote the development of chess as a tool for education, empowerment and social cohesion, particularly in countries where chess structures and training resources remain insufficient.

The success of this session confirmed that there was a genuine need. The 25 available places were quickly filled by participants from 11 countries: Benin, Cameroon, Djibouti, France, Haiti, Luxembourg, Morocco, Madagascar, Monaco, Senegal and Switzerland.

In response to this enthusiasm, we immediately began preparing another session, giving priority to those on the waiting list.

This initiative therefore marked another important step in our determination to expand French-language training and support the sustainable development of chess in schools throughout the French-speaking world.

- **25-29 March 2025: preparatory mission for the Francophonie Games in Yerevan**

As part of the preparations for the 10th Francophonie Games, scheduled to take place in Yerevan in July 2027, I participated from 25 to 29 March 2025 in a preparatory mission organised in Armenia by the International Committee of the Francophonie Games.

This edition will be historic because, for the first time, chess will be one of the official disciplines of the Francophonie Games. Appointed Technical Delegate by FIDE, I represented both our International Federation and AIDEF during this mission, whose main purpose was to assess the proposed infrastructure, define the logistical requirements and continue developing the technical conditions for the competition.

I first visited the Tigran Petrosian Chess House in central Yerevan, where I was welcomed by International Arbiter Ashot Vardapetyan. I then visited the Chess

Academy of Armenia, which also houses the headquarters of the Armenian Chess Federation, accompanied by its Vice-President, Grandmaster Smbat Lputian. The quality of both facilities was remarkable. Following the assessment, however, the Chess House was preferred, notably because of its central location and better accessibility for participants. I also took part in discussions concerning the competition regulations.

At the end of this mission, I made several recommendations, particularly regarding accommodation for players in single rooms, proximity between the hotel and the playing venue, and the need to mobilise governments and sports ministries to ensure the broadest possible participation by member States and governments of the Francophonie. For my part, I undertook to promote the competition among French-speaking chess federations.

This preparatory visit confirmed that all the conditions were in place to make the introduction of chess at the Francophonie Games a genuine success. It also strengthened cooperation between the OIF, FIDE, AIDEF, the Armenian Federation and the local authorities ahead of this historic first.

- **11 May 2025: 13th AIDEF online chess course**
- **8 June 2025: Vanuatu Chess Federation joins AIDEF**

I was pleased to announce that the Vanuatu Chess Federation had joined AIDEF following the unanimous approval of its application by the 17 members of our Executive Board.

Established in 2022 and affiliated with FIDE since 2023, the Vanuatu Federation thus became AIDEF's 57th member, bringing the number of nations represented within our association to 49.

This membership was especially significant because it extended our reach into the Pacific. A former Anglo-French condominium that became independent in 1980, Vanuatu has maintained close ties with the French language, which is one of its three official languages alongside Bislama and English. The country is also a full member of the International Organisation of La Francophonie.

Vanuatu's integration into AIDEF immediately took on a practical dimension, as its federation entered two teams in the Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship, held just a few days after it joined.

This new member once again illustrated AIDEF's geographical expansion and its ability to bring together, across continents and cultures, members of the chess world who share the French language and the values of the Francophonie.

- **9 June 2025: AIDEF reaches 10,000 Facebook group members**

In June 2025, our Facebook group passed the symbolic milestone of 10,000 members, confirming the steady growth of AIDEF's visibility and reach on social media.

In January 2024, the group had 9,144 members. Seventeen months later, it had 10,033, an increase of nearly 9.7%. Over the same period, our Facebook page grew from 6,347 to 6,600 followers.

These results confirmed the importance of social media in our communication strategy. They enable AIDEF to fulfil its role as a platform for information, dialogue and the promotion of Francophone chess, while strengthening ties among thousands of players, officials, coaches, arbiters and enthusiasts around the world.

AIDEF Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aidef>

- **14-15 June 2025: 5th Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship**

AIDEF organised the 5th Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship, played on the Tornelo platform under the direction of International Arbiter Laurent Freyd.

Participation was entirely free, and each AIDEF member could enter up to two teams. The competition was played over 11 rounds with a time control of 15 minutes + 5 seconds per move. Each team consisted of four players, including at least one woman, with the option of registering up to two substitutes.

This edition set a new participation record, with 42 teams representing 25 federations. Several other teams had expressed interest but were unable to complete their registration, notably because they could not field a female player or because their entries arrived after the deadline. The playing strength was also particularly high, with 66 titled players, including seven Grandmasters.

Greece, already the winner in 2024, retained its title in remarkable fashion, finishing undefeated with 21 match points from 10 wins and one draw. France took second place with 18 points, ahead of Egypt, also on 18 points but separated on board points.

The special prize reserved for teams with an average Elo rating not exceeding 1900 was won by Albania 2, which produced an excellent performance to finish ninth overall.

AIDEF had allocated a total prize fund of EUR 3,300: EUR 1,500 for the winning team, EUR 1,000 for second place, EUR 500 for third place and EUR 300 for the best team with an average Elo rating below 1900. One player from the latter team, selected by

the captain, was also to receive a personal invitation to the next International Francophone Chess Meetings.

I would like to highlight the excellent atmosphere in which this competition took place and thank all the captains and players for participating. I also commend the outstanding work of the arbitral team led by Laurent Freyd, which ensured the smooth running of this important online competition.

With this new participation record, the fifth edition confirmed that this championship had become one of AIDEF's regular unifying events, bringing together federations and players from many countries around a demanding sporting competition and the shared values of the Francophonie.

Full standings and results: <https://chess-results.com/tnr1192391.aspx?lan=20&art=0&rd=11&turdet=YES>

- **27-29 June 2025: second French-language "FIDE School Instructor" course**

Following the success of the first session organised in May, whose 25 places had quickly been filled, I decided, in cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, to organise a second online course in French leading to the FIDE School Instructor title.

This second session was again fully booked very quickly, confirming the strong demand for FIDE training courses available in French.

The 25 participants, from eight French-speaking countries and territories (France, Cameroon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Monaco, Madagascar and New Caledonia), completed 15 hours of training over three days.

As in the first session, the courses were delivered by Denis Lemouton, AIDEF School Education Coordinator and Lead FIDE School Instructor, and Seddik Sidrine, also a Lead FIDE School Instructor.

The course concluded with a 50-question multiple-choice examination. The results were particularly encouraging: 21 of the 25 candidates passed, representing a pass rate of 84%, with an overall average of 41/50. Remarkably, three participants achieved the perfect score of 50/50, a first in the history of this course.

The few unsuccessful results were mainly due to Internet connection problems that prevented some candidates from following all the sessions under satisfactory conditions.

Participant feedback also confirmed the quality of the educational content, the expertise of the instructors and the practical value of this training for teaching chess,

particularly to children.

Candidates who obtained the title also received lifetime access to the Opening Master Premium database, providing them with an additional tool for preparing and enriching their teaching activities.

The consecutive success of these first two sessions confirmed the relevance of the approach I had initiated with FIDE: developing a structured French-language training programme so that teachers and instructors throughout the French-speaking world could gain easier access to international qualifications and educational tools.

Given this enthusiasm, we subsequently considered organising an additional session to maintain this momentum and respond to new requests.

- **6 July 2025: 14th AIDEF online chess course**
- **11-14 July 2025: FIDE Arbiters' Seminar and negotiations concerning preparations for the 11th RIDEF in Cairo**

From 12 to 14 July 2025, AIDEF organised a seminar in Cairo, in cooperation with the Adly Chess Academy and under the auspices of FIDE, to train and qualify future FIDE Arbiters.

The seminar was led by International Arbiter and FIDE Lecturer Anastasia Sorokina, with the local assistance of Egyptian International Arbiter Khaled Hawas. Delivered in English, this training reflected our desire to enable arbiters from the French-speaking world also to master the terminology and regulations in the language used primarily at major international FIDE competitions.

I travelled personally to Cairo on this occasion to supervise the organisation of the seminar and also to continue preparations for the 11th International Francophone Chess Meetings (RIDEF).

At our General Assembly in Budapest, Ahmed Adly had presented Egypt's bid, on behalf of the Egyptian Chess Federation, to host this 11th edition. My visit therefore enabled me to work with him directly on the sporting, logistical and financial aspects of the project and to meet the event's prospective principal sponsor.

I also took part in a working dinner with the new President of the Egyptian Chess Federation, General Mohamed Moukhtar, Moukhtar, his Vice-President Sabry, George and Grandmaster Bassem Amin. Our discussions focused mainly on future relations between the Egyptian Federation and AIDEF, as well as the conditions required to organise the 11th RIDEF.

These discussions were all the more important because they took place against the backdrop of a more delicate internal situation within the Egyptian Federation, notably due to strained relations between the new President and Ahmed Adly. It was therefore essential for me to ensure that the previous commitments could be maintained and that the various parties would be able to cooperate to guarantee the successful organisation of our main international event.

This visit to Cairo therefore served a dual purpose: continuing our arbiter-training policy and making tangible progress in preparing the 11th RIDEF, while strengthening dialogue with the new officials of the Egyptian Federation.

- **24-28 July 2025: Arab Youth Championship in Casablanca and meeting on the organisation of the 11th RIDEF**

From 24 to 28 July 2025, I travelled to Casablanca for the 2025 Arab Youth Individual Chess Championship, organised from 20 to 28 July by the Arab Chess Union in partnership with the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation.

This major competition brought together more than 250 young players from 17 Arab countries.

I attended as AIDEF's representative and also to take part in a meeting organised by Bouchra Kadiri, President of the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation and Vice-President of AIDEF. Also present were the President of the Egyptian Chess Federation, General Mohamed Moukhtar, Moukhtar, and AIDEF Deputy President Éric Bopala, who had travelled from Montreal.

This meeting followed directly from the discussions I had begun a few days earlier in Cairo concerning the organisation of the 11th International Francophone Chess Meetings, initially scheduled to take place in Egypt in December 2025.

Unfortunately, the discussions confirmed that it was impossible to continue the project according to the arrangement initially planned, with Ahmed Adly as Tournament Director. The new President of the Egyptian Federation categorically refused to allow him to perform that role. However, Ahmed Adly had established the contacts with the principal sponsors, and his involvement remained essential to secure the event's funding.

This situation therefore created a major incompatibility between, on the one hand, the conditions imposed by the new leadership of the Egyptian Federation and, on the other, the financial requirements necessary to carry out the project.

The Casablanca meeting thus confirmed that it was becoming extremely difficult, if not impossible, to organise the 11th RIDEF in Egypt under the conditions initially envisaged.

A few days later, it was ultimately decided to cancel the 11th RIDEF edition that was due to take place in Cairo in December 2025, as the necessary conditions for its organisation, particularly in financial and organisational terms, could no longer be guaranteed.

- **8-10 August 2025: third French-language "FIDE School Instructor" course**

Following the success of the first two sessions organised in May and June, I continued, in cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, to develop our French-language training programme leading to the FIDE School Instructor title.

A third session was therefore held online, this time at the express request of the Congolese Chess Federation, which alone registered 22 candidates.

As with the previous courses, participants completed 15 hours of instruction, including the final examination, delivered by Denis Lemouton and Seddik Sidrine.

This third session confirmed the growing interest among French-speaking federations in FIDE training available in their own language. It also demonstrated the relevance of our approach of responding directly to the needs expressed by our members and supporting federations wishing to develop the teaching of chess in schools in a structured manner.

With this third course organised in less than four months, we had now established genuine momentum for French-language training in school chess, in close cooperation with FIDE.

- **21 September 2025: 15th AIDEF online chess course**
- **9-12 October 2025 - 40th anniversary of the European Chess Union (ECU) in Batumi**

At the invitation of the European Chess Union (ECU), I travelled to Batumi, Georgia, for the celebrations of its 40th anniversary.

The programme included the ECU General Assembly, held on 11 October, and the official "ECU 40th Anniversary Gala & Awards - Broadway Night", celebrating four decades of the development and promotion of European chess.

This visit also gave me the opportunity to meet and speak with many federation officials, ECU leaders and prominent figures from the European chess world in an environment particularly conducive to developing institutional relations.

- **24-26 October 2025: Fourth 2025 session - Preparatory course for the "FIDE**

School Instructor" title

From 24 to 26 October 2025, AIDEF organised, in cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, a fourth online French-language preparatory course for the FIDE School Instructor title. Like the previous three, this session, conducted by Denis Lemouton and Seddik Sidrine following the same programme, was highly successful and confirmed the strong demand for this type of French-language training.

- **30 November 2025: 16th AIDEF online chess course**
- **6-14 December 2025: 11th International Francophone Chess Meetings in Marrakech**

The 11th RIDEF took place in Marrakech from 6 to 14 December 2025, jointly organised by AIDEF and the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation. This particularly rich edition combined classical, rapid and blitz competitions with a programme of training courses, cultural and tourist activities, the traditional Friendship Tournament and a lecture by Georges Bertola entitled "Chess, a Living World Heritage". The competitions offered a total prize fund of EUR 10,000.

FIDE was represented by Dana Reizniece, Deputy Chair of the FIDE Management Board, whose presence from 9 to 13 December also marked this edition and demonstrated the International Chess Federation's interest in AIDEF's activities and the development of chess throughout the French-speaking world.

In the classical championship, played over nine rounds, French GM Jean-Marc Degraeve won with 8 points out of 9, ahead of Malagasy IM Milanto Harifidy Ralison (7.5/9) and French GM Romain Édouard (7/9). Quebec WGM Maïli-Jade Ouellet, who finished fourth overall with 6.5 points, won the Women's Francophonie Championship title for the third consecutive year.

The blitz and rapid championships were also highly successful, with 114 and 116 participants respectively, representing 14 countries. Jean-Marc Degraeve also won both disciplines, achieving an exceptional classical-rapid-blitz treble, while Maïli-Jade Ouellet likewise won all three women's titles.

This 11th edition thus confirmed the high sporting standard, international reach, and cultural and fraternal dimension of the RIDEF, while furthering AIDEF's mission to bring together the French-speaking chess community around a major annual event.

- **7-8 December 2025: in-person preparatory seminar for the "FIDE School Instructor" title**

As part of the 11th RIDEF, AIDEF organised in Marrakech, in cooperation with the

Royal Moroccan Chess Federation and under the auspices of the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, a preparatory course for teachers leading to the "FIDE School Instructor" title. Held in person for the first time in Morocco, this course took place over two days, from 09:00 to 17:00, and was delivered by international lecturer Seddik Sidrine.

Intended for teachers wishing to integrate educational chess into their teaching, the course presented innovative and creative methods designed to develop students' academic and twenty-first-century life skills. It offered participants the opportunity to obtain the official FIDE School Instructor title awarded by the FIDE Chess in Education Commission. The participation fee was set at 200 dirhams (approximately EUR 19) to make the course widely accessible.

Of the 24 registered candidates, 20 passed the final examination, representing an excellent pass rate of 83.33%. This first Moroccan experience therefore marked another important step in AIDEF's policy of developing educational chess, training teachers and extending FIDE programmes throughout the French-speaking world.

- **9-11 December 2025: training seminar for Regional Arbiters**

As part of the 11th RIDEF, AIDEF organised a training seminar for Regional Arbiters in Marrakech, in cooperation with the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation.

The course, conducted by Othmane Sebbar and Zoheir Slami, took place over three days, with three hours of instruction per day, and concluded with a one-hour final examination. The programme notably covered the Laws of Chess, arbitration procedures, the practical management of tournaments and various case studies.

Held at the City of Languages and Cultures in Marrakech, the seminar brought together 29 participants. This strong turnout confirmed the value of this type of training and the commitment of AIDEF and the FRME to developing skills and professionalising arbitration throughout the French-speaking chess world.

- **13 December 2025: Lecture by Georges Bertola**

Still as part of the 11th RIDEF, AIDEF and the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation organised an exceptional lecture in Marrakech by Georges Bertola, chess historian and long-standing contributor to Europe Échecs, entitled "Chess, a Living World Heritage".

Held in the Auditorium of the Faculty of Arabic Language in Marrakech, with free admission and live streaming on YouTube, this lecture traced more than 1,500 years of chess history, its evolution across civilisations and its influence on the arts, thought and cultures. It highlighted chess not only as a sporting discipline, but also as a

universal cultural heritage and a vehicle for transmission and closer ties among peoples.

This initiative illustrates AIDEF's determination to give the RIDEF a dimension extending beyond competition alone by combining sporting events with cultural, educational and historical activities that promote the full richness of Francophone chess heritage.

- **8 January-June 2026 - The so-called "Kasparov contract" case and attempts to restore relations with the French Chess Federation**

On 8 January 2026, the Investigation Chamber of the Versailles Court of Appeal upheld the order dismissing the case at the end of the second judicial investigation opened against Jean-Claude Moingt, notably for forgery and use of forged documents to the detriment of AIDEF and breach of trust to the detriment of AIDEF, as well as against the French Chess Federation (FFE) for handling the proceeds of the breach of trust committed to the detriment of AIDEF.

This second judicial investigation had been opened after the courts initially overturned the dismissal order issued by the Versailles Judicial Court on 2 March 2021 and ordered the investigation to be reopened, thereby finding that the case required further investigation.

Despite the repeated and detailed requests made by AIDEF's lawyer during this new investigation, the Investigation Chamber ultimately found that the evidence was insufficiently established to permit referral to a trial court. AIDEF deeply regretted this decision because it deprived us of the opportunity to have a criminal court rule publicly, in adversarial proceedings and on the merits, on whether or not the persons concerned were liable.

In the statement I sent to Éloi Relange, President of the French Chess Federation, with copies to the members of the Executive Boards of the FFE and AIDEF, I expressly emphasised the legal effect of such a decision:

"A dismissal order is neither a finding of guilt nor an order of discharge or acquittal. It does not determine the merits of the case and does not rule on the criminal liability of the persons concerned."

I also explained that a dismissal means that no judicial decision has been made on the merits, because the assessment was that the state of the case did not permit referral to a trial court.

In my communication to the FFE, I also recalled that throughout these proceedings AIDEF had acted consistently, transparently and responsibly, cooperated fully with

the judicial authorities, provided all the documents in its possession and pursued this action exclusively in the collective interests of its members.

Above all, I stressed that the case originally concerned funds intended to support the development of chess in several French-speaking African countries, which, according to AIDEF's consistent position, had never received the sums intended for them under the so-called "Kasparov contract".

After pursuing the remedies we considered appropriate, we decided not to appeal to the Court of Cassation, thereby bringing the judicial proceedings to an end. I nevertheless made it clear in my statement that the closure of the legal case did not resolve the moral, institutional and financial issues raised by this matter.

I therefore called upon the French Chess Federation to honour the commitments that, according to our position, had been made after the facts were acknowledged at the Marrakech symposiums in 2013, and to return the funds to the French-speaking African countries concerned at the time.

In an effort to ease tensions and attempt to turn the page at institutional level, our Vice-President subsequently met Éloi Relange and invited him to Casablanca for a round table with me. The aim was to examine the outstanding disagreements calmly, resolve the problems and identify the conditions for restoring relations between the FFE and AIDEF. Unfortunately, this proposal received no response.

I finally had the opportunity to meet Éloi Relange personally in Paris in June 2026 during the "Chess Meets Content" summit. At this stage, that discussion did not reveal any genuine willingness on his part to begin a process of reconciliation.

For its part, AIDEF remains faithful to the position expressed in my statement: defending the principles of good governance, transparency and Francophone solidarity, while remaining open to institutional dialogue that could eventually lead to normalised relations with the French Chess Federation.

- **1 February 2026: 17th AIDEF online chess course**
- **5 February 2026: Armenian Federation joins AIDEF**

The Armenian Chess Federation officially joined AIDEF, becoming its 50th member nation. Its application for membership was approved unanimously by the 17 members of the Executive Board. This membership represents an important symbolic milestone in the development and international reach of our association.

It followed on from the contacts I established during my visit to Yerevan in March 2025 as part of the preparations for the 10th Francophonie Games, which will take place in Armenia in July 2027 and at which chess will be an official discipline for the

first time.

The arrival of Armenia, a major nation on the international chess scene with close ties to the French-speaking world, thus strengthens AIDEF's sporting and cultural diversity and opens new prospects for cooperation ahead of this important event in 2027.

- **7-9 February 2026 - Visit to Geneva: proposed 2028 Francophonie Rapid and Blitz Championships**

I travelled to Geneva from 7 to 9 February 2026 to continue, with Patrice Delpin, former President and committee member of the Geneva Chess Federation (FGE), the discussions begun several months earlier concerning the possibility of organising the Francophonie Rapid and Blitz Championships in Geneva in early 2028. This visit also enabled me to establish contact with the FGE's new joint Presidents, Marcel Mettler and Jean-Luc Constant.

I stayed at the Mövenpick Hotel Geneva, the venue under consideration for this future event, which enabled me to visit the facilities, inspect the playing hall and the accommodation and catering options, and assess in practical terms whether the site could meet the needs of an international AIDEF championship. Our discussions also covered the various sporting, logistical and financial aspects of the project, notably the budget, sponsorship possibilities, prize structure and conditions for welcoming participants.

I also participated on 8 February in the 37th Rapid Open of the Geneva Chess Club, held at the same hotel. This competition, whose playing hall could accommodate more than 120 players, provided an excellent full-scale test of the facilities being considered for our future championships.

Following this visit, discussions continued with a view to organising the event in 2028, although the project remained subject to the final approval of the Geneva Chess Federation and the establishment of a dedicated organising committee. Patrice Delpin had confirmed that he was prepared to chair this ad hoc committee if the Federation approved the project.

- **16 February 2026 - Visit to Brussels: preparations for the Luc Winants Memorial and the "Brussels 2030" project**

I travelled to Brussels on 16 February 2026 to meet Quentin Geubel as part of the preparations for the Luc Winants Memorial, which was to host the 2026 Francophonie Rapid Championship on 9 May. After a working lunch, we visited the Van der Valk Brussels Airport hotel and the future playing hall to examine on site the various practical and organisational aspects of this important event.

At the end of the day, I was also received at Brussels City Hall by Florence Frelinx, First Alderwoman, accompanied by her Head of Cabinet, Alexandre Barnstijn, to explore the possibility of organising a major chess event in Brussels in 2030 as part of the celebrations marking Belgium's bicentenary. Several ideas were discussed: a living chess game on the Grand-Place as part of the Ommegang, the possible organisation of the RIDEF, a special Bicentenary tournament, a lecture on the history of chess in Belgium since 1830, an exceptional simultaneous exhibition with a leading champion, and tournaments and activities in various districts of the city.

This first meeting laid the groundwork for longer-term reflection and consideration of the involvement of the Royal Brussels Chess Club and various local partners. I had also invited representatives of the City of Brussels to attend the Luc Winants Memorial on 9 May so that they could see at first hand how an international event associated with AIDEF is organised.

- **6-8 March 2026: Preparatory course for the "FIDE School Instructor" title**

In cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, AIDEF organised a new French-language online preparatory course for the FIDE School Instructor title.

The course, totalling 15 hours over three days from 16:00 to 21:00, was conducted by Denis Lemouton, Seddik Sidrine and Jérôme Voillat. Limited to 25 participants, it followed the same educational programme and examination arrangements as the previous sessions, with at least 66% correct answers required to obtain the title. The fees were EUR 100 for the course, plus EUR 50 for the title.

The regular continuation of these courses confirms the strong demand for FIDE education and certification available in French and AIDEF's commitment to developing educational chess throughout the French-speaking world.

- **20 March 2026 - 6th edition of the "24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz"**

On the occasion of International Francophonie Day, AIDEF organised the 6th edition of its traditional "24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz" online marathon, played on the Lichess platform with a time control of 3 minutes + 2 seconds per move.

Entirely free and open to everyone, the tournament allowed players to join or leave the competition at any time during the 24 hours. A total prize fund of EUR 500 was provided for the top three finishers.

This edition brought together 181 players. Spain's Jorge Manuel Miranda Herrera won with 423 points from 305 games, ahead of defending champion and French Grandmaster Gabriel Flom, who scored 389 points from 255 games, and FIDE Master Alban Delorme, third with 332 points from 249 games.

Held every year on 20 March, this event has now become one of AIDEF's traditional occasions for celebrating the Francophonie through chess in a spirit of conviviality, openness and fraternity.

- **29 March 2026: 17th AIDEF online chess course**
- **7 May 2026 - Guinean Chess Federation joins AIDEF**

The Guinean Chess Federation officially joined AIDEF, becoming its 51st member nation. Its membership application was approved without objection by the members of the Executive Board, confirming the continued development of our association and the growing dynamism of Francophone chess in Africa.

Newly established and admitted to FIDE in December 2025, the Guinean Federation will now be able to participate in competitions, training courses and projects organised under the auspices of AIDEF. The arrival of Guinea, a French-speaking West African country and a member of the International Organisation of La Francophonie, further strengthens the geographical and cultural diversity of our association and brings the number of its member nations to 51.

- **9 May 2026 - 2026 Francophonie Rapid Championship - Luc Winants Memorial**

On 9 May 2026 in Brussels, the first Luc Winants Memorial, organised in tribute to the late Belgian Grandmaster, hosted the 2026 Francophonie Rapid Championship in cooperation with AIDEF. Played over nine rounds with a time control of 10 minutes + 5 seconds per move, the competition brought together more than 200 participants from 26 nationalities, including 37 Grandmasters, 19 International Masters and 32 FIDE Masters, as well as three world champions. With a total prize fund of EUR 20,000, the event established itself as one of the strongest tournaments ever organised in Belgium.

French Grandmaster Marc'Andria Maurizzi, the reigning French Champion, won with 7.5 points out of 9 and an Elo performance of 2746, taking both the tournament and the title of 2026 Francophonie Rapid Champion. On this occasion, he received a unique trophy specially created by artist Betty Miss Boll. The women's prize went to former World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk (Switzerland) with 6.5/9, the veteran prize to GM Igor Glek (Belgium) with 7/9, and the U20 prize to French IM Marco Materia with 6.5/9.

FIDE was represented by GMs Victor Bologan and Nigel Short, while the online appearance by former World Champion Viswanathan Anand was one of the

highlights of the day. Bouchra Kadiri, President of the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation, was also present.

Games from the top boards were broadcast live online, giving the event significant international exposure. This first edition, remarkable both for its sporting standard and the quality of its organisation, was a fitting tribute to Luc Winants and another highlight for the international profile of Francophone chess.

- **16 June 2026 - Organisation of a training camp for the Haitian national teams ahead of the 46th Chess Olympiad**

As part of the Haitian Chess Federation's preparations for the 46th Chess Olympiad in Samarkand, I continued the support provided by AIDEF to this federation by contributing to the organisation of an intensive training camp in Alicante, Spain, from 8 to 13 September 2026. This initiative followed a similar first programme carried out before the Budapest Olympiad in 2024.

Organised in cooperation with the Dama Negra Chess Club and with the support of the University of Alicante, which made its facilities available, the camp was led by French Grandmaster Jean-Marc Degraeve, 2025 Francophonie Champion. Its location in Spain also provided the Haitian delegation with a particularly suitable preparatory stop before continuing its journey to Uzbekistan.

This initiative also created a new partnership between the Haitian Chess Federation and the Dama Negra Club, opening prospects for future cooperation in training and sporting exchanges. Once again, it illustrated AIDEF's determination to provide practical support to its member federations, particularly in preparing their teams for major international competitions.

- **22 and 23 June 2026 - Participation in the "Chess Meets Content" summit in Paris**

At the invitation of ChessFam, I travelled to Paris on 22 and 23 June 2026 to participate in the international "Chess Meets Content" summit held at the Blitz Society.

This deliberately small gathering brought together federation presidents and officials, content creators, journalists, streamers and various members of the chess world to reflect collectively on the future of our discipline and, more particularly, on ways of bringing the millions of online players closer to competitive over-the-board chess.

During these two days, several round tables and workshops addressed particularly topical issues: eSports, the place of women in chess, media coverage and tournament promotion, European funding, private investment, artificial intelligence, and how

federations can cooperate more effectively with content creators and digital platforms. A final workshop notably invited participants to develop practical projects capable of attracting online players to traditional competitions.

This visit also enabled me to establish numerous contacts and exchange views with several prominent figures from the international chess world. In particular, I had the opportunity to meet and speak with Wadim Rosenstein, a candidate for the FIDE presidency who was also taking part in the event. Our discussions enabled me to address with him various issues concerning FIDE, the Francophone chess community and future relations with AIDEF.

- **4 and 5 July 2026 - 6th Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship**

AIDEF organised the 6th Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship on the Tornelo platform, under the technical and arbitral direction of International Arbiter Laurent Freyd. Played over 11 rounds with a time control of 15 minutes + 5 seconds per move, this edition set a new participation record with 44 registered teams from AIDEF member countries.

After two days of competition, Quebec won the title, returning to victory after having already won the first three editions. France finished second and Canada third. The special prize reserved for teams with an average Elo rating not exceeding 1900 was won by Chad. The prize fund included EUR 1,500 for the champion team, EUR 1,000 for the runner-up, EUR 500 for third place and EUR 300 for the special under-1900 Elo prize, together with an individual invitation to the next RIDEF.

This edition was also marked by the broadcast of a video message from FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich, once again demonstrating his support for AIDEF's activities.

I would also like to highlight the outstanding work of Laurent Freyd, who for the past six years has handled the technical organisation and arbitration of this competition with expertise and dedication, helping it become one of the regular events of the Francophone chess community.

The official prize and trophy presentation will take place during the next AIDEF General Assembly, to be held in Samarkand during the FIDE Congress on 22 September 2026.

- **9 July 2026 - Relaunch of the organisation of the 12th International Francophone Chess Meetings (RIDEF)**

Following the Luc Winants Memorial on 9 May in Brussels, a working group was formed to examine the possibility of organising the 12th RIDEF in Belgium from 18 to

26 August 2026. Despite the interest generated by the project and the prompt efforts undertaken, it ultimately could not be completed, mainly because it was impossible to find a suitable playing hall at such short notice.

At the online meeting of the AIDEF Executive Board on 9 July 2026, we therefore decided collectively to relaunch the organisation of the 12th RIDEF, also incorporating the blitz tournament initially announced in Casablanca, with the aim of holding the event before the end of 2026. Victor Bologan, representing FIDE at the meeting, confirmed financial support of at least EUR 20,000, subject to satisfactory visa guarantees and participation by representatives of at least 20 countries.

A call for bids was therefore opened to all AIDEF members, with a deadline of 15 September 2026. Three countries had already formally expressed interest: Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. The applications were to be considered at the AIDEF General Assembly in Samarkand in order to award the organisation to the candidate offering the best sporting, organisational, financial and logistical guarantees.

- **24 July 2026 - Proposal for inclusion on the agenda of the 2026 FIDE General Assembly**

On behalf of AIDEF, I officially submitted a proposal to include in the FIDE Charter the recognition and systematic use of its bilingual English-French institutional name: International Chess Federation / Fédération Internationale des Échecs.

The primary purpose of this proposal is to preserve the historic name under which FIDE was founded in Paris in 1924 and to recall that the acronym FIDE derives directly from its French name. It in no way challenges the status of English as FIDE's official and working language and creates no general obligation to translate into French.

The proposal provides for the gradual implementation of this bilingual presentation on FIDE's principal institutional materials, without changing its acronym, seal, flag or emblem.

This proposal will be put to a vote at the FIDE General Assembly in Samarkand. I therefore warmly invite all AIDEF members with voting rights in FIDE to support this proposal and vote in favour of it, in order to preserve an essential part of the history and identity of our International Federation.

- **History of the RIDEF - Google Drive**

I have just updated the complete history of the International Francophone Chess Meetings (RIDEF). Now available as a free download from Google Drive in Word or PDF format, this document recounts the history of every edition, from the first held in Marrakech in 2013 to the recent Marrakech edition.

This 400-page dossier, enriched with photographs, documents and press clippings, provides a detailed account of each edition. It includes portraits of iconic players, highlights from the competitions and numerous anecdotes that have marked the evolution of the event. The document does more than recount the competitions: it also illustrates the personal encounters and cultural exchanges that have enriched every edition of the RIDEF.

I strongly encourage future organisers to use this document as a press kit for private and institutional sponsors. By highlighting the rich and varied history of the RIDEF, it provides a valuable tool for demonstrating the impact and importance of these gatherings in the Francophone chess world, showcasing our partners' contributions and strengthening relationships with current and prospective sponsors.

The complete dossier can be viewed and downloaded from the following link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/10xIc2arWA1w4tHMCHa6_EIImeUsA5zy/view



Association
Internationale
Des Echecs
Francophones

Review of the 2024/2026 term

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Presidents, Delegates, Members and Friends of AIDEF,

First of all, allow me to thank you most sincerely for accepting our invitation and for being here today in Samarkand for this General Assembly. Your participation demonstrates your commitment to our association and your determination to

contribute actively to building a Francophone chess community that is ever stronger, more united and better represented on the international stage.

As you have seen, I chose to begin the presentation of my report with a complete chronological account of the activities carried out by AIDEF since our last General Assembly, held in Budapest on 20 September 2024. The purpose of this detailed presentation was to preserve an accurate record of each of our initiatives, place events in their context and enable our members to appreciate fully the scale of the work accomplished.

I would now like to review more concisely the main achievements of this term, which covers the period from September 2024 to July 2026, while also mentioning certain subsequent actions that were already under way when it ended and that enable us to present this General Assembly with a fully up-to-date picture.

This particularly busy period was marked by the continuation of our institutional development, the admission of new federations, the organisation of numerous international competitions, the expansion of our training activities, the strengthening of our relations with FIDE and other chess institutions, and the preparation of several major projects for the years ahead.

- Governance and institutional continuity

Our General Assembly in Budapest was electoral. I had the honour of being unanimously re-elected as President of AIDEF for a new four-year term. I would like to express once again my sincere gratitude for the confidence you placed in me.

A new 17-member Executive Board was also elected. Throughout this term, it was regularly involved in the main decisions concerning the future of our association, the admission of new members, the organisation of our competitions and training activities, and the preparation of our major international projects.

Tahar Battikh served as secretary of the meeting at the Budapest General Assembly. The minutes he drafted were published on the AIDEF website and sent to all our members. Under item 4 on the agenda of this General Assembly, I will invite you to approve them formally.

- Expansion and international reach of AIDEF

The past term confirmed the geographical and institutional growth of our association.

On 8 June 2025, the Vanuatu Chess Federation joined AIDEF following the unanimous

approval of its application by the 17 members of our Executive Board. Established in 2022 and affiliated with FIDE since 2023, it became the 57th member of our association and brought the number of nations then represented within it to 49.

This membership was particularly significant because of the opening it gave us towards the Pacific. Vanuatu, where French is one of the three official languages alongside Bislama and English, is also a full member of the International Organisation of La Francophonie. Only a few days after joining, its federation demonstrated its commitment by entering two teams in our Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship.

On 5 February 2026, the Armenian Chess Federation officially joined AIDEF, becoming the 50th nation represented within our association. This membership followed on from the relations I had established during my mission to Yerevan in March 2025 as part of the preparations for the 10th Francophonie Games. The arrival of Armenia, a major nation on the world chess scene, represented a particularly symbolic milestone and opened new prospects for cooperation ahead of the 2027 Games.

Finally, on 7 May 2026, the Guinean Chess Federation in turn joined AIDEF. Newly established and admitted to FIDE in December 2025, it became our 51st member nation. This membership further strengthened our presence in West Africa and confirmed the growing vitality of Francophone chess on the African continent.

These three membership applications were approved in advance by our Executive Board. In accordance with our Statutes, it now falls to this General Assembly, under item 5 of its agenda, formally to confirm the admission to AIDEF of the Vanuatu Chess Federation, the Armenian Chess Federation and the Guinean Chess Federation.

These new memberships illustrate the universal vocation of our association. AIDEF now brings together federations and organisations on several continents, united by the use or sharing of the French language, as well as by common values of solidarity, education, respect, diversity and closer ties among peoples.

- Financial situation and search for new resources

Our Treasurer, Roland Akhrass, will present in detail the income statement, balance sheet and his report for the past financial period. I will therefore not duplicate that presentation.

I would nevertheless like to recall that our financial situation remains directly affected by the significant reduction in the annual subsidy granted by FIDE to affiliated organisations. It fell from EUR 20,000 to EUR 5,000 in 2024 before subsequently being increased to EUR 7,000. Despite this slight rise, the amount remains substantially below the level we previously received.

This lasting reduction in our resources has required us to exercise increased vigilance, prioritise our activities and seek additional funding from institutional and private partners.

Despite these constraints, AIDEF continued to finance or support a considerable number of activities: free masterclasses, French-language training, online championships, prizes awarded to players and teams, the organisation of the RIDEF, arbiter seminars, educational projects and preparatory initiatives for certain member federations.

The search for new partners and the diversification of our resources must therefore remain absolute priorities. FIDE's announced contribution to the next RIDEF, amounting to at least EUR 20,000 subject to certain participation and organisational conditions, is an encouraging signal in this regard. However, it cannot relieve us of the need to continue approaching private sponsors, public institutions and international organisations that share our objectives.

I would also like to recall that my mandate as President remains entirely voluntary and that I continue personally to cover some of our association's operating and representation expenses.

From the 10th to the 19th AIDEF online chess course

The series of online chess courses that I launched in 2023 continued regularly under the direction of French Grandmaster Gabriel Flom, whom I assisted each time with the organisation and running of the various sessions.

Ten new courses, from the 10th to the 19th, were therefore organised, confirming the continuity and success of this training programme.

All ten sessions were conducted by Gabriel Flom on the Zoom platform. Lasting three hours, they were organised at regular intervals, generally every six to eight weeks, and were intended for French-speaking chess players of all ages, from beginners up to an Elo rating of approximately 2000.

This initiative had two objectives. First, to enable players to improve their knowledge through the teaching of an experienced Grandmaster renowned for his educational skills; and second, to provide coaches and club instructors with content and methods that could enrich their own teaching.

Participation was entirely free of charge, with all costs covered by AIDEF. To preserve the educational quality of the sessions and allow genuine interaction between the instructor and participants, registration was limited to 100 people per course.

The regular organisation of these ten additional sessions demonstrates the sustainability and success of this programme. It also confirms AIDEF's determination to provide, over the long term, high-quality training accessible to the entire French-speaking chess community, regardless of geographical location or financial means.

- Development of French-language chess training

Alongside the masterclasses, we have developed, in close cooperation with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, an extensive French-language preparation programme for the FIDE School Instructor title.

A first session was held from 16 to 18 May 2025, followed by a second from 27 to 29 June, a third from 8 to 10 August, a fourth from 24 to 26 October, and a further course from 6 to 8 March 2026.

Each session consisted of 15 hours of instruction spread over three days and concluded with an examination. The courses were mainly conducted by Denis Lemouton and Seddik Sidrine, with Jérôme Voillat joining them for the March 2026 session.

The programme was an immediate success. The 25 available places in the first sessions were filled very quickly. Participants came from many French-speaking countries and territories: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Djibouti, France, Haiti, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Monaco, New Caledonia, Senegal and Switzerland.

The second session notably achieved a pass rate of 84%, with 21 successful candidates out of 25 and three perfect scores of 50 out of 50, a first in the history of this training programme. The third session was organised at the express request of the Congolese Chess Federation, which alone registered 22 candidates.

In addition to these online courses, the first in-person seminar was held in Marrakech on 7 and 8 December 2025 as part of the 11th RIDEF. Conducted by Seddik Sidrine, it brought together 24 candidates, 20 of whom passed the final examination, representing a success rate of 83.33%.

Providing FIDE training courses in French is of fundamental importance. In many countries across the French-speaking world, French remains the language of education, administration and professional training. Enabling teachers and instructors to obtain an international qualification in a language they fully understand contributes to a better assimilation of the course content, the professional development of instructors and the sustainable growth of chess in schools.

A new session is already scheduled to take place from 30 October to 1 November. It will be conducted by Denis Lemouton and Jérôme Voillat. Anyone wishing to receive further information may contact me directly.

- Training and professional development of arbiters

Our training policy was not limited to the field of educational chess.

From 12 to 14 July 2025, AIDEF organised a seminar in Cairo, in cooperation with the Adly Chess Academy and under the auspices of FIDE, to train and qualify future FIDE Arbiters. It was led by International Arbiter Anastasia Sorokina, assisted by Egyptian International Arbiter Khaled Hawas.

The course was deliberately delivered in English to enable arbiters from the French-speaking world also to master the terminology and regulations in the language used primarily at major international competitions.

A second seminar, this time intended for Regional Arbiters, was organised in Marrakech from 9 to 11 December 2025 as part of the 11th RIDEF. Conducted by Othmane Sebbar and Zoheir Slami, it brought together 29 participants for a programme covering the Laws of Chess, arbitration procedures, the practical management of tournaments and various case studies.

These two initiatives demonstrated our determination to strengthen technical expertise throughout the French-speaking world and enable our members to rely on better-trained arbiters capable of officiating both in national competitions and at major international events.

- International responsibilities at senior championships

From 24 October to 3 November 2024, I travelled to Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy, for the European Individual Senior Chess Championship held under the auspices of the European Chess Union. Appointed as an ECU official, I served as Chairman of the Appeals Committee.

A few days later, from 16 to 29 November 2024, I participated in the FIDE World Senior Chess Championships held in Porto Santo on the island of Madeira, Portugal. The competition comprised four distinct categories: Open 50+, Open 65+, Women 50+ and Women 65+.

FIDE had appointed me as an official for these World Championships and entrusted me with chairing the Appeals Committee. This role involved examining, together with the other Committee members, any appeals lodged against arbitral decisions and

ensuring that they were handled impartially, rigorously and in accordance with international regulations.

This confidence was renewed from 20 October to 2 November 2025 for the 33rd FIDE World Senior Chess Championships, held in Gallipoli, Apulia, Italy. This edition also featured the 50+ and 65+ categories in both the Open and Women's competitions.

For the second consecutive year, I was officially appointed by FIDE and again served as Chairman of the Appeals Committee.

These three successive appointments - by the ECU in 2024 and then by FIDE at the 2024 and 2025 World Senior Championships - represented a significant mark of confidence from the international bodies. They also enabled me indirectly to represent AIDEF at major international competitions and to strengthen our experience in senior chess, arbitration and the handling of appeals procedures.

- Online competitions and celebration of the Francophonie

Our online competitions continued to grow and became firmly established among AIDEF's traditional events.

The fifth edition of the "24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz", held on 20 March to mark International Francophonie Day 2025 on the Lichess platform, brought together 205 players. After a contest that remained undecided until the final minutes, Grandmaster Gabriel Flom won with 369 points, ahead of FIDE Master Alban Delorme with 366 points and Ivorian Candidate Master Nicolas Cogan, third with 342 points.

The sixth edition brought together 181 players on 20 March 2026. Spain's Jorge Manuel Miranda Herrera won with 423 points from 305 games, ahead of Gabriel Flom and Alban Delorme.

For each edition, AIDEF awarded EUR 500 in prizes: EUR 250 to the winner, EUR 150 to the runner-up and EUR 100 to the third-placed player.

Beyond their sporting dimension, these 24-hour marathons enable us to celebrate the Francophonie through an event that is free, open to everyone and accessible worldwide, in a spirit of conviviality, fraternity and personal achievement.

Our Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship also continued to develop.

The fifth edition, played on the Tornelo platform on 14 and 15 June 2025, set a record with 42 teams representing 25 federations and 66 titled players, including seven Grandmasters. Greece retained its title ahead of France and Egypt, while Albania 2 won the prize reserved for teams with an average Elo rating not exceeding 1900.

On 4 and 5 July 2026, the sixth edition increased the record to 44 teams. Quebec won ahead of France and Canada, while Chad took the special prize reserved for teams with an average Elo rating below 1900.

These competitions, held under the technical and arbitral direction of Laurent Freyd, offered EUR 3,300 in prize money. Their format required each team to include at least one female player, reflecting our determination to promote women's participation in a practical way.

The sixth edition was also marked by the broadcast of a video message from FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich, demonstrating FIDE's interest in our association's activities.

- The 11th International Francophone Chess Meetings

Organising the 11th International Francophone Chess Meetings was one of the main challenges of this term.

Egypt initially submitted a bid to host this edition in Cairo. I travelled there in July 2025 to work with Ahmed Adly on the sporting, financial and logistical aspects of the project and to meet the prospective principal sponsor.

However, changes within the Egyptian Federation and the inability of its new leaders and Ahmed Adly to reach an agreement had jeopardised the project. A meeting held a few days later in Casablanca, notably in the presence of Bouchra Kadiri, Éric Bopala and the President of the Egyptian Federation, confirmed that the necessary financial and organisational guarantees could no longer be secured.

It was therefore necessary to abandon the organisation of the event in Cairo and find an alternative solution at particularly short notice.

Thanks to the efforts of the Royal Moroccan Chess Federation, the 11th RIDEF was ultimately able to take place in Marrakech from 6 to 14 December 2025.

This particularly rich edition included classical, rapid and blitz competitions offering a combined prize fund of EUR 10,000, as well as training courses, cultural and tourist activities, the traditional Friendship Tournament and a lecture by Georges Bertola entitled "Chess, a Living World Heritage".

French Grandmaster Jean-Marc Degraeve won the classical championship with 8 points out of 9, ahead of Malagasy International Master Milanto Harifidy Ralison and French Grandmaster Romain Édouard. He also won the rapid and blitz competitions, completing a remarkable treble.

Quebec Woman Grandmaster Maïli-Jade Ouellet, who finished fourth overall in the classical tournament, won the Women's Francophonie Championship title for the third consecutive year. She too won all three women's disciplines.

The presence of Dana Reizniece, Deputy Chair of the FIDE Management Board, from 9 to 13 December demonstrated FIDE's interest in the RIDEF and, more broadly, in AIDEF's activities.

Beyond the sporting results, this edition demonstrated our collective ability to overcome a particularly difficult situation and maintain our main international event despite the late abandonment of the project initially planned for Egypt.

- Francophonie Rapid Championship in Brussels

On 9 May 2026, the first Luc Winants Memorial, organised in Brussels in tribute to the late Belgian Grandmaster, hosted the Francophonie Rapid Championship.

With more than 200 participants representing 26 nationalities, including 37 Grandmasters, 19 International Masters, 32 FIDE Masters and three world champions, together with a total prize fund of EUR 20,000, this event established itself as one of the strongest tournaments ever held in Belgium.

French Grandmaster Marc'Andria Maurizzi, the reigning French Champion, won the tournament and the title of 2026 Francophonie Rapid Champion with 7.5 points out of 9 and an Elo performance of 2746. The women's prize went to former World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk (Switzerland), the veteran prize to Grandmaster Igor Glek (Belgium), and the under-20 prize to International Master Marco Materia.

FIDE was represented by Grandmasters Victor Bologan and Nigel Short. The online appearance by former World Champion Viswanathan Anand was one of the highlights of the day.

This event, organised under outstanding conditions, was another highlight for the international profile of Francophone chess.

- Preparations for the 2027 Francophonie Games

The official inclusion of chess in the programme of the 10th Francophonie Games, which will be held in Yerevan from 23 July to 1 August 2027, represents a historic advance for our discipline and for AIDEF.

Appointed Technical Delegate by FIDE, I participated from 1 October 2024 in an initial online technical meeting with Zeina Mina, Director of the International Committee of

the Francophonie Games, and Nathalie Demarty, Programme Officer. This meeting marked the official launch of the general phase of the selection process.

From 25 to 29 March 2025, I then travelled to Yerevan as part of a preparatory mission organised by the International Committee of the Francophonie Games. I visited the Tigran Petrosian Chess House and the Chess Academy of Armenia and took part in discussions concerning the regulations, infrastructure, accommodation, accessibility and logistical requirements of the competition.

The Chess House was preferred because of its central location and ease of access. I also stressed the need to provide participants with single rooms, limit travel between the hotel and playing venue, and mobilise governments and sports ministries to ensure the broadest possible participation by member States and governments of the Francophonie.

The introduction of chess at the Francophonie Games represents one of the most important achievements of recent years. It gives our discipline new institutional recognition and opens considerable prospects for its development in French-speaking countries.

- Institutional relations and future projects

During this term, I continued to develop AIDEF's relations with FIDE, national federations and various international participants in the chess world.

At the invitation of the European Chess Union, I travelled to Batumi, Georgia, from 9 to 12 October 2025 for the official celebrations of its 40th anniversary.

This visit gave me the opportunity to meet and speak with many federation presidents and officials, ECU leaders and prominent figures from the European chess world. These various contacts helped strengthen AIDEF's institutional relations and raise awareness of its activities and projects among our European partners.

From 7 to 9 February 2026, I travelled to Geneva to examine, with Patrice Delpin and the officials of the Geneva Chess Federation, the possibility of organising the Francophonie Rapid and Blitz Championships there in 2028. The visit to the Mövenpick Hotel Geneva and my participation in the 37th Rapid Open of the Geneva Chess Club enabled us to assess the site's capacity to host such an event in practical terms.

On 16 February 2026 in Brussels, I worked with Quentin Geubel on preparations for the Luc Winants Memorial. I was also received at Brussels City Hall to consider several projects that could be organised in 2030 as part of Belgium's bicentenary: a living chess game on the Grand-Place, the RIDEF, a Bicentenary tournament, a

historical lecture, a prestigious simultaneous exhibition and activities in various districts of the city.

On 22 and 23 June 2026, I participated in the international "Chess Meets Content" summit in Paris, organised by ChessFam. The discussions notably covered eSports, the place of women in chess, artificial intelligence, media coverage of competitions, private investment and relations among federations, content creators and digital platforms.

There I met Wadim Rosenstein, a candidate for the FIDE presidency, with whom I was able to discuss the specific issues facing the Francophone chess community.

24 July 2026 - AIDEF proposal to the 2026 FIDE General Assembly: recognition of the bilingual institutional name

On behalf of AIDEF, I officially submitted a proposal to include in the FIDE Charter the recognition and systematic use of its bilingual institutional name: "International Chess Federation / Fédération Internationale des Échecs". This initiative seeks to preserve the historic name under which FIDE was founded in Paris on 20 July 1924 and to recall that the acronym FIDE derives directly from its French name.

This proposal in no way challenges the status of English as FIDE's official and working language and creates no general obligation to translate into French. It concerns exclusively FIDE's institutional identity and representation and provides for gradual implementation, without changing its acronym, seal, flag or emblem.

This proposal will be put to a vote at the FIDE General Assembly in Samarkand. I therefore warmly invite all AIDEF member federations with voting rights in FIDE to support it and vote in favour of it. Beyond the defence of the French language, this is about preserving an essential part of the history and identity of the International Chess Federation.

- Solidarity and support for member federations

Our activities also retained an important dimension of solidarity.

As part of the Haitian Chess Federation's preparations for the 46th Olympiad in Samarkand, I contributed to organising an intensive training camp in Alicante, in cooperation with the Dama Negra Chess Club and the University of Alicante.

Led by Grandmaster Jean-Marc Degraeve, 2025 Francophonie Champion, this camp was intended to give the Haitian national teams high-level preparation before they travelled to Uzbekistan. It also established a new partnership that could lead to

future training activities and sporting exchanges.

This project perfectly illustrates AIDEF's vocation: not merely to organise competitions, but to provide practical assistance to its members, taking into account their needs, resources and the particular difficulties they may face.

- Communication, heritage and promotion of chess

AIDEF's visibility on social media continued to grow.

In June 2025, our Facebook group passed the symbolic threshold of 10,000 members. It then had 10,033 members, compared with 9,144 in January 2024, an increase of nearly 9.7% in seventeen months. Over the same period, our Facebook page grew from 6,347 to 6,600 followers.

Today, these platforms are essential tools for sharing Francophone chess news, announcing our members' activities, promoting our tournaments and training courses and creating connections among players, officials, coaches, arbiters and enthusiasts around the world.

Once again, I encourage all our members to send us their information regularly so that we can publicise their initiatives and give them greater visibility.

On 9 November 2024, I also published an article on our website entitled "Chess: a game with many benefits, from childhood to adulthood". This work presented the cognitive, educational, social and emotional benefits of chess, as well as the values of respect, perseverance, responsibility and sportsmanship that the game promotes. I invite our members to use it as a promotional tool among schools, public authorities, institutional partners and sponsors.

I also continued to expand our album devoted to "Art in All Its Forms in Chess", which brings together several thousand items illustrating the place of chess in the arts and cultures of the world.

Finally, I updated the complete history of the International Francophone Chess Meetings. This nearly 400-page dossier, enriched with photographs, documents, press clippings, portraits and anecdotes, recounts every edition of the RIDEF since the first held in Marrakech in 2013.

Beyond its historical value, this document is a genuine reference dossier and a valuable tool for future organisers. It will enable them to present institutions and sponsors with the history, international scope, human impact and cultural reach of the RIDEF.

- The so-called "Kasparov contract" case and relations with the French Chess Federation

The past term was also marked by the conclusion of the judicial proceedings relating to the so-called "Kasparov contract" case.

On 8 January 2026, the Investigation Chamber of the Versailles Court of Appeal upheld the dismissal order issued at the end of the second judicial investigation opened notably against Jean-Claude Moingt and the French Chess Federation.

AIDEF regretted this decision, which prevented it from having a criminal court rule publicly, in adversarial proceedings and on the merits, on the liability of the persons concerned.

I was careful to recall that a dismissal order was neither a finding of guilt, an order of discharge nor an acquittal, but resulted from the assessment that the evidence gathered did not permit referral to a trial court.

After pursuing the remedies we considered appropriate, we decided not to appeal to the Court of Cassation, thereby bringing the judicial proceedings to an end. This closure did not, however, eliminate the moral, institutional and financial issue concerning the funds that were intended to benefit several French-speaking African countries.

In an effort to ease tensions, our Vice-President met in Paris with Éloi Relange, President of the French Chess Federation, and proposed a round table in Casablanca to identify the conditions for restoring relations between our two organisations. Unfortunately, this proposal received no response.

I subsequently met him personally in Paris in June 2026 during the "Chess Meets Content" summit, without any genuine desire for reconciliation being apparent at this stage.

AIDEF nevertheless remains available for sincere and constructive institutional dialogue, in keeping with the principles of transparency, good governance and solidarity that have consistently guided our work.

- Preparations for the 12th RIDEF

Following the success of the Luc Winants Memorial, a working group had considered organising the 12th RIDEF in Belgium from 18 to 26 August 2026. Despite the interest of the project, it had not been possible to find a suitable playing hall within the available time.

At its online meeting on 9 July 2026, the Executive Board therefore decided to

relaunch the bidding process officially, with the aim of organising the 12th RIDEF before the end of 2026 and incorporating the blitz tournament initially planned for Casablanca.

Victor Bologan, who represented FIDE at the meeting, confirmed a minimum contribution of EUR 20,000, subject to sufficient visa guarantees and participation by representatives of at least 20 countries.

A call for bids was sent to all our members, with a deadline of 15 September 2026. Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo had already expressed interest. The various applications will have to be considered in light of the sporting, financial, organisational and logistical guarantees offered by each candidate.

General conclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

At the end of this term, I believe that AIDEF has continued and consolidated its development across all the areas that constitute its purpose: bringing together the Francophone chess community, organising international competitions, developing training, supporting its member federations and strengthening the presence of the Francophonie in international chess institutions.

The period under review was particularly busy. Our sporting activities continued both in person and online through the International Francophone Chess Meetings, the rapid and blitz championships, the Francophonie Online Team Chess Championship, the traditional 24 Hours of Francophonie Blitz, and various events organised in partnership with our members. Several of these competitions recorded remarkable participation and confirmed that AIDEF had now established regular, recognised events in the international chess calendar.

Training also remained one of our priorities. The masterclasses fully subsidised by AIDEF continued regularly under the direction of Grandmaster Gabriel Flom, reaching a 19th session on 6 September 2026. At the same time, together with the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, we developed French-language courses leading to the FIDE School Instructor title, both online and in person, and organised a specific training course for Regional Arbiters in Marrakech. These initiatives respond to a genuine demand and contribute directly to developing expertise within our federations.

AIDEF also continued to provide practical assistance to its members. The support granted to the Haitian Chess Federation in preparing its national teams before the Olympiad is a particularly significant example. New partnerships were also developed, and several projects were examined in Brussels, Geneva and other cities

to prepare future competitions and diversify the options for hosting our events.

Our association also continued to expand. The arrival of Vanuatu, Armenia and then Guinea, the 51st member nation, confirmed AIDEF's steady growth and its reach far beyond its original sphere. This development is particularly important ahead of the 10th Francophonie Games, which will be held in Armenia in 2027 and will include chess among the official disciplines for the first time.

At institutional level, I maintained contacts with FIDE and the various international chess federations and organisations. My travels and meetings enabled me to present AIDEF's activities, defend the interests of its members and establish or strengthen numerous contacts. Some relations naturally remain more difficult, particularly with the French Chess Federation, but I continued to favour dialogue and leave open the possibility of reconciliation whenever a mutual willingness can emerge.

Following the same institutional logic, on behalf of AIDEF I officially submitted on 24 July 2026 a proposal to the FIDE General Assembly to recognise and use systematically its bilingual institutional name: "International Chess Federation / Fédération Internationale des Échecs". The aim is not to challenge the status of English as FIDE's official and working language, but to preserve its historic name, under which it was founded in Paris on 20 July 1924, and to recall that the acronym FIDE derives directly from the French name "Fédération Internationale des Échecs". This proposal will be put to a vote at the FIDE General Assembly in Samarkand, and I warmly invite all our member federations with voting rights to support it.

The RIDEF naturally remain at the heart of our project. Following the excellent edition held in Marrakech in December 2025, we continued to work on their future. Several possibilities were examined for the 12th edition and, after it proved impossible to complete the Belgian project within the planned time frame, we opened a new call for bids to find the solution offering the best sporting, financial, organisational and logistical guarantees. The support announced by FIDE is particularly important in this regard, enabling this competition to continue its development.

Beyond the figures, competitions and training courses, I remain convinced that AIDEF's principal achievement lies in the human network it has gradually built. Today, our association enables federations, players, arbiters, coaches and officials from very different countries to meet, exchange experiences and carry out together projects that they probably could not have achieved independently.

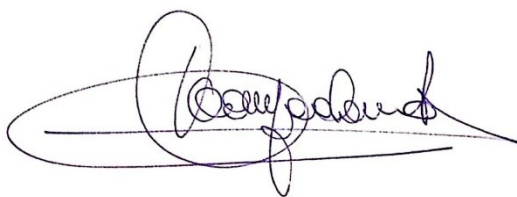
Naturally, much remains to be done. We must continue to seek new financial resources, consolidate our competitions, develop our training activities, provide greater support to federations with limited resources and prepare carefully for major future events, foremost among them the 2027 Francophonie Games in Yerevan.

Finally, I would like to thank most sincerely the members of the Executive Board, our member federations, organisers, arbiters, trainers, partners, volunteers and everyone who contributed to our activities during this term. None of what was achieved would have been possible without their commitment and trust.

AIDEF has evolved considerably since its creation and now holds a recognised place in the international chess world. Our collective responsibility is now to consolidate what has been built, preserve our independence and identity, and continue our development in a spirit of openness, solidarity and Francophone fraternity.

It is in this spirit that I hope we will continue our work together in the years ahead.

Gens Una Sumus.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, featuring a large, stylized 'P' and 'V' that are interconnected, followed by 'Hoolandt'. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Patrick Van Hoolandt
President of AIDEF