



A Roadmap for the Future



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**Presidential Programme
2018-2022**



**Dear National Federations,
Dear Friends,**

It has truly been a great honour for me to serve you as FEI President for the past four years. My programme for 2014-2018 was ambitious but I believe that 80% of what I pledged to do has been done, thanks to the fantastic cooperation with our National Federations, our stakeholders and the wonderful FEI HQ staff. But some points are still “under construction” and, with work still to do, I am standing for a second term.

We live in a challenging and dynamic world with an ever-changing landscape. So it is no surprise that during my first term new challenges were identified that we, as a dynamic organisation, needed to address. In this document I have laid out what has been done and the roadmap for the organisation which naturally will continue to evolve over the next four years.

Broadcast and **digital media** are evolving continuously. We already have a successful broadcast and media strategy, but we need to further identify how the fans and the larger audience will consume sport in the future. We must make the right decisions for our Over The Top (OTT) programme in a proactive way. We cannot miss this train, so we need to explore new horizons and follow the new trends.

Identifying how our fans consume the sport, particularly the **youth**, is crucial to our ongoing growth and sustainability in a cluttered sporting landscape. The youth are our future and their involvement in the sport is not only essential for its ongoing success in terms of participation, it also helps in adapting the sport to the common trends. As a sport we need to be relevant to this youth audience, utilising the communication channels they use. For my next term as FEI President I will continue to engage with youth, listen to them, put a youth development programme in place and grow our fan base amongst a younger audience.

I am always proud to say that our sport is the true Olympic Champion in **gender equality** as we are the only Olympic sport where male and female athletes compete against each other. We need to promote this gender equality in our organisation. Regrettably women are still under-represented in decision-making positions. Of the athletes registered to participate in our international events, 60% are women and 40% are men, and our fan base is heavily female dominated. We must motivate more of these women to contribute to the governance of the sport by applying for positions and offering their expertise to our organisation. We must also actively promote this policy with our NFs.

We have done a lot to improve **governance** within the FEI Family and I am proud to say that these efforts have been recognised and appreciated, not only by our own community but also by our colleagues in the Olympic movement at a time when governance in the wider sport’s world is under the microscope. Good governance is more than just ticking boxes and complying with rules or recommendations. It’s a mind set and a philosophy, a very clear positioning and automatism in everything that we do. It needs to be integral to the culture we set within our organisations so that the ethos of good governance can filter from top to bottom. It is work in progress and we need to question and challenge our own structures at all times so that we can continue to improve, both at the FEI and our NFs.

In the field of **development**, during my visits to many NFs across all the continents, I identified a real need for independent experts that are prepared to share and transfer their knowledge and expertise. For this reason, the FEI Solidarity Committee has started working on a programme to make this possible and is identifying experts in the area of development that will contribute to this programme funded by the FEI and create a lasting legacy. Since the FEI Solidarity programme was created in 2012, we have already invested close to CHF 14 million on 284 NF projects in 88 countries, education, transport and quarantine, and related operating expenses.

The updated programme I present to you is by no means exhaustive, but I hope it provides a flavour of my vision for the future. Believe me when I say that the last four years have been an incredible experience and that my passion for our sport and the FEI remain as strong as ever.

We have already achieved a lot but we still have a lot to do and I want to underline that this is not the work of one person. All of this is the result of teamwork – the amazing staff at FEI Headquarters, a great Executive Board and Bureau – but also thanks to the input and support of our NFs and stakeholders.

If we want to be successful in an ever more challenging world, our community needs to stay united, even in sometimes difficult times. Communication is key and for this reason I warmly invite you to provide your feedback and any comments or suggestions you want to share with me.

I am proud to serve our great sport and I would be honoured if you would continue to support me as President of the FEI.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of my Presidency – Continuity, Unity, Respect, Innovation and Development - are enshrined in the FEI vision, mission and values:

FEI Vision

To grow the unique and mutually beneficial bond between horse and human in sport globally (#TwoHearts #BeOne).

FEI Mission

To drive and develop equestrian sport globally in a modern, sustainable and structured manner with guaranteed integrity, athlete welfare, equal opportunity and a fair and ethical partnership with the horse.

FEI Values

Horse First: The welfare of the horse is our top priority.

Perform as one: A unique sporting partnership built on mutual trust and respect.

Fair and equal: A universal and level playing field for men and women of all ages to compete together in a safe environment from grassroots to the world stage.

For today and tomorrow: Meeting the needs of today without compromising tomorrow.

These were the principles when I first stood for election in 2014 and they remain equally as valid today as they were four years ago.

Please allow me to provide an overview of what we have achieved since my election in 2014 as well as my pledges for the future.

My 2014 programme had five pillars, each with a set of key commitments.

These five pillars were:

- 1. Serving our Community**
- 2. Sport: Our Core Business**
- 3. Equestrian Sport in the Olympics**
- 4. Solidarity: The Engine of Development**
- 5. Horses as our Partners**

1. FEI Serving Our Community

Promoting the FEI as a service organisation has always been my mantra and I believe we can all agree that the FEI is more service-oriented than ever before. We are dedicated to delivering the best services possible to our NFs and community.

The FEI will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with its NFs to promote them and to support them where necessary in discussions with national governments, NOCs and other organisations.

Pledge for the Future

The principles of territoriality and nationality have been respected and I will continue to honour and preserve the principle of one nation, one vote.

I will also protect the rights of NFs as the sole authority for entering dates in the FEI Calendar and registering/entering athletes and horses.

IT solutions

The FEI is already providing the NFs and stakeholders with innovative IT platforms and solutions to improve the exchange of data such as registrations, entries, results, etc.

Pledge for the Future

We will continue to provide innovative tools and digital applications to support NFs.

Dialogue

Development of the new branding for the seven FEI disciplines was based on communication with and input from all stakeholder groups, including NFs, athletes and officials. The creation of the Commercial Advisory Board has brought together individuals with proven relevant business background to advise the FEI on the commercial and media strategies. Similarly, the FEI has established working groups for FEI Officials, Dressage Judging, Invitation System and Rankings.

Pledge for the Future

Inclusive dialogue and consultation with NFs and stakeholders is crucial. I will ensure that the FEI continues to engage and involve our community and experts on strategic matters.

Education

We are proud that the online education system, FEI Campus, is now up and running. FEI Campus offers a broad range of courses for the education of FEI Officials but also general courses for the wider public on horse welfare and horsemanship as well as language courses.

We see FEI Campus becoming the equine online encyclopaedia, and the success of FEI Campus has also been recognised commercially, with two companies – Boehringer Ingelheim and OTTO – signing up as sponsors of FEI Campus to date.

To demonstrate the commitment we have to education and to our officials, the FEI has created a new post within Headquarters, Director of Education & Officials. In addition, the FEI has established FEI Courses for Secretary Generals and Administrators, which have been in place since 2017.

These courses offer a unique insight into the workings of the FEI and the tools available to NFs, as well as offering an in-person dialogue with NF Officials during a week in FEI HQ with the active involvement of all FEI Departments.

Pledge for the Future

We will continue improving and developing FEI Campus with the regular addition of courses for our FEI Officials and for the broader equestrian community. And the FEI will continue to focus on education programmes for a wide range of people in our community. This will be a key priority in my Presidency.

Regional Groups and Continental Associations

We have learned that the history, role and reasons for the creation of Continental Associations vary a lot and that it is impossible to compare them with each other. We have established bilateral relations with them through tailor-made MOUs.

We will continue to work in close relationship with our Continental Associations and we will support them in their specific missions.

Pledge for the Future

I will create a Working Group with representatives of Continental Associations and Regional Group Chairs to better understand the future role of Regional Groups and Continental Associations within the FEI.

Finances

We can only serve our community if we have the resources to do this. Financial health and sustainable revenues are paramount. Additional revenues should come from commercial partners, sales of television rights and commercialisation of our own products.

The FEI is doing well financially. Thanks to good financial management we were able to increase our reserves and we established a risk management policy that defines the reserves we need in order to guarantee the services even in difficult times. After the good financial years 2016 and 2017 we were also able to increase the funds provided to FEI Solidarity in order to guarantee the sustainability of our development programmes.

Regarding the generating of revenues through our commercial programme, we are delighted to have concluded in 2017 an expansion of our partnership with Longines which now also includes the title sponsorship of the Longines FEI Jumping Nations Cup™. Although we were also able to secure new partnerships, we need to further diversify our commercial portfolio and attract new partners for our existing products such as FEI World Cup™ and FEI Nations Cup™ in other FEI disciplines and age categories. The first priority is to find a partner for the FEI Dressage World Cup™ which, for the time being, is funded by the FEI.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that we continue to apply a strict financial policy with a conservative approach, allowing us to build up our strategic reserves and to reinvest in our sport with a priority for our development programmes, including education. In light of the FEI's current financially healthy situation, there are no plans to increase the level of taxation on NFs.

2. SPORT Our Core Business

Our sport has continued to grow over the last four years and there is still a lot of potential. But growth brings many challenges. Maintaining a fair and level playing field and preserving the integrity of the sport is an ongoing mission and many initiatives have been developed in this field with the help of other organisations such as the IOC.

If we want to promote our sport in the best way possible, we need to make the sport accessible, exciting and easy to understand for a larger audience. This means also that our competition formats need to be adapted for modern television and digital media.

In 2015 we started to discuss new Olympic Formats which after a thorough process of discussions and consultation, also with the IOC, resulted in the approval of new formats for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

In the period running up to the Tokyo Olympics we will have to test these new formats also with the involvement of the Olympic Broadcast Services, the Official Timekeeper and ORIS (Olympic Results and Information Management Service). Failure is not an option and we need to do it right from the start as this will help us to consolidate our position in the Olympic programme.

We also need to continue working on a better presentation of our sport by introducing new technologies, graphics and applications that are exciting for spectators. A lot of preparation work has been done in this field over the last years and it is now time to implement new technologies at all our events.

FEI World Equestrian Games™

Although we have further strengthened the minimum eligibility criteria, we must recognise that due to the successful development of our sport in many regions it is more and more difficult to find organisers that are capable of organising an event of such magnitude. It is also increasingly difficult for NFs to send athletes in all the disciplines for which their athletes achieved the minimum eligibility requirements.

We must have the courage to look at the future of our World Championships and ask if the WEG is still the best format. Closely related to this is also the New Norm introduced by the IOC to reduce costs for organisers and develop concepts that make it again feasible for organisers to bid to host World Championships. Whereas we still would promote multi-disciplinary bids, we must ask ourselves if it is still realistic to impose a model integrating all our disciplines in one event. If we want to be successful we need to have a model that creates competition and can interest a lot of organisers rather than having to fight to find and motivate one organiser for WEG.

Pledge for the future

We will review our Games and Championships objective and with an open mind in order to make the best choices for the future and sustainability of our sport.

FEI Calendar

The growth of our sport has also increased the number of events in the FEI Calendar. In my view, this increase is not a real problem as the growth in the number of events goes hand-in-hand with the growth of our sport and, at the same time, answers to market demands. The growth of the number of athletes that are capable of competing at the highest level explains the need for more top events in our Calendar. We need to identify the real high level events that showcase our sport, and we need to have a better structured approach to inserting them in the Calendar to avoid date clashes, but always respecting anti-trust legislation.

Pledge for the Future

I will, together with our NFs and Organisers, identify improved ways to allow more of our elite athletes to compete at the top level in a balanced Calendar.

Invitation system

One of the consequences of the success of our sport is that the competition between high level events is very tough with more top level events than there are weekends in a year. We must respect international anti-trust legislation. Consequently, we need to find other tools than date clash rules to promote FEI named events. Over the last years, we were able to create added value for our events by promoting them on digital platforms but we need to find also other ways to help organisers of our traditional Series.

Invitation systems must guarantee a fair balance of participation based upon sports results (rankings), home riders selected by the NF of the OC and a limited number of invitations by the OC. Although we cannot deny that, for organisers, a limited number of personal invitations are necessary to preserve the event, these personal invitations need to be strictly controlled.

Over the past year we have developed an online invitation system that will guarantee that riders that have the right to participate in events based upon their performance (as reflected in their standing in the rankings) will effectively receive the invitation. The FEI IT Department together with the Jumping Committee is evaluating the pilot phases and I am confident that after making the necessary adaptations and fine tunings this system will be up and running in 2019. This will be a true game changer as this system will ensure a strict application of invitation rules.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure the strict application of the Invitation System and that further improvements to the online entry system are made in consultation with NFs, Organisers and Athletes.

Event Classification System

We all agree that the level of prize money should not be the only parameter to define the level of an Event. Over the last years the Event Classification System (ECS) has been further developed and improved with evaluation possibilities for all relevant stakeholders. However, we need to decide for what purpose we will use ECS in the future and whether we will use it as a tool to identify a limited number of 'real' top level events that may lead to the creation of a new additional layer of events on top of the existing structure with additional points for the rankings.

Without wanting to pre-empt the outcome we need at least to have an open discussion involving all stakeholders. We are committed to addressing this topic at a Sports Forum during my next term. The best protection is guaranteeing the highest quality.

Pledge for the Future

We will do our utmost to help the organisers of FEI named events such as the FEI Nations Cup™ and FEI World Cup™ meet the highest standards in order to further promote and develop these series according to the highest ECS standards.

Competition on borrowed horses

Although I believe that competition on borrowed horses could be exciting and also allow developing countries and/or countries that are struggling with transport and quarantine issues to be more involved on an international level, this is more complicated than at first sight. The main problem in many developing countries is to find a pool of horses of the same level that can be borrowed. And even if the horses could be made available, owners are often hesitant to put them forward for competitions or ask important financial compensation to do so. We will continue to seek solutions with the next Youth Olympic Games 2022 in Senegal in mind.

Pledge for the Future

I pledge to work to develop existing and, where possible, create new FEI series on borrowed horses.

Integrity

In everything we do, we need to ensure that the integrity of our sport is preserved. Many initiatives have been developed in this field over the last years. We have now a worldwide uniform equine anti-doping system and also for human anti-doping we are going to work closely with the newly created Independent Testing Authority to increase the testing. Scientific research is key in order for our programmes to remain relevant and proactive and under the supervision of the Veterinary Committee and the List Group we will continue investing in research also in new methodologies to continue our fight against practices to enhance performance.

Also we are working closely with the IOC on all initiatives related to integrity in the sport. As a consequence, in 2015 we signed an MOU with the IOC to be an active actor of the Integrity Betting Intelligence System (IBIS). In 2017 we incorporated into our rules the FEI Code on the Prevention of Manipulation of Competitions. In 2018 we were the first International Sport Federation ever to activate a campaign on the prevention of competition manipulation with the "Be True, Be You, Believe in Equestrian" campaign launched at Tryon 2018.

Pledge for the Future

I will lead the fight against doping and match fixing in a proactive way by ensuring that we further promote clean sport while also ensuring that new regulations are fraud-proof.

Promotion of our sport

The #TwoHearts and #BeOne campaigns have left their footprint and actively promoted our sport in different regions in the world. Also the creation of an FEI website in Chinese language offers further possibilities to promote our sport in one of the biggest countries and potential markets. Our recently reviewed digital strategy will continue to focus on this.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that we promote each of our disciplines in all regions of the world and continue developing a strategy to do this in an efficient and effective way.

Universality

Increasing the universality of our sport is an important element of Olympic Agenda 2020 and we have seen encouraging results from our development programmes, with a number of new nations participating in Games and Championships.

Pledge for the Future

I pledge to continue these efforts through FEI Solidarity and ensure that we will also develop other initiatives to further support developing NFs so that they have the opportunity to reach the highest level of the sport.

Athletes

Without athletes, there is no sport. Thanks to motivated organisers, the number of events is still growing and offers our athletes the possibility to practice their sport at all levels. We see however that there are important regional differences. Through our cooperation with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) we will continue working on facilitating crossing borders for our equine athletes. After having reviewed the World Challenge and the introduction of the Equestrian Sport Educative Event (ESEE) we have also seen an increase of these events, which provide a solid basis for the expansion of the sport in developing regions. We will continue our efforts to expand these programmes.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that, as the governing body, the FEI continues to play a key role in creating the right framework to allow athletes - whether professional or amateur, and without regard to the level - to practice their sport.

Athlete rights

As well as being the guardian of horse welfare, the FEI has an important responsibility to protect the rights of athletes. Offering fair participation possibilities and a level playing field to those athletes is key.

We have made further investments in the education of our athletes, especially on anti-doping and match fixing. We have made good use of outreach activities, such as having a human anti-doping booth at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ Tryon 2018, together with the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), where athletes could get information as to their obligations and ask any questions. In addition, we rolled out the campaign on the prevention of competition manipulation in Tryon. We will further continue and expand these efforts.

The active participation of our athletes is key and this year we have seen a higher level of participation in the athletes' elections thanks to wide-reaching communications initiatives in the framework of the WEG2018. We must continue our efforts to further activate the Athletes' Committee and to integrate them more in our governance.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that the FEI further develops campaigns to make athletes aware and keep them informed on changes in all fields that concern them, such as clean sport, horse welfare, harassment & abuse, new rules, etc.

I am also committed to further encouraging athletes to participate more actively in the decision-making process by promoting the athlete elections and by further activating the Athletes' Committee.

Legal system

Several initiatives have been undertaken to improve the rights of athletes in our legal system.

These include the development of a Safeguarding Policy Against Harassment & Abuse (to be approved at the FEI General Assembly 2018). The FEI is committed to promoting a safe environment for its members and has developed this Policy to set forth the measures it will put in place to promote a safe equestrian environment, both independently and in partnership with other parties, including National Federations, parents or legal guardians, athletes, and the equestrian community.

Also included in the measures to improve the rights of athletes in our legal system, the FEI has introduced the principle of specified substances. The specified substance concept gives more flexibility on the provisional suspension or sanctions, depending on the circumstances, notably in cases where it can be proven that a horse has ingested a contaminated food substance.

The FEI has issued guidelines for fines and contributions towards legal costs and, in particular, the FEI has agreed that it should pay a financial contribution to athletes if after legal proceedings they were found not guilty. In addition, athletes can file an application for a reduced fine and/or lower contribution towards legal costs due to exceptional circumstances. For example, if the Person Responsible competes at lower levels only (such as 1* and 2* competitions) and/or has a low income.

In 2019 we will do a thorough review of the FEI Legal system which will be discussed at the Sports Forum and which will also provide a platform to our athletes to voice any further concerns. We will also look at the possibility of introducing an "Athletes' Declaration", similar to what was recently approved at the IOC Session in Buenos Aires (ARG), which outlines a common set of aspirational rights and responsibilities for athletes covering anti-doping, integrity, clean sport, career, communications, governance, discrimination, due process, and harassment and abuse.

In case of infractions against the rules, the athlete – like all other parties – has an absolute right to a fair trial and must be able to exercise in full their rights of defence. Everyone is innocent until found guilty, and I will not accept any deviation from these principles, not even for reasons of time constraints.

Pledge for the Future

I will not allow any deviation from the principle of presumption of innocence.

Organisers

Without organisers, there is no sport. As the global governing body, the FEI plays a key role as a regulator in many fields that concern organisers. The FEI establishes requirements and rules that define the framework in which organisers operate. Any changes to these requirements and rules can have a very significant impact on organisers.

It is now standard procedure laid down in the MOU with the International Equestrian Organisers' Alliance (IEOA) that the organisers will be consulted if proposals for rule changes or calendar clashes have an impact on them. Furthermore, in almost all Technical Committees, the organisers have a specific representative. Having a good dialogue and open channel with the organisers is key for our organisation and for the future of our sport.

For many years the fees for organisers have remained unchanged and we have no intention of changing this. With the introduction of the worldwide anti-doping system, this programme no longer has a financial impact on the organisers.

Pledge for the Future

A fair evaluation and classification system of events will allow more structure in the calendar. I am committed to ensuring that we provide organisers with the tools to allow them to apply invitation systems in an easy and efficient way. And we will not increase the level of organising dues paid by our event organisers.

Sport Officials

Officials play a crucial role in our sport by guaranteeing a fair field of play. In order to consolidate this role, I believe we need to establish a specific statute for Officials which includes a clear definition of their role, rights and obligations. The statute should include a code of conduct that clearly defines our ethical standards and offers guidance on avoiding conflicts of interest. This statute should also include guidelines and rules for a fair per diem system. However, we must be very careful that such a system is adapted to the needs of the sport.

An Officials Working Group was established in 2017 under the leadership of the FEI Vice-President Mark Samuel to look at all aspects of our Officials. This Working Group has undertaken broad consultations and has presented its conclusions to the community on a number of occasions, most recently at the Sports Forum 2018.

A final report, which has been provided to the FEI Bureau and FEI Headquarters, provides a detailed list of recommendations and a timeline for their implementation. Some of them are already in place, such as the establishment of a code of conduct and clear job descriptions.

In order to implement the recommendations in full, the FEI will need additional staff and IT support, but this complex matter is one of the FEI's priorities and we will devote the necessary time and resources to work on this important task.

A newly appointed Director of Education & Officials will have to establish a clear roadmap for this, including a well-defined career pathway with clear promotion and demotion rules and the education system will be reviewed in a harmonised way. In addition, FEI Campus will be further developed to provide the necessary tools for improved education of our Officials.

We will also work to promote more respect for the Officials and provide them with greater support while they are fulfilling their duties at events.

Pledge for the Future

Under my Presidency, the FEI will review the education system for Officials in line with the recommendations of the Officials Working Group, offering them a well-defined career planning structure with clear promotion and demotion rules. I am committed to ensuring that such a system is developed hand-in-hand with those it will impact the most.

Online reporting

Following the introduction of online reports for FEI Veterinarians, the FEI IT Department is expanding the online reporting for other categories of Officials. This is also related to another ongoing project – the digital event schedule – and both initiatives need to be integrated. We will continue to provide the IT Department with the necessary budgets to develop these new tools.

Pledge for the Future

I will push for the development of online reports for all Officials, which will provide Officials with a more efficient reporting method and mean that the FEI will receive the reports in an automated way direct to the relevant departments.

Age limits

An important recommendation of the Officials Working Group is the introduction of a competency based evaluation system to replace the age limit. This evaluation system needs to be developed from scratch, which will take some time as it is important that it meets expectations and is fit for purpose.

Pledge for the Future

I will continue to my quest to abolish the age limit of Officials and to replace it by an evaluation system based upon quality and ability.

Appointment of Officials

The appointment of Officials was debated at the Sports Forum 2018 and the consensus was that both NFs and Organisers want to retain the possibility to appoint some Officials themselves. While we recognise this, the appointment of key Officials should be done by the FEI.

The FEI also needs to have the possibility to appoint some Officials in order to allow those that have limited opportunities to officiate at events to gain experience. The Officials Working Group has recommended the creation of a development pool of Officials. We are actually losing candidate Officials who, after completing courses and passing exams, get no chance to put their knowledge into practice. The creation of a development pool is aimed at resolving this problem.

The Officials Working Group also promoted the introduction of a rotation system for certain categories of Officials to avoid the situation that the same Officials always officiate at the same events.

Pledge for the Future

In order to guarantee independent Officials and a level playing field, I will work to help ensure that more appointments to officiate at events can be made by the FEI and, during events, there is scope for evaluation by independent supervisors. I will also ensure that, together with NFs, we develop a programme to attract new Officials.

Other Members of our Community

Besides athletes, organisers and Officials, there are, of course, other members of our community that play an important role in our sport. Over the last years we have established official relations with many stakeholders by concluding MOUs with them in which the relationship between them and the FEI is well defined.

A crucial part of these MOUs is mutual respect and the obligation of consultation and dialogue. I will continue to debate with and listen to these valued members of our FEI community, such as owners, breeders, trainers, coaches, etc.

Pledge for the Future

I will, throughout my Presidency, ensure that relationships with all our stakeholders are nurtured and respected.

Grooms

I strongly believe that we must reach out more to a group that often has been neglected, namely, the grooms. As they take care of our horses, day in and day out, and travel with them from event to event, we should make more effort to better understand and support them.

Several preparatory meetings have been held with representatives of the grooms. We will continue these efforts and will help them create their own international association in order to have a representative body with whom we can interact. Grooms will also be integrated in the ECS and we are in the process of creating a mobile application specifically for them.

The ultimate goal would be to register the grooms and provide them with a certificate after an online course and exam in order to recognise their crucial role in the equestrian world.

Pledge for the Future

I will drive the creation of specific online education programmes for our grooms and look at ways to assist them in finding opportunities when they want to re-orientate their careers.

Sponsors and commercial partners

Sponsors and commercial partners make it possible to develop and promote our sport. It is, of course, the responsibility of the FEI to see that they fit into a clear and consistent commercial strategy. A total of six new sponsors have signed up over the last 18 months, and two new sponsorships will be announced shortly. Following the review of the FEI's commercial strategy and the creation of the Commercial Advisory Board, we will continue to attract commercial partners to support our sport.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that we further develop the FEI's commercial portfolio with a broad variety of commercial partners.

3. Equestrian Sport in the Olympic and Paralympic Games

From my first contacts with the IOC as newly elected President I was aware that we – like all sports – needed to undertake action to consolidate our position in the Olympic and Paralympic programmes. Along with all other Olympic International Federations (IFs) we were invited, according to the 40 recommendations of Olympic Agenda 2020, to evaluate our own sport and its position in the Olympic movement.

It became clear that universality and increasing the global reach and popularity of our sport are the big challenges. The popularity of any given sport on television, digital and traditional media has become more and more important. The IOC revenues depend on this as well as the distribution of television revenue to the IFs.

In order to achieve global reach and enhanced popularity, we identified that we needed to make our sport more accessible for a larger audience by reviewing our competition formats to make them more exciting, easier to understand and suitable for television formats that are easy to distribute (60-90 minutes). We also need to use modern technology and graphics to better explain our sport and develop apps to encourage our audience to participate in a more active way when enjoying our sport.

Promotion of our sport in the different regions in the world, preferably in their own language, was and is a challenge but I believe that the #TwoHearts campaign running up to and during the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games showed our commitment and was appreciated by the IOC and IPC.

I am confident that the introduction of new formats in Tokyo 2020 which will allow (within the same quota of 200 athletes) more nations to compete in equestrian sport at the Games will allow us to further consolidate our position in the Olympic Movement. I know the introduction of these new formats was and is not appreciated by all but I am still convinced that this was the only right thing to do.

Maintaining a solid record of integrity and clean sport is the best promotion for the fact that our sport deserves its place in the Olympic and Paralympic programmes. We activated our Clean Sport campaign prior to and during the Games and will continue to do so in the future.

A new element introduced recently by the IOC is the New Norm. With this programme the IOC wants to control in a more efficient way the costs of organising Olympic Games. We already contributed to this programme and will do so in the future. The FEI will also in future cooperate in a much more intensive way with the organising committees of Olympic and Paralympic Games to keep the costs of the equestrian competitions under control. An important aspect here is to approve in future only venues that can host all our Olympic and Paralympic disciplines, including Eventing cross country.

And let us not forget our presence in the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). To showcase that our sport is attractive for the youth, our presence in the YOG is key. After the successful edition in Buenos Aires, the IOC decided it is time for Africa and the YOG 2022 were allocated to Senegal. We welcome YOG in Africa and Senegal and the FEI will be available already in an early stage to support the organising committee in delivering the equestrian competitions in a successful way.

Last but not least, it was for me an incredible honour to be elected IOC Member in 2017. But more than this I believe it is together with the recent visit of the IOC President at WEG 2018, a clear recognition for what the FEI has achieved over the years and clear signal that our sport is still very relevant for the Olympic movement.

Pledge for the future

I will do everything in my power to protect and consolidate the position of equestrian sport in the Olympic and Paralympic programmes. I will also push for the introduction of a second equestrian discipline in the Youth Olympic Games programme.

4. FEI Solidarity: The Engine of Development

FEI Solidarity is probably the strongest legacy of my predecessor HRH Princess Haya and it was, and still is, a great honour to build further on this legacy and to preserve it for the future.

Over the past four years we have strengthened the FEI Solidarity team in Headquarters and besides the 284 NF projects that were approved for the years 2012–2018, we approved a record number of 71 projects for 2019. In addition, we continued to work on initiatives that included the improvement and extension of the Coaching programme, the expansion of the World Challenge and the further development of the IT NFs Platform which has already been shared with 30 NFs. We also introduced the Equestrian Sports Educative Events (ESEEs) and, with the support of Longines, we created the Retraining of Racehorses programme.

The FEI has invested almost CHF 14 million in FEI Solidarity since its creation in 2012. But what is even more important is that the financial future of the programme is secured for the next years thanks to the good financial results of the FEI in 2016 and 2017 that has allowed us to strengthen the fund by not using it for FEI Solidarity (the costs were taken from the operational budget) and at the same time increase the fund in 2016 and 2017 by CHF 1 million per year.

Over the past years, 50% of the revenues of merchandising went to FEI Solidarity, but these revenues were low. FEI Campus is also part of FEI Solidarity and a portion of revenues coming from partners of FEI Campus is redirected to this initiative.

We will continue on this principle and hope that revenues from this activity will increase further to the new commercial strategy. As for commercial revenues there are many costs related to this, I believe it is best to feed the fund from the financial results of the FEI, and this has proved a successful strategy in 2016 and 2017.

In order to fulfil the true vision of FEI Solidarity, we need to guarantee that the necessary resources are available. I will work on a long term sustainable revenue programme based upon three pillars:

- o Contribution from the operational budget of the FEI to allow the department to work in the best possible conditions, while at the same time keeping the administration costs of the programme under control. Additionally, the coaching and educational aspects of the programme should be covered by the operational budget. We will also continue to try to secure the financial sustainability of the programme.
- o A part of FEI commercial revenues should be reserved for FEI Solidarity. An important part of the revenue of licensing and merchandising should go to FEI Solidarity, and we should further develop these programmes to increase the revenue coming from them. Already, a portion of the income from the newly-signed FEI Sponsors is allocated to FEI Solidarity.
- o Fundraising programmes should be established for specific projects. We have also asked the Commercial Advisory Board to look into the feasibility of this financial structure. In addition, I will involve the Group Chairs and NF Liaison Office to better identify needs in the different countries and regions, and also the Members of the FEI Solidarity Committee, our most important ambassadors of this programme.

During the assessment of FEI Solidarity applications we try to identify if there are also other resources available, such as Olympic Solidarity, Continental NOC programmes, and also programmes established by IGOs, and we try to assist our NFs to apply for these additional funds.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure the financial sustainability of FEI Solidarity and develop further initiatives to extend the programme in line with the needs of our NFs and community.

FEI Solidarity Committee

An important part of the annual FEI Solidarity Committee meeting is the evaluation of the programme and the projects that have been submitted by the NFs. Over the years we have identified what programmes are successful and we guide our NFs in that direction.

FEI Campus is up and running and we have a clear commitment to further develop this platform as a tool for education for our Officials and the broader community. We will ensure that we further develop FEI Campus as the online education tool, thereby reducing costs due to the reduced need for travel and accommodation.

Pledge for the Future

I am committed to ensuring that FEI Solidarity remains at the very core of our organisation and that it has the resources to grow and develop as a vehicle that is accessible and beneficial to all National Federations who may require assistance.

Opening borders

Opening borders is crucial and one of the important drivers to stimulate the global development of our sport.

Within the framework of the International Horse Sport Confederation (IHSC) we have secured a strong relationship with the OIE for the future. We have a dedicated person within the OIE administration who supports us on a full time basis in all our project.

On the subject of biosecurity, the technical handbook for High Health, High Performance Horses (HHP) has been finalised as well as a first draft of a veterinary certificate. And a large number of regional meetings have been held to bring official government veterinarians together with our national head veterinarians and with the involvement of customs authorities. The goal of these meetings is to create a greater awareness of the HHP concept and to establish a good working relationship between all relevant partners.

We have also invested in veterinary research and the most important breakthrough to date is probably the development of a Diva vaccine for AHS. It will now be important to find a partner in the pharmaceutical industry to produce the vaccine.

The biggest challenge for the future will be to formalise the public-private partnership with the OIE that will create the framework to implement HHP. This will involve considerable investments and, from our side, we are 100% prepared to take our responsibility.

Pledge for the Future

The FEI will continue working with the OIE in the fields of transport and quarantine, and we will continue to invest in research relevant to our community.

5. Horses As Our Partners

Last but not least the welfare of the horse is always our priority. This is the responsibility of the whole community, but the FEI must clearly take the lead. Awareness of the importance of horse welfare must be present in all that we do and must inform all decisions the FEI and our community make.

With the globalisation of our sport, we have an important challenge to promote FEI values and standards with regards to horse welfare across the world.

Equine welfare is very much related to horsemanship as it defines the attitude we need to have regarding our horses: respect for horse welfare is a key factor of horsemanship.

When further developing FEI Campus, we must give priority to the establishment of online programmes about horse welfare for all categories of our community.

Under the chapter of horsemanship, FEI Campus offers already a variety of scientific based courses focusing on equine health and horsemanship specifically related to horse welfare. The focus on horse welfare is continuously present in all aspects of our work and our communications.

We will further expand the courses on FEI Campus in this direction and promote the values we, as the FEI community, stand for. But promoting is not enough. We must have the courage to evaluate our disciplines according to our values and take our responsibility to also make the necessary changes to bring them, if necessary, back in line with our values.

Pledge for the Future

I will lead the charge in the creation of horse welfare awareness through education in all regions in order to maintain the welfare of the horse at the top of everyone's agenda.

Rules

When establishing and reviewing rules, I will ensure that we always consider the impact on horse welfare and that we are also proactive in identifying new practices that could have an impact.

We have already invested a substantial amount in research to identify new performance enhancing practices and this has already resulted in new rules which will ban hind boots in Jumping. We are also identifying new methodologies to detect chemical and physical nerve blocking. These new rules and methodologies will be game changers in the future.

We need to continue our efforts and investment in research focused on safeguarding horse welfare in the most proactive way possible.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that rules related to horse welfare are properly enforced by establishing better education and supervision of Officials.

The role of Stewards

Stewards play a crucial role in rule enforcement and the FEI Stewards Manual, which dated back to 2009, now has a new and updated 2018 version. The education and evaluation of the performance of Officials are an important part of the recommendations of the Officials Working Group.

Pledge for the Future

I pledge that I will oversee the correct implementation of the recommendations of the Officials Working Group, particularly those related to horse welfare.

Research

In order to better understand the causes of injuries and fatalities, we need to continue developing more sophisticated reporting tools to generate better statistics. But identifying potential issues and reporting about them through the creation of statistics is not enough. The data needs to be evaluated so that the findings can be used to drive change that will have a positive impact on the welfare of our horses.

Over the last years the FEI has commissioned several scientific studies to better understand the reasons for injuries, such as the Global Endurance Injuries Study (GEIS) by the University of Glasgow and the statistical research done by EquiRatings for Eventing and Endurance.

In addition, we have established a science-based standard for footing, which not only allows for the production of optimal competition footing, but also reduces the number of injuries. However, we see that there is often a reluctance to translate this knowledge into effective measures and rules, and this will be one of our challenges for the future.

Risk management in Eventing has also been further developed and a lot of progress has been made. The role of our National Safety Officers has played an important role in this progression.

Pledge for the Future

I will establish a multi-disciplinary working group to evaluate all horse welfare related data gathered as part of our research and to propose specific actions where necessary.

Clean Sport

It is the first duty of a regulator to ensure clean sport and a level playing field and we do this by conducting an ongoing and very comprehensive testing programme.

The FEI Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication (EADCM) Programme was successfully rolled out globally in 2016 to ensure harmonisation of testing worldwide. The increase in the level of testing has resulted in an increased number of positives, but while this may seem to be a negative, it clearly demonstrates that our testing programme works.

However, it is clear that we need to work even harder on our educational outreach to get the message across that clean sport and a level playing field are non-negotiable.

Pledge for the Future

I will ensure that we continue to evaluate the EADCM Programme in order to further improve its performance and to make it more cost-effective.

Conclusion

As you can see, we have achieved a lot over the past four years, but our work is far from finished and we can only realise our objectives if we do it as a team.

As I said at the start, we are dedicated to delivering the best services possible to you, our NFs and the equestrian community.

I thank you all for the support that you have given me over the past four years. Together, we have weathered some difficult times, but we have come out on the right side, united by our love of the sport and we have achieved incredible results. Together, we're doing a great job, but there's more to be done.

By seeking a return to the post of FEI President for the next four-year term, I am asking for your continued support and commitment so that we can work as a team for the good of the sport. Unity in our community is the magic formula that will take equestrian sport to the next level.

Thank you!



Ingmar De Vos

FEI President
and IOC Member

