

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The season full of events is already well underway and accelerating. The re-launch of the full Championship Program is very demanding and poses many risks as we continue facing the consequences of the pandemic and other difficulties. As such, the immediate focus should remain on responding to the current challenges and day-to-day business.

We need to select the right General Secretary and support our staff so that the office goes through the transition period smoothly and effectively to ensure successful delivery of all IIHF competitions this season, be it the World Juniors, a Division III Championship, the Winter Olympic Games, or the 2022 IIHF WM in Finland.

Ongoing essential matters such as NHL Olympics participation and reaching long-term agreements with the IOC and NHL, promotion of youth ice hockey, including 3-on-3 formats, recruitment and retention programs, continued development of the women's game, Unified Rule Book and officiating, sustainability, delivering our support and services to MNAs, and many more will certainly be at the center of attention of the newly elected Council and require strong teamwork with each other and all stakeholders.

However today we are speaking not only about our ongoing challenges, but what future do we want for the IIHF in the long-term? How do we see our sport not only over the next few years, but in a decade? Which steps do we need to take to ensure constant development of the IIHF into a more progressive and innovative organization? Organization that has an active presence across the world of sport, business and entertainment, and empowers its MNAs to drive forward.

It is our collective choice. It is the long-term vision and direction of the IIHF that we are choosing.

I would like to present for your consideration my proposals and concepts for the IIHF's future. They provide a framework with the ultimate goal of creating a jointly approved long-term strategy and action plan, after thorough review and evaluation. These, as well as many other topics and ideas of all of us, are to be discussed, with some set aside, others developed and implemented, together.

