



**SECRETARY GENERAL
COMMISSIONS AND COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Coaches Council

15 January 2026

Online

Present:

Gulnora Saidova
Tychler Guennadi
Gregory Massialas
Dmitry Glotov
Natalia Conrad
Lei Sheng
Aoki Yusuke
Gardos Gabor
Gamir Zahra
Elena Murdaca

FIE Secretary General
President of the Coaches Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Member of the Council
Projects and Development Director

Absent:

Han Woo Lee
Marcelin Stephane

1. Opening Remarks

Gulnora Saidova opened the meeting by outlining the objective of establishing a structured dialogue with the international coaching community. She emphasized that coaches' expertise should play an active role in improving coaching education, competition organization, the rules, and the overall development and visibility of fencing.

The Chair proposed consolidating the various questionnaires into a single comprehensive survey covering coaching, education, competition management and rules-related matters. The participants supported preparing the survey after further review by the Coaches' Council to ensure that it addresses the most relevant topics.

2. FIE Coaches Academy

Gulnora Saidova informed the participants about the ongoing development of the FIE Coaches Academy in Budapest.

The Academy is intended to become the central educational platform for coaches, with cooperation being established with a university in Budapest to provide recognized educational programmes and certificates that could support coaches from different regions, particularly developing fencing nations.

3. Representation of Coaches at International Competitions

A substantial discussion focused on coaches working simultaneously with athletes representing different National Federations.

Greg Massialas explained that this practice has become common in international fencing and should not automatically be considered problematic, particularly for private coaches working independently of national federations.

Gulnora Saidova clarified that the objective was not to restrict coaches' professional activities but to identify an appropriate framework for their official representation during World Championships, Olympic Games and other major FIE competitions. She noted that while athletes and federations remain free to choose their coaches, greater clarity regarding accreditation and official representation would benefit both organizers and participating federations.

The participants agreed that the topic requires broader consultation before any recommendations are prepared.

4. Consultation with the Coaching Community

To strengthen communication with coaches worldwide, Gulnora Saidova proposed organizing regular consultations with representatives of the coaching community.

The participants discussed different formats, including online meetings and in-person discussions during major competitions. While acknowledging the limitations of large online meetings, participants agreed that broader consultation would provide valuable feedback on competition organization, coaching matters and future rule development.

It was suggested that future discussions should be organized by weapon and that proposals from coaches should be collected in advance to facilitate productive exchanges.

5. Promotion of Fencing and Media Development

The participants discussed ways to improve the visibility and commercial appeal of fencing.

Greg Massialas highlighted the importance of developing professional commentators in multiple languages and establishing training programmes to improve the quality of international broadcasts.

Gulnora Saidova welcomed the proposal and confirmed that media development has become one of the Federation's priorities. She informed the participants that the FIE Television Department is expanding its activities and expressed readiness to cooperate with qualified commentators and media professionals interested in supporting the promotion of fencing.

6. Competition Calendar and Team Events

The participants exchanged views regarding the structure of the international competition calendar, including the balance between Grand Prix and World Cup events.

Greg Massialas expressed concerns regarding the possible reduction of team competitions and its potential impact on Olympic qualification, emphasizing the sporting importance of team events.

Gulnora Saidova acknowledged these concerns and encouraged the Coaches' Council to submit formal written proposals so that they could be considered during future discussions.

7. Competition Quality and Spectator Engagement

The participants discussed the quality of event organization and the importance of attracting larger audiences. Several members expressed concerns regarding attendance at certain international competitions and the overall spectator experience.

Gulnora Saidova informed the participants that the FIE has already strengthened its requirements for organizers and continues to work closely with Local Organizing Committees to improve venue quality, audience engagement, television presentation and cooperation with local authorities. She noted that these improvements require continuous collaboration and cannot be achieved immediately. The Chair also proposed that invitations and major organizational changes should be reviewed jointly by the relevant Commissions before publication to improve communication with coaches and organizers.

Conclusions

The participants agreed to:

- continue developing the FIE Coaches Academy in Budapest;
- prepare a unified survey for the international coaching community;
- organize broader consultations with coaches on competition organization, coaching matters and future rule development;
- continue reviewing the framework for coach representation at major FIE competitions;
- support initiatives aimed at improving media coverage, commentator education and the promotion of fencing;
- encourage the Coaches' Council to submit formal recommendations on competition calendar and team events;
- strengthen cooperation with organizers to improve competition quality, audience engagement and communication with stakeholders.