



## **International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability**

### **PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER – MAY 2009**

#### **INAS-FID Conference and General Assembly**

This newsletter is dedicated in its entirety to the INAS-FID Conference and General Assembly that took place in Puerto Rico on 24 and 25 April. In total, there were 45 participants from the following 28 member nations: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China-Taipei, Columbia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatamala (by proxy), Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

#### **Conference**

**London 2012** - Although the original intention had been four sessions of equal length, it is perhaps of no surprise that the opening session on Paralympic re-inclusion ran over-time, occupying the whole of the morning and some of the afternoon. A progress report on the work of the IPC/INAS-FID joint working group provided fertile ground for a more general discussion of all that might be required if athletes with intellectual disability are to be re-admitted to future Paralympic Games in time for London 2012.

*Since Puerto Rico, the INAS-FID Secretariat has been working with psychologists in the UK to validate the registration documents of all 1,800 INAS-FID athletes. We realise that, where there are queries or concerns, this will inevitably cause extra work for the nations involved and genuine distress for the athletes. We are grateful to all concerned for the co-operation and understanding that is being shown in difficult circumstances. We would not be undertaking such a huge task at such very short notice if it were not a necessary pre-requisite to Paralympic re-inclusion.*

**INAS-FID Handbook** - During the afternoon, Geoff Smedley provided the conference with a summary of the very valuable work that has been undertaken during the past two years to bring up-to-date and to make fit-for-purpose INAS-FID's handbook. Geoff emphasised the need for the current draft to be formally adopted by the General Assembly, even though further refinement was still required, and acknowledged the desire, given adequate financial resources, for the handbook to be translated into other languages than English.

**INAS-FID Sport Programmes** - Later still, Bengt Lindstedt led a useful discussion of the range of sports that are already a part of the INAS-FID programme or that might be worthy of consideration in the future. His treatment of what he described as priority sports,

development sports and new sports was thought-provoking and led to the recognition by many conference delegates of the need for a formal INAS-FID sport strategy.

**Future Building** - The final session, which had originally been conceived as a bridge between the past, the present and the future, was abbreviated because of the extra time dedicated to Paralympic re-inclusion. Important questions were posed about INAS-FID's vision and mission; its relationship with other key players such as IPC, Special Olympics and the mainstream International Sports Federations; and the quality and range of services that INAS-FID should be providing for its members, either directly or through its regions. Sadly, the answers to these questions will have to await another day.

## **General Assembly**

**New members** – The meeting began with the ratification of six new members: Belgium, Columbia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Italy and the United States of America, bringing the total number of member nations currently in good standing to thirty-seven.

**Reports** – As required by Constitution, reports were received from the Executive Committee on its work programme since the last General Assembly and from the Treasurer on the state of the Federation's finances. Nick Parr was congratulated on the colourful presentation of the Executive report, which included details of committee meetings, Mencap's support of the Secretariat, meetings with IPC and progress towards Paralympic re-inclusion, UEFA's support of INAS-FID football, preparation for this year's Global Games and re-presentation of the handbook. After the Treasurer's presentation of financial reports and budget proposals, Katalin Gruiz (who was unable to seek re-election) was thanked for the clarity of her report and for her many years of service to INAS-FID.

**Motions** – Only one motion, on the re-alignment of INAS-FID's regional boundaries, had been received before the deadline. Of four others, only one (on the creation of a Down Syndrome class of competition) was rejected by the Assembly without discussion. After due consideration, the four remaining motions (on regional boundaries, Paralympic re-inclusion, the non-election of an Eligibility Officer and the adoption of the Handbook) were put to the vote and all four were passed, either as drafted or with minor or 'friendly' amendment.

On regional boundaries: Instead of agreeing to the immediate re-alignment of INAS-FID's boundaries with those of IPC, it was decided to consider the implications further and to return the matter to the next General Assembly.

On Paralympic re-inclusion: The action plan recommended by the IPC/INAS-FID joint working group was formally endorsed and the INAS-FID Executive was authorised to take 'whatever steps are reasonable' to secure the inclusion of athletes with intellectual disability in the Paralympic Games of London 2012.

On INAS-FID's Eligibility Officer: The General Assembly endorsed the Executive's decision not to promote the election of another Eligibility Officer and, instead, authorised the Executive to pursue as a matter of urgency the recruitment of a Head of Classification.

On the INAS-FID handbook: This was accepted for immediate use, even though it was recognised that further modification will be required for some time to come.

**Elections** – Bengt Lindstedt (Sweden) was re-elected to the post of Vice President; Jose Costa Pereira (Portugal) was elected Treasurer; and Marc Truffaut (France) was elected as Technical Officer. The members of the new Nominations Committee will be Hakan Freijd (Sweden), Michel Chopinaud (France), Katalin Gruiz (Hungary), David Ip (Hong Kong) and Angel Torres (Puerto Rico).

**Next General Assembly** – Expressions of interest in hosting the next General Assembly in 2011 were received from Brazil, France and the United Kingdom.

### **Thanks to Puerto Rico**

Although our thoughts are already turning to the Global Games taking place in July and, with London 2012 in mind, to IPC's General Assembly taking place in November, it would be wrong to end this newsletter with anything other than a sincere vote of thanks to our Puerto Rican hosts and, in particular, to Luis, Angel and Jose. To prepare for three days of meetings, with delegates from all over the world, is no mean undertaking. To do so as successfully as was done in Puerto Rico is remarkable. The hotel accommodation, the meeting rooms and the warmth of your hospitality were exceptional. The cultural event arranged for the last evening's entertainment was the perfect antidote to three days of meetings and will live long in the memory of all concerned.

**Dr Bob Price**  
**President INAS-FID**