

*by Prof. Bruno Grandi, FIG President*

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Dear Friends,

In the next issue of the *World of Gymnastics*, to be released at the end of May, I would like to invite you on a journey to the recent Olympic Games in Athens. You will examine the events that discredited our sport and pointed an accusing finger at serious deficiencies in our judging system. On August 18, 2004, the FIG witnessed one of the darkest hours in its history.

This edition is equally an invitation to reflect, analyse and to take action.

To all the congressional participants in Antalya, I declared that Gymnastics did not quit in Athens! On the contrary. In a climate of crisis and doubt, Gymnastics found its strength to rise and move forward, taking action where deemed necessary.

The responsibility I have taken, with the support of the Assembly, the Executive Commission and the entire Executive Committee were always necessary and imperative but often unpopular and painful sometimes. I am aware of this and I understand. But what you must try and understand, Dear Friends, is that I am endeavouring to steer Gymnastics out of a dead end that satisfies only a handful of short-sighted individuals with nostalgia for an era gone by.

In a few days, an extraordinary Symposium will take place in Budapest, exclusively dedicated to this issue. I will meet with the best of our technicians as I rely on their expertise, their experience and their wisdom in the taking of decisions. I am confident. Gymnastics is a serious issue and we need serious people to take care of it.

At the end of May, the FIG Parliament, its Council, will meet in Helsinki. Other important decisions will be made there, decisions that will affect the future of our sport. The judging system, the age of our gymnasts, a harmonized calendar, development, education, security of the gymnasts and sponsoring are among the numerous issues that the delegates will examine. The task is complex, but that is the price to pay for success.

Gymnastics has changed, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We must move forward in harmony with our sport! But, and I would emphasise, with the permanent aim of preserving the health of our gymnasts, sports justice and the economic success of our disciplines. In other words, the gymnasts are my priority because without them the FIG doesn't exist. Justice is next because Gymnastics is practised in the gymnasium and not in court. Finally, economic success, for without a show, we have no resources, no possibilities for development. The squaring of the circle? Certainly not, for there are solutions out there and with everyone's contribution, we will succeed.

This edition is both a crossroads and a milestone in the FIG's journey. An invitation of a sort to travel towards the horizon of 2006, the year of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary and of a new Code for our Artistic gymnasts.

With my kind regards.

