

Statement of the European Chess Union

22 February 2023

Following the FIDE Council's decision concerning the proposed transfer of the Russian Chess Federation (RCF) to the Asian Chess Federation (ACF), the European Chess Union (ECU) hereby declares:

The ECU Board expressed in detail its position in its statement of 30.01.2023.

<https://www.europchess.org/statement-of-the-european-chess-union/>

The FIDE Constitutional Commission (FIDE CC) after its meeting on 5th of February justified most of the ECU's positions and opined that prior to RCF's transfer to Asia, it needs to withdraw from the ECU and the International Chess Federation (FIDE) shall approve the required change of zones.

The FIDE Council held lengthy discussions on the matter during which ECU President Zurab Azmaiparashvili insisted on strong adherence to the rules and defended the interests of those Russian players who have been vocal against the war in Ukraine and wish to stay in Europe.

Z. Azmaiparashvili: "In this situation when the RCF takes a radical political step and leaves Europe, we are totally ready to close the doors behind them. But we need to provide at least a minimum remedy and treat fairly those players who did not act against the peaceful mission of sports and do not want to follow the RCF administration to Asia."

Following the strong position taken by the ECU and its proposals, the Council agreed to allow Russian players who reside in Europe to transfer to the new ECU federation without paying fees to Russia and FIDE. They will be able to represent the new federation in all individual tournaments with immediate effect. While the ECU recognises the importance of the long-standing Russian chess history, the war in Ukraine and the political composition of the RCF administration creates a huge legal, political, and ethical gap between the RCF and the ECU.

Now it is a matter for the Asian Continent to decide whether the RCF complies with its statutes, rules and values.

In order to avoid any ambiguity in the World Chess Championship Cycle qualifications, the ECU notes that all the players who have transferred to the FIDE flag and registered on time in accordance with the official invitation to play in the European Individual Chess Championship, that will take place in Serbia and Montenegro in March 2023, are eligible to do so. The events in Serbia and Montenegro conclude the current cycle at the European level which started in 2020. As for the next qualification cycle, the Russian players who do not transfer to ECU federations will belong to the Asian Continent and would not qualify from Europe if the transfer of the RCF takes place.