

New Year Message

December, 2016

Dear friends of wheelchair basketball,

an exciting and eventful year is drawing to a close, and with pride and gratitude we look back at the fantastic Paralympic Games in Rio, where our sport has been the best-visited discipline with over 440,000 tickets sold. Nevertheless, Rio will not remain the only milestone in IWBF's new era of development!

In this year of transitions, we have been working intensively on the structural and organizational realignment of our federation. While continuing our efforts and following our new strategic direction, we will successfully take advantage of new opportunities and meet the challenges ahead of us.

Following an intensive analysis and audit of our communication channels, we were able to establish a new department, appointed to provide our media channels such as facebook, twitter, e-news and fiba daily with the latest news and information. In this context, it shall not be failed to mention that our new IWBF website has provided excellent up-to-date and comprehensive online reports during the Paralympic Games, and is therefore an excellent example and important milestone along our new communication path.

Over the past year, and primarily through the commitment of our NOWBs, we were fortunate to increase the professional resources for the IWBF, with the result that two full-time and two part-time workers support us from now on and allow us to realize our ambition of a new operations department that supports and acts independently under the direction and supervision of the Secretary General. The objective of this development is to ease the Commission's valuable workload in the administrative area and to ensure their innovative and future-oriented actions.

As a significant groundwork for future projects, the mutual signing of a letter of intent between ICRC and IWBF deepens our recently established partnership and leaves us encouraged to build a cooperation just as strong with the United Nations. With these agreements, the integration and expansion of wheelchair basketball shall reach new quality and intensity levels pursuing our vision to broadcast the game, engage new audiences and create sustainable opportunities to practice wheelchair basketball worldwide.

Our close relationship with our long-standing partner FIBA experienced a significant intensification this year. Not only has the IWBF headquarters found a new home at FIBA's house of basketball in Mies, the enhanced cooperation between FIBA and IWBF also lays the foundation for our vision of an inclusive basketball world, which we ambitiously work for through joint projects and initiatives.

With our vision in mind, in 2017 we must move to meaningful action. As we begin a new year, we do so with confidence. Yet again, it will be filled with excellent wheelchair basketball events and with great pleasure we can look forward to the upcoming qualification tournaments for the U23 Men World Championships in Toronto, Canada, the continental qualification tournaments for the men & women world championships in Hamburg 2018, and the numerous international competitions of our zones and NOWBs.

With all of our excitement about our achievements in the past, we should keep in mind to follow our current path together. Foremost, we must continue to strengthen and deepen our partnerships, expand our base of supporters and cherish the all-consuming commitment of every national federation.

As we celebrate the coming of Christmas and the New Year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support and wish you and your families all the best for the coming year 2017!



Ulf Mehrens
President



Maureen Orchard
Secretary General

