

TASHIR

External Communications Department

Press Release

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The President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan visited the International Tashir Chess Tournament

The President of the Russian Chess Federation Andrey Filatov and the Vice-President of the Armenian Chess Federation Smbat Lputian in the presence of the President of Armenia and head of the Armenian Chess Federation Serzh Sargsyan signed an agreement on cooperation in promoting chess in schools and development of cooperation within the sphere of chess tournaments for schools, called 'White Castle'. The document was signed today at the International Tashir Tournament in Memory of Tigran Petrosian in Moscow. We are proud to recall that Serzh Sargsyan is a head of the organising committee for the International Tashir Tournament in Memory of Tigran Petrosian.

'White Castle' is the oldest children's tournament founded in 1969. In the USSR the competitions were staged in every Soviet republic. Annually up to half a million schoolchildren became participants in those tournaments. 'White Castle' was a school of higher sporting mastery for many a talented chess player. Following the collapse of the USSR 'White Castle' was discontinued for about 7 years. The revival of the competition began in 2004 when 73 teams from various Russian regions took part in the competition final. The main goals of these competitions are the popularisation of chess among schoolchildren, detection of talented young players and increasing their sporting skills.

The agreement that has been signed today calls for standardisation of school tournament systems in Armenia and Russia. It is stressed in the document that both parties consider it very important to develop school competitions which do not only make chess more popular but also promote friendly relations among schoolchildren of the world. In accordance with the document the national Armenian federation and the Russian Chess Federation will support staging competitions among educational institutions of their countries in conformity with the 'White Castle' tournament policy. The Russian Chess Federation takes it upon itself to secure places for the winners of national team championships in the 'White Castle' finals. Thus, new participants will be included into the school championships system, and the final



tournament receives international status. RCF commits itself not only to holding the final intramural stage of the competitions, but also to providing assistance to the national federations in staging their respective championships.

The President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan emphasised the excellent organisation of the International Tashir Tournament in Memory of Tigran Petrosian: "Progress of chess is obvious not only from the point of view of the game itself, but also with regard to the organisation of tournaments. RCF and Tashir did everything in their power to give the grandmasters the opportunity to prove themselves to the full extent. Without Tigran Petrosian's great heritage, his talent and achievements, chess in Armenia would never have risen to its present level".

Serzh Sargsyan also expressed gratitude to the Russian Chess Federation for its offer of cooperation.

The President of the Russian Chess Federation Andrey Filatov: "One of the key fields of concern for the Russian Chess Federation is development of children's chess. So it is a great honour for us to cooperate with Armenia, a country with a rich history and traditions, where chess has been honoured and respected from the earliest times. The Armenian Chess Federation actively develops children's chess; the game is a compulsory subject in every school of the country for children from 2nd to 4th grades. The men's national team of Armenia headed by Levon Aronian won three World Chess Olympiads out of the last five. We are very happy that young Armenian chess players will now take part in the 'White Castle' competitions and hope that other countries would join our program in the future".

Zara Agemian, head of communications and marketing department of Tashir Group: "These days, chess is not simply a kind of intellectual competition; it holds a creative power capable of uniting individuals and entire countries. Every tournament is a new spectacular story of victories and achievements, and today we are happy to get an opportunity of staging one of the strongest tournaments of 2014 in Russia and in the world."

It should be recalled here that during the World Chess Olympiad in Tromsø similar agreements with the heads of chess federations of Turkmenistan, Belarus, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Israel have also been signed.

About

Tashir Group

Tashir is a diversified federation-wide group of companies founded in 1999 and uniting over 200 companies in various sectors of Russia's economy, including construction, manufacturing, finance, energy, development, and retail. Its staff totals over 45,000 people. The company's geography covers over 60 cities of Russia and the former USSR. Tashir's founder and President is Samvel Karapetyan; the company is headquartered in Moscow.

The Group's primary business is development and managing of commercial real estate, with a focus on retail estate. Tashir is a leader in development in Russia and has so far built 2.5 million sq m of modern, hi-tech commercial and residential real estate.

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