



GENS UNA SUMUS

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES ÉCHECS

Recognized by the International Olympic Committee

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FIDE secured visas for Qatar and Iran

Riyadh, 24 December 2017

FIDE would like to clarify the following points regarding the King Salman World Blitz and Rapid Championships, being held between the 26th and 30th December in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

FIDE has been working very hard and in a discreet manner to organise and safeguard the process of entry visas for all participants of the event. For the first time, ground-breaking special arrangements have been made to issue visas upon arrival for over 200 persons, including the players of Iran and Qatar. Although the visa process lies exclusively with the national immigration authorities of every country, FIDE has actively supported and proposed measures to make the process as smooth as ever, especially taking into account the very short time available for preparing the championships.

As stated above, after combined efforts of FIDE officials and Saudi Arabian authorities, visas for players from Iran and Qatar were secured. Any publication on the internet stating that visas for players from Iran and Qatar have been "refused" is completely wrong. The fact that players from Iran and Qatar may decide not to participate, after consulting their own authorities, is clearly their own individual decision.

To put facts into perspective, the Saudi authorities informed FIDE that the visas for Qatari players will be issued and they also proposed that for security reasons the Qatari players should play under the FIDE flag. This issue was resolved the next day by FIDE, and the Qatar Chess Association was informed that their players would play under their own flag. FIDE, additionally, had accepted the registration of two Qatari players as FIDE nominees, although they had not met the minimum rating requirements. FIDE took this extra responsibility knowing that it would create additional organisational burden.

As everybody clearly understands from the above, FIDE and the Saudi organisers are always ready to welcome any participant.

FIDE's principle is that its World Chess Championships are a vehicle for promoting peace and development of friendship amongst all nations. FIDE will adhere to this principle and will continue to work in this direction.