



To: Mr. Rudi Azimullah  
President of ICAONA  
Copy to: Mr. Yevgeniy Sklyarov  
General Secretary ICAONA

Dear Sir,

I would like to thank you for your letter and argumentation you brought forward to explain a situation and position of the ICAONA. However, your argumentation does not seem sufficient to justify position of the ICAONA and to address concerns raised by the FMJD.

First of all, let me remind you about the letter of your colleague Lyublyana Turiy sent by her to me on 22th April 2025 of which you were addressee yourself as well. This e-mail letter included an attachment named "InfoUSOpen\_2025". In this document (its part USA Specific Qualifications) it is stated as follows: *If you are a long-time USA player and want to be ranked and qualified as such, but not yet ICAONA member, you need to join ICAONA and pay membership fees 2024 prior to the event start.*

This regulation as it was said earlier raises grave concerns to the FMJD, taking into account, that in order to be ranked and qualified for the US national championship every player should become a member of ICAONA. Article No.4 of the ICAONA By-laws states that: *The ICAONA is open to checkers players nationwide who wish to become active members.* As the ICAONA is a non-profit and non-governmental organization then it is clear that membership of ICAONA **is and should be voluntary** and based on willingness of player to become a member of the ICAONA. Meanwhile there should be no sanctions or restrictions to those players who are not for any reason members of the ICAONA because no natural person can be forced to join non-profit organization if he/she is not willing to do so. If ICAONA is open for draughts players it does not mean player should be forced to become a member of the ICAONA.

ICAONA as the FMJD member and therefore the national body which is responsible for US national championships may choose much more democratic and non-discriminatory approach, for example, to establish reasonable licence payment and/or increased inscription fee for tournaments which every US player registered in the FMJD database should pay to participate in the US championship and other tournaments organized by the ICAONA. Meanwhile no US player registered in the FMJD database should be denied of participation in the US championship only because of being not a member of the ICAONA and should have a right to play in the US championship with the very same rights as members of the ICAONA.

I need to inform you that the FMJD allows every registered player (if respective federation is not suspended by the FMJD) to play in almost every draughts tournament, except World championships and continental championships for which there are qualification requirements as well as formal application of the national federation is required. In our opinion each FMJD member should support every player and every draughts club/draughts organization but it should not be an obligation either for player or draughts club/draughts organization to become a member of organization which represents country at the FMJD.

Core value for the FMJD is non-discrimination and priority of interests of the players. Being not a member of national federation as a non-profit organization should not be reason to deny independent players or players from other draughts club/draughts organization a right to play at the national championship. National federations should be inclusive and support all the draughts players who by their activity contribute to draughts development.

As it was said earlier permitting participation in a national open championship only to members of ICAONA violates the principles of non-discrimination and fair competition. The US championship titled "Open" by definition should be accessible to all US players (including Alexander Rudnitsky whose disqualification is appealed to the FMJD Ethics committee if only FMJD Ethics Committee finds a decision of ICAONA on him to be justified) and they all should be able to play and qualify for continental and World championships. Let me once again remind you that membership of non-governmental and non-profit organization is always voluntary, therefore restricting other players from participation on basis of non-membership of ICAONA clearly is to be considered discriminatory practice. Article 4.1. of the FMJD Statutes clearly states that FMJD and its Members reject all forms and means of discrimination against individuals, groups of people, organisations or countries on grounds of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion or politics;

I hope that above-mentioned clearly states position of the FMJD on this issue. I would like to ask you that ICAONA follows principle of non-discrimination written in the Article 4.1 FMJD Statutes and allows all US players to participate in the US Championship on full rights and irrespective of them being or not being members of the ICAONA.

Also, the latest activities of the ICAONA, namely, denying NDF-US a right to organize Miami Open 2026 as World Cup tournament as well as requiring a youth player to become a member of the ICAONA in order to permit his transfer to USA are practices which in our opinion can not be qualified as beneficial for draughts development in the USA but rather as such which tend to abuse power given by the FMJD membership instead of allowing players to represent country of their residency and to prevent other organizations for mutual work for draughts development in the USA.

Let me, please, assure you that FMJD always reacts to requests of every federation and player, especially if there are concerns on possible violations of the FMJD Statutes and other FMJD legal regulations. Let me also assure you that FMJD is ready to react decisively and to make necessary decisions to prevent any kind of discrimination against any player. Actions of the FMJD with regard to US Championship 2025 may include, but are not limited to, possibility to decide on removing of the US championship Open from the list of tournaments published on the FMJD webpage, excluding this tournament from calculation of player rankings and not considering it as a qualification tournament for continental championship.

Taking into account all above-mentioned FMJD Executive Council may also consider adding agenda item on discriminatory practices and potential suspension/expelling of the ICAONA to the agenda of the FMJD General Assembly envisaged on 26<sup>th</sup> October this year in Turkey as a last resort options if violations of the FMJD Statutes and discriminatory practices by the ICAONA will not be stopped.

Please, inform us about your next steps by the 28th July 2025. If we will not receive your answer or ICAONA will continue above-mentioned practices FMJD Executive Council will consider next steps as mentioned above.

I stay at your disposal should you have any further questions.



Vladislavs Vesperis  
FMJD Acting Secretary General  
Riga/Lausanne July 8<sup>th</sup> 2025