



December 25, 2017

To:

Georgios Makropoulos
Deputy Chair, World Chess Federation (FIDE)

Dear Sir,

We are writing to express our great concern at reports that the Israeli team will not be able to participate in the World Chess Championship taking place on December 26 in Riyadh, due to Saudi Arabia's refusal to issue entry visas to the Israeli players.

It is an accepted principle in competitive sports – and part of FIDE rules - that hosts of internationally recognized competitions must permit all competitors to participate. The Saudi refusal to provide visas to the Israeli team is a violation of this principle and a violation of sportsmanship. Moreover, Saudi Arabia will be hosting the championship for three years, in accordance with the agreement with FIDE, thus indicating that the Israeli team will apparently not be able to participate in the games in the coming years either.

It should be noted that Saudi Arabia initially refused to issue entry visas to the Qatar and Iranian teams too, but eventually issued them. The Israelis are the only ones left outside the tournament, which will be held as usual, with the full support and leadership of FIDE.

It is indeed an outrage that instead of Saudi Arabia being penalized for this action, the competition will be taking place as if nothing has happened. FIDE as the sponsoring body should be making clear to the Saudi hosts that it will not be complicit with discrimination against, or the boycott of, any team, regardless of its national origin, in accordance with FIDE rules requiring the host country to allow the participation of all players in competitions.

We call upon you as FIDE's Deputy Chair to penalize Saudi Arabia for its policies this year, and to make that if Saudi Arabia continues with this policy, it will not be eligible to host future championships.

Sports and competition should serve as a bridge between groups and nations. FIDE should stand with these principles of sportsmanship.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Greenblatt

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Greenblatt", written in a cursive style.

CEO and National Director, ADL