



2024 IWF ANNUAL REPORT

2024 IWF Annual Report

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1. Introduction by IWF President

2024 was a very successful year for the weightlifting family. It provided many outstanding opportunities to show the vitality of our beloved Sport, the devotion of our athletes, and the prestige of our competitions around the world. The corollary of these memorable 12 months was the great celebration of weightlifting at the Paris Olympic Games, a privileged occasion to showcase the value of our Sport in the Olympic programme.

After a qualification period where our lifters fought for the 120 available places for the Games, the event in the French capital was spectacular: breathtaking performances, new countries getting medals, a packed venue with thousands of enthusiast spectators cheering for their idols, a great exposure through TV and digital platforms worldwide, and a 100% fair and clean competition, with no positive cases before and during the Games.

In general, the Games were a remarkable success and weightlifting was part of this achievement. We are proud of this outcome and I obviously take this opportunity to warmly thank our National Federations, and respective athletes, coaches, and officials.

The IWF events were also of paramount importance for the prestige of our Sport. From the Youth World Championships, where for the first time a double platform was used, to the significant success of the Junior showcase and the amazing experience provided by the IWF World Championships some weeks ago in Manama, the vibrant capital of Bahrain, everything was put in place to ensure optimal conditions for all participants and to guarantee the maximum possible promotion of these events in the five continents.

These achievements and the perspective of future successes can only be achieved in a spirit of unity and solidarity. Despite national and even personal differences, I am happy and proud to say that the weightlifting family is a very united one. We walk together with one common and consensual vision: to make weightlifting a more credible, important, and respected sport on a global scale!

We are on the right track but must continue working hard. The competition is fierce, and the political, social, and economic challenges around us are enormous. But we are strong and resilient people, who know to overcome adversity.

I thank you for your continuous support and hard work!

Mohammed Jalood
IWF President

2. Paris 2024 Olympic Games

Date: August 7-11

Number of athletes: 61M/61W

Number of NOC: 57 (+ Olympic Refugee Team)

Karlos Nasar leads the way as young stars – and fans – excel on the biggest stage

If Paris 2024 is a good guide, weightlifting is heading for a bright future. While the outstanding individual achievement was Lasha Talakadze winning his third gold, the best performance of the Olympic Games came from Karlos Nasar, who was 20 in May.

Many people expected the formidable Bulgarian to win at 89kg, but few would have expected him to smash the world record on total by 8kg.

Liu Huanhua had, in his own words, “*a breakthrough victory for Chinese weightlifting*” at the age of 22. He is the first man from his country to win in a 100kg-plus category.

Rizki Juniansyah won 73kg gold aged 21 for Indonesia, which also expects much from Rahmat Erwin in the years to come.

Olivia Reeves, also 21, was the first American woman to stand on top of the weightlifting podium at the Olympics. Li Wenwen won her second gold for China aged 24. Solfrid Koanda became Norway’s first female champion at 25.

Seven of the 10 winners were 25 or younger, which in percentage terms is twice as many as last time in Tokyo, where the ratio was five in 14 medal events.

We saw outstanding performances by other youngsters in Paris. Mihaela Cambei from Romania went close to winning gold at 21, taking her social media following close to half a million in the process. Park Hyejeong from Korea, also 21, finished second to Li Wenwen and is already looking forward to a rematch at Los Angeles 2028.

Four other 20-year-olds, besides Nasar, shone in the men’s events – medallists Weeraphon Wichuma and Theerapong Silachai from Thailand and Hampton Morris from the United States, plus the exciting super-heavyweight Ali Ammar Yusur from Iraq. Ammar, who broke two junior world records in finishing sixth, should win the junior world title by a long way in Spain next month.

There were many more stars in Paris – thousands of them, sitting and often rising to their feet in the 4,000-capacity South Paris Arena. The fans created a vibrant, party-like atmosphere throughout the sessions.

Those who were there speak especially highly of the “show” at Atlanta 1996, Athens 2004 and London 2012. Paris 2024 was up there with them.

There was a good example in the final session on Sunday, the women's super-heavyweights in which two lifters – Chaidee Duangaksorn from Thailand and Crismery Santana from Dominican Republic – were saved from a bombout by the crowd's support.

Chaidee looked downhearted and beaten in the back room after two snatch failures. She could barely believe the backing she got when she came out for her third attempt and made it.

"I have never experienced anything like it," she said. "It was like the people were lifting the bar with me."

Many other athletes said the same. Lesman Paredes from Bahrain was among them and may go back on his decision to retire after his experience in Paris. *"I loved it out there. The support from the crowd, I could really feel it."*

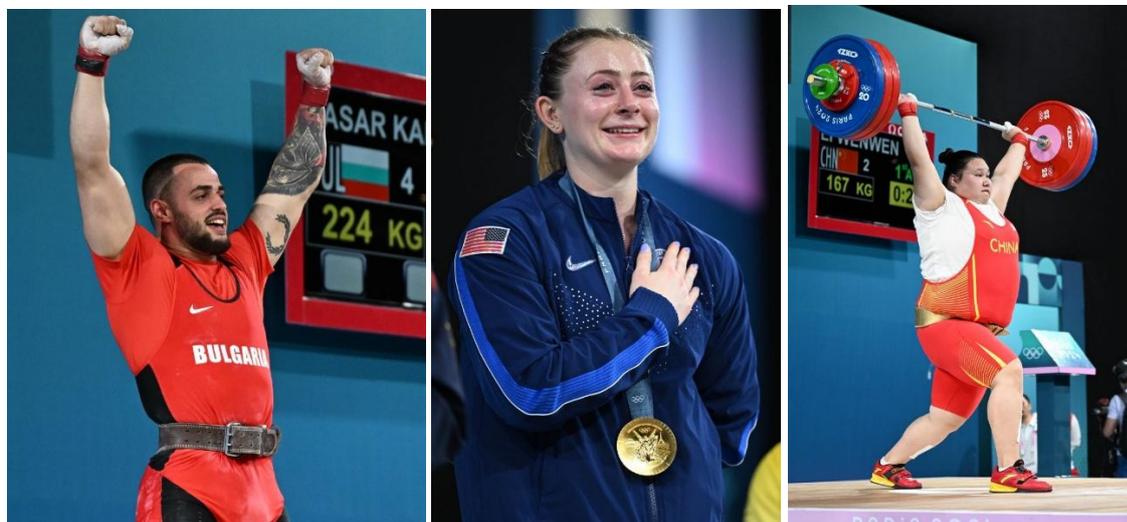
One element the crowd clearly did not like was the jury review process. Every overturned 'good lift' decision was greeted with boos.

There was good news away from the platform, too. Those who have been in weightlifting for a while will know that when the wider media world takes an interest in the sport, it is often for "bad news" reasons.

This time the reports about doping and corruption were nowhere to be seen. There was a positive report about weightlifting in the *Wall Street Journal*, the second largest newspaper in the United States which usually focuses on business and finance.

One of the global news agencies wrote about the IWF's "rebirth" after years of problems. It referenced the time, not long ago, when weightlifting was deemed to be "a problem child" by the IOC.

As the IWF president Mohammed Jalood said in that report, *"I'm fully convinced that we aren't any more."*



3. IWF Events

IWF WORLD CUP

Phuket (THA), March 31-April 11

Rizki v Rahmat, red lights and PRK helped to make World Cup memorable – and unique

The IWF World Cup, which ended in Phuket, Thailand, was an exciting, high-quality, well organised competition that will live long in the memory. It was also unique.

Weightlifting at the Olympic Games in August will be very different from what we saw over 12 days at the World Cup, which rounded off the Paris 2024 qualifying programme. There are three good reasons why – no head-to-heads between team-mates, nowhere near as many red lights and bombouts, and the best team in Phuket cannot be there.

An unforgettable contest between two Indonesians was the highlight in Thailand. Rahmat Erwin had led the Olympic rankings for 482 days, setting world records along the way, only to be knocked out of Paris 2024 by team-mate Rizki Juniansyah in the last five minutes of qualifying.

The long-time rankings leader Jiang Huihua from China, Olympic champion Hidilyn Diaz from the Philippines, Tokyo silver medallist Tamara Salazar from Ecuador and multiple European champion Samuel Gasparian from Armenia were overtaken by a team-mate in similar, if less dramatic fashion.

Those showdowns were a feature in Phuket because nations are limited to one athlete per weight category in Paris. This was the last chance for anyone to outperform a team-mate.

PRK claimed eight victories and as many world records, seven of them by women. PRK has shown itself to be the world's strongest weightlifting nation in the seven months since it returned to international competition after a long absence caused by the Covid pandemic. But it entered the Olympic qualifying programme too late for its athletes to be eligible for Paris.

The number of red lights and bombouts added to the World Cup drama. Athletes overstretched themselves in trying to move up the rankings, usually in the B Groups. That will not happen in Paris, where there will not even be any B Groups.

After so many failures, the cut-off point between the 10th-placed lifter and those below barely changed throughout the weight categories. The biggest upward move was 3kg in the women's 59kg, while the cut-off in two categories remained exactly as it was before the World Cup.

Two athletes did make a spectacular jump from the B Group to qualify. Yu Dongju from Korea moved up eight places at 89kg and Davranbek Hasanbayev from Turkmenistan climbed from 26th to eighth at 102kg.

The individual stars in Phuket included world record breakers Rizki, China's Liu Huanhua at 102kg, Hou Zihui and PRK's Ri Song Gum in the women's 49kg, Karlos Nasar from Bulgaria at 89kg and Hampton Morris from the United States at 61kg – his country's first senior world record holder in 55 years.

Others who added to the spectacle without breaking world records included two Olympic champions, Li Wenwen from China and Neisi Dajomes from Ecuador, and the American Olivia Reeves, who stood on top of the women's 71kg podium above athletes from China and PRK.

China once more has to decide which athletes to leave at home, having qualified nine when the limit is six.

Those who will take five athletes to Paris include Egypt, Korea, the United States and Venezuela, all of whom deserve respect for taking so many when the athlete quota is the lowest this century at 120. The US and Venezuela will have to refuse women's places after exceeding the limit of three.

Kate Vibert, one of the unlucky ones who will not be selected despite being ranked in the top 10 of two weight categories in the extended lists (two or more per nation), said, *"The respect for the US team throughout this quad has exponentially increased."*

IWF WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS Lima (PER), May 22-26

Venezuela moving up, IWF moving forward with senior World Championships plans

Venezuela reaped the rewards of planning ahead when three of its team won gold medals at the World Youth Championships in Lima, Peru.

"Long-term planning and strategic vision" helped Venezuela to follow up their achievement of qualifying five athletes for the Paris Olympic Games by topping the medals table in Lima.

The IWF will be hoping for similar success at the end of a process of change that moved another step forward at this landmark Championships.

There were two platforms in the main arena for the first time at an IWF competition, and technical officials wore t-shirts and chinos rather than their usual uniforms. Whether these two initiatives will be followed up in future is yet to be decided.

Away from the arena in Lima, the IWF's Innovation Commission, tasked with making the sport more attractive to its own stakeholders and its audience, held its latest meeting.

Top of the agenda for the Commission is devising a way of making the IWF senior World Championships more marketable and less costly for prospective hosts. *“It’s the IWF’s flagship event, and we need to make changes,”* said Sam Coffa, chair of the IWF Technical Committee and the Innovation Commission.

At last year’s World Championships there were more than 700 athletes in action over 13 days. In 2022 the numbers were 537 and 10 days. *“We want it to be all over in six or seven days,”* Coffa said.

There are three ways of doing it, all under consideration by the innovation group. One is to use two platforms, as in Lima where all 20 medal events, plus B Groups, were staged within five days.

The other two involve cutting the number of athletes by either imposing minimum standards or using an Olympic-style qualifying system, in which there would be continental quotas. The IWF executive board has already approved a proposal to cut the number of weight categories from 20 to 16, eight per gender, although precise details are yet to be decided.

Coffa said that the Technical Committee had failed to reach a conclusion last time the subject was discussed.

“We (the commission) met here and agreed that we would like to present a proposal to the executive board, then Congress before the World Championships in Bahrain in December,” Coffa said. Any changes would be made after this year.

“In all of this we have to ensure that representation from all continents is appropriate. For example if you have a qualifying system you might have six or seven athletes from Europe and Asia because they’re the biggest, and two or three from Africa and Oceania.

“The Pan American nations qualified as many athletes for Paris as Europe. As we have seen again here, the success of Venezuela and Colombia is very significant not just in the Americas but worldwide. We have to take all this into consideration. If any federations are left behind it’s a big problem.”

The United States also qualified five athletes for Paris, Colombia four, and Dominican Republic and Ecuador three each. The only European nation to qualify four was Belarus, whose athletes will compete as Individual Neutral Athletes.

Jose Quinones, president of the Pan American Federation, said the two-platform trial in Lima had been a success.

“Mexico, United States and other countries have had multi-platform competitions for many years, and we did it for the first time at our Pan Am Juniors in 2022,” he said.

“We realised it would be useful for the IWF to test it because it cuts timing for a competition in half. That’s good for athletes, organising committees, teams and the public.”

“With two platforms you can cut costs and time without cutting athletes. You can have 400 athletes in four days easily. We can see it with our own eyes here.”

There were landmark events on the platform too – a first world champion in any age group for Argentina when Paz Casadevall won at 59kg, and a first World Championships medal for Iceland when Bergros Bjornsdottir was second at 71kg. India took both “best lifter” awards, which went to the 40kg champion Preetismita Bhoi – who set a clean and jerk world record – and Bedabrat Bharali at 73kg.

Venezuela’s champions were Claudia Rengifo at 64kg, Sahara Ochoa at 71kg and Dionangel Vargas at 61kg.

Henry Velasquez, national coach and general secretary of the Venezuela Federation, said, *“These are truly impressive results. We qualified five athletes for the Paris Olympics, placing ourselves only behind China in this regard, and now we have the number one youth team in the world.*

“These achievements are the result of a long-term development plan. The dedication, effort and strategic vision of the board of directors and coaches have been essential to achieve these goals.

“Teamwork, constant training of athletes and coaches, as well as the continuous support of sports authorities and the government, have been pillars on this path to success.

“Surpassing Colombia in these achievements is a clear indicator of the significant progress that Venezuelan weightlifting has made. The most exciting thing is that this momentum appears to be sustainable well into the future.”

IWF WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS León (ESP), September 19-27

Rizki and Olivia Reeves did it last time, now the stars of 2024 World Juniors are ready to shine

Before the 2024 Championships ended in León, Spain, the last time a World Junior Championships was held in an Olympic year was in 2021 in Tashkent.

Among the winners in the Uzbekistan capital were the Paris 2024 Olympic champions Rizki Juniansyah from Indonesia and Olivia Reeves from the United States. Few people outside their own country had heard of them at the time.

Other future Olympians won junior world titles three years ago – Sergio Massidda from Italy, Muhammed Furkan Ozbek from Turkey, Garik Karapetyan from Armenia and Kamila Konotop from Ukraine all lifted in Paris, and Hristo Hristov from Bulgaria competed at the delayed 2020 Games in Tokyo a few months after becoming junior world champion.

Among those who won silver or bronze in Tashkent were Mihaela Cambei from Romania, Nina Sterckx from Belgium and Yekta Jamali, then lifting for Iran and now a medal-winning member of the Weightlifting Refugee Team. They competed in Paris too, where Cambei won a silver medal.

During the three years between winning in Tashkent and competing in Paris, those 2021 junior world champions trained harder, got stronger and improved their best competitive totals by huge amounts. The biggest female improver was Reeves, up 39kg, while Karapetyan did best of the men, up 46kg.

The stars from León have four years rather than three before the next Olympics. While they may be “unknown” as of now, you may well hear much more about them in the coming years.

Some of the best juniors did not win. Remarkably, the IWF’s “best lifter” rankings, based on Robi points, featured three silver medallists in the men’s top six.

In the best competition of the Championships, the men’s 102kg, winner Shahzadbek Matyakubov from Turkmenistan and runner-up Matheus Pessanha from Brazil both broke world records. Shahzadbek, ranked best individual in León, will go for more world records at the senior World Championships in Bahrain in December.

Kwon Dae Hee from Korea, ranked second, was within 8kg of Karlos Nasar’s clean and jerk junior record when he made his final attempt at 200kg. That was at 81kg, and nobody in the 89kg or 96kg sessions matched it. Four men from the 81kg contest were ranked in the top nine.

There was no doubt about the best individual female – 55kg junior world record breaker Chen Guan-Ling, who is also the senior world champion. Chen had four junior world records in outperforming her senior gold medal total by 14kg.

The 64kg and 71kg champions, Ingrid Segura from Colombia and Charlotte Simoneau from Canada, were ranked second and third.

United States filled positions four, five and six in the individual rankings – Ella Nicholson, Katie Estep and Miranda Ulrey – and topped the team medals table for the second straight year. Their top-rated male was Hampton Morris, who won a medal in Paris and holds a senior world record. American team-building for their “home” Olympics in 2028 is clearly going very well.

Even though China and North Korea, the world's strongest weightlifting nations, did not send teams to Spain, the standard of lifting was very high.

There was an exceptional performance at the concurrent Commonwealth Championships in Fiji, too. Family Notte from the remote Pacific island of Nauru, who was second in this year's World Youth Championships in Lima, Peru, swept the youth, junior and senior titles at 64kg with a 220kg total at the age of 15 years four months.

That is better than the current European, African and Pan American youth records, and within 13kg of the world youth record set by Pei Xinyi from China when she was two and a half years older.

IWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS Manama (BRN), December 6-15

PRK leads way on the platform and hosts take plaudits for 'best ever' World Championships

There were 29 world records at the IWF World Championships, where athletes from PRK, China, Bulgaria, the United States, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Iraq and elsewhere put on a show that will long be remembered. So did the host nation.

Every member of PRK's team of 17 won at least one medal in Manama. Two of PRK's world record breakers were especially impressive, Ri Suk at 64kg and Kim Il Gyong, who won the women's best lifter award, at 59kg.

China gave its five Olympic champions a break. Its junior newcomers excelled, led by super-heavyweight Li Yan who set a world record on her international debut. PRK and China filled 15 of the top 16 places in the women's individual rankings, in which the only interloper was the American Olivia Reeves, who ended the year with Olympic and world titles at 71kg.

Karlos Nasar from Bulgaria also did the Olympics-World Championships double, setting yet more 89kg world records at the age of 20. PRK filled the next three places behind Nasar – named best male lifter – in the individual rankings.

Kazakhstan's men put on a show of strength with victories for Nurgissa Adiletuly and Artyom Antropov, as well as 81kg silver for Alexey Churkin, the top-ranked junior after Nasar. In the super-heavyweights Varazdat Lalayan claimed gold for Armenia while Ali Ammar Yusur from Iraq became the first junior to total more than 450kg.

These superlative efforts were matched off the platform by the hosts, who got everything right. *"It has been like a festival – nobody wanted it to end,"* said Eshaq Ebrahim Eshaq, president of the Bahrain Weightlifting Federation and head of an organising committee that worked for 18 months on the biggest hosting project in Bahrain's Olympic sport history.

“The competition venue, presentation, spectator engagement, training hall, hotels, transport, food, fanzone... everything worked really well. We have not had a single complaint about anything.”

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood stated at the closing ceremony, *“Bahrain has raised the World Championships bar to a new level.”*

Sam Coffa, chair of the IWF Technical Committee who has been involved in weightlifting across seven decades, rated Bahrain 2024 as *“the best World Championships I have ever witnessed or worked in”*. His view was echoed by federation officials from China, Great Britain and Germany plus countless athletes and coaches. *“How does anybody follow this?”* asked one coach.

Eshaq said Bahrain had set a couple of world records itself, for the biggest billboards in weightlifting, and the biggest tent. Those billboards, featuring Gor Minasyan, Olivia Reeves, Sara Samir and others, adorned buildings all over Manama. *“You’d have to be living under a rock not to know about this event,”* he said.

The 1,000 seat arena, plus training hall, merchandise area and fan zone, were all inside a giant tent standing nearly 16 metres tall. *“It was on a sand plot with no electricity, no wifi, no bathrooms when we started. We built it over 45 days,”* said Eshaq.

“It was a risk, and it paid off. Our long-term planning worked, strategic sponsorship partnerships for food, vehicles, accommodation, promotion. Our volunteers were available 24 hours a day at all the competition hotels. It’s so much better when you can plan ahead.”

“We tried to treat everyone like a VIP. This is the biggest Olympic sports event ever staged in Manama, and we did it in one the most global sports. We did it with a smile. It has been a source of national pride.”



4. Continental Events

All the 2024 continental championships worked as qualification events for the Paris Olympic Games:

African Championships – Ismailia (EGY), February 2-10

Asian Championships – Tashkent (UZB), February 3-10

European Championships – Sofia (BUL), February 12-20

Oceania Championships – Auckland (NZL), February 21-25

Pan-American Championships – Caracas (VEN), February 23-29

5. Multisports/Regional Games

Commonwealth Games

Weightlifting continues to shine at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow

The Commonwealth Games Federation confirmed the location of the 2026 event in Glasgow, the Scottish city that had already hosted the competition in 2014. At the same time, the sports programme of the Games was presented and Weightlifting is proudly part of it, along with nine other sports.

The 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place from July 23 to August 2, and will comprise four main venues within a 13km corridor, ensuring the event is easily accessible to spectators and the 3'000 athletes participating in the competition.

“The entire weightlifting family is very happy to remain as a core sport in the programme of the Commonwealth Games. This shows our important and historic contribution to the event’s success since 1950! In 2026, we will continue demonstrating our value, and all our lifters look forward to competing in Glasgow, a city that will surely host great Games!” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood after the announcement of the upcoming edition of the competition. *“After this important announcement and positive news, the IWF is ready to work together with the Organisers so that our events can run as smoothly as possible,”* also said Mr Jalood.

“The Commonwealth Games is an important and truly unique event for our community providing an international opportunity for our home nations, crown dependencies and overseas territories; as celebrated as recently as the last Games at Birmingham 2022 where Emily Campbell (England), Holly O’ Shea (Gibraltar) and Micky Yule (Scotland) were selected as Flag Bearers for their respective Commonwealth Games Associations at the Opening Ceremony,” declared Matthew Curtain, British Weightlifting Federation CEO and member of the IWF Executive Board.

6. IWF Congresses

Phuket (THA) – March 30

IWF Congress approves first-ever IWF anthem

“An anthem should reflect an identity. This is normally the case with a country, as we are used to national anthems. But it should also happen with all types of organisations, namely in the sports world. That is what I tried to apply for the IWF”. Antonio Urso, the International Weightlifting Federation General Secretary, was obviously happy, after the IWF Congress approved the melody of the first-ever IWF anthem. His melody, as Urso is also a musician and is the author of the music that will from now on represent the IWF at all protocolar moments.

“I wanted something joyful, something that could represent the happy moments in our beloved sport, the satisfaction of a good performance, the importance of being together, of competing in a spirit of fair-play and camaraderie, of enjoying each and every moment we lift a bar. I had to ‘condense’ that in a 1m30s melody that would resonate in a nice harmony for all those listening to the IWF anthem,” adds the IWF General Secretary. *“I am too biased to say it, but I believe everyone in the weightlifting family will like our anthem,”* he continued.

“It all started last November, when we were in Guadalajara for the IWF World Junior Championships. After listening to the Mexican anthem at the opening ceremony, our IWF Communications manager approached me and said: ‘We need an IWF anthem. You could be the person doing it’. I immediately liked the concept and many ideas started to flow in my head. But, one day in December, the melody came naturally. In no more than 30 minutes, I had it written down,” Urso admits. *“Uniting two of my biggest passions in life, weightlifting and music, in this project was obviously a very exciting mission. I take it also as a kind of legacy to the sport that gave me so much,”* the IWF General Secretary confessed.

The Congress also ratified the IWF 2023 Audited Financial Report and the ones received from the various IWF committees: Technical, Medical, Coaching and Research, and Athletes. An update was also given on the Paris 2024 Games, the Olympic qualification system, and the IWF Refugee Team and Sustainability projects.

The IWF gathering also was the occasion to be briefed on the preparation status of upcoming IWF events. After the presentations from the IWF licensed barbell companies (Eleiko, Uesaka, and ZKC), and from the most recent IWF sponsor (SBD), the delegates approved the status of Associate Member for the Federation of Faroe Islands (FRO).

Manama (BRN) – December 4

IWF Congress approves amendments to the IWF Constitution

The IWF Congress, gathering representatives of 135 National Member Federations approved several amendments to the IWF Constitution, thus leading also to the validation of the IWF By-Laws, approved by the IWF Executive Board last November 25. Both documents will enter into effect from December 5, 2024.

In his welcome speech, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood declared: *“This Congress is held in a time of great unity within our International Federation and this is leading to enormous progress. The Paris 2024 Olympic Games were a great success – moreover, we are happy to report that we didn’t have any positive doping tests! – and these achievements greatly help our Sport to secure its presence in the Olympic programme,”* concluded the IWF President.

With delegates of 93 national bodies present in person in the capital of Bahrain and another 42 connecting with the assembly online, the new IWF Constitution was approved with 134 votes in favour and only one vote against.

The changes voted by the delegates do not alter the document’s substance, whose last update was made in September 2023. They are essentially aimed at providing a simpler language, to remove redundant provisions and details not belonging to a constitutional text. Four new modifications were however made: 1. Conditions for IWF Membership (Article 6); 2. Time limit for payment of outstanding amounts by MFs (Article 11); 3. Composition of the Executive Board (Article 16); 4. Two changes in the eligibility criteria (Article 25).

On the side of the IWF By-Laws, they now incorporate large sections of the former Constitution, namely related to operational and technical provisions in the ‘Schedules’ sections.

After this important vote, the Congress proceeded with the presentation of the various IWF Committees and Commissions reports (who had already made successful presentations to the IWF Executive Board on December 3).

IWF commercial partners (Eleiko, ZKC, Uekasa, and SBD) were next on the programme, and the presentations’ time came to an end with the update of the IWF upcoming competitions, namely the 2025 World Junior and Youth World Championships in Lima (PER), and the 2025, 2026 and 2027 IWF World Championships, respectively in Forde (NOR), Ningbo (CHN) and Yerevan (ARM).

The IWF Congress concluded with the grant of IWF awards for their contribution to weightlifting to: Michel Raynaud (FRA, Merit Certificate), Waldemar Gospodarek (POL, Gold Collar), Taisto Kuppola (FIN, Gold Collar), Stian Grimseth (NOR, Gold Collar), Karl Rimböck (GER, IWF Hall of Fame induction) and David Montero (BRA, IWF Hall of Fame induction).

7. IWF CEO

Achilleas Tsogas appointed as new IWF CEO

In **February 2024**, the IWF was happy to announce the hiring of Achilleas Tsogas, as CEO of our International Federation, taking his functions from March 1, 2024 at the headquarters in Lausanne (SUI). With an extensive and solid experience in Sports Management, Mr Achilleas was previously working at the International Olympic Committee for more than eight years, firstly in the Olympic Games department, in the Youth Olympic Games unit and successfully delivered three Youth Olympic Games before transitioning to the sports department. Within the summer sports team, Achilleas was responsible for the combat sports, as well as for weightlifting, and the key contact person for all elements related to the Olympic Movement for the relevant International Federations.

Before his IOC involvement, the new IWF CEO held several managerial roles in the organising committees of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, but also in other international, renowned events around the globe, namely the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Mediterranean Games, Arab Games and European Games. Originally a judo athlete and member of the Greek national team, he relocated to Australia and became a member of the Sport department of the organising committee of the Olympic Games Sydney 2000. Following that, he became the sport's competition manager at the Olympic Games Athens 2004, having being also successfully involved in the Judo World Championships in 2001, 2003 and 2005, as an additional member of the IJF Sport commission.

Mr Achilleas is of Hellenic nationality and is fluent in his Greek and English, while having an intermediate level in French and Japanese. In his native Greece, he was also the man behind the creation and management of several sport clubs around the country. Education-wise, his bachelor degree in Physical Education and Sports Science, obtained in Athens, was complemented by a Masters in Sport Management at the University of Technology, Graduate School of Business, in Sydney (AUS).

“We are extremely satisfied with the appointment of Mr Tsogas as our new CEO, as we believe his confirmed experience will be an added-value for the International Weightlifting Federation. I am sure he will be pivotal for the reinforcement of our sustained and continuous development,” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood.

“It is a great pleasure and honour for me to embark on this new exciting journey with the IWF/Weightlifting Family. I have been privileged to undertake diverse sports event positions around the world in which I was able to successfully co-operate with various organisations and groups of people coming from different cultural and sporting backgrounds and look forward to bringing all the experience to the best use in my new role,” said the new IWF CEO.

8. IWF Athletes Commission activities

Cyrille Tchatchet elected to the WADA Athlete Council

Cyrille Tchatchet, an active weightlifter representing Great Britain, was elected to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Athlete Council (for the period 2025-2027), after an electoral process taking place between December 10-12. The scrutiny was held via an online voting platform and was available only to IFs Athlete Commissions that were registered and deemed eligible to vote. A total of 55 out of 60 IF ACs voted (91.7%).

The WADA Athlete Council has a total of 20 members, with eight of them coming directly from the International Federations group. Tchatchet was elected among 26 candidates to this group and is one of the four new members of the Council in this category (the remaining four were re-elected).

Cyrille Tchatchet, 29, and also member of the IWF Athletes Commission, started his international career representing his native Cameroon. He then sought refugee status in Great Britain, which he eventually got. In this capacity, he was one of the athletes selected for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Refugee Team, competing in the weightlifting competition in the Japanese capital. Presently, already with a British passport, he represents his new country in IWF and other major events.

“I am sincerely thrilled with my election to the WADA Athlete Council and I would like to warmly thank all my fellow colleagues from so many International Federations that supported me in this so significant endeavour for me. I also express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the IWF Athlete Commission and the weightlifting community in general for the endorsement of this candidature,” declared Cyrille Tchatchet after knowing the election’s result.

“I am very proud to represent this beautiful Sport, the one that always provided me so much happiness and unforgettable moments! This is an enormous responsibility for me, and I can ensure that I will do my best to conveniently represent the athletes’ voice in this so crucial topic,” he continued.

“It is our obligation to constantly fight for clean sport and fair competition. WADA is the leading international organisation setting the highest standards to implement that strategy – I am therefore very much committed to offering my experience and expertise to assist in this noble cause,” Tchatchet concluded.

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood was also happy with this positive outcome: *“Firstly, I would like to congratulate Cyrille for this brilliant election! I am sure that his work and contribution will be extremely valued within the WADA Athlete Council. He is truly a great athlete, an inspiring example of resilience, and is now keen to give back to Sport all his knowledge and expertise”.*

9. Anti-Doping Programme – WADA/ITA

In **May 2024**, the IWF was happy to announce the 2023 statistics concerning its Anti-Doping activities, in co-operation with the ITA (International Testing Agency). Last year, a total of 3192 samples were collected around the world, including 1766 in-competition and 1426 out-of-competition. Moreover, in terms of urine/blood proportion, there were respectively 2403 and 789 samples.

This amount of collected samples resulted in a total of 2522 completed tests, performed on 1039 athletes (52% men, 48% women) from 109 countries. Concerning the Results Management of these tests, 18 of them constitute Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRV).

In 2023, the IWF/ITA received 25 TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemptions) application requests. In terms of Anti-Doping Education, the attendance in webinars/seminars totalled 1211 participants from 64 different nationalities.

In **September 2024**, an IWF delegation led by President Mohammed Jalood met the International Testing Agency (ITA) in Lausanne (SUI) to discuss the ongoing partnership between the two entities and their common anti-doping strategies. The list of the IWF representatives also included the General Secretary Antonio Urso and the IWF CEO Achilleas Tsogas. From the ITA side, its Director General Benjamin Cohen led the discussions.

The IWF and the ITA are working closely together since 2019, with the independent agency supervising all anti-doping operations on behalf of our International Federation. The set of activities in this area comprises the in and out-of competition testing, results management, intelligence and education, TUE supervision, and storage and re-analysis of samples. This very complete programme ensures total transparency and reliability, and has produced very fruitful results in recent years.

The high-level meeting between the IWF and the ITA reinforced and praised this level of co-operation, and reiterated the mutual interest in remaining connected in a common effort to keep the sport of weightlifting clean and fair.

“The excellent relationship we have with the ITA is extremely important for us, as it shows our total commitment for a drug-free environment around our lifters. This is presently confirmed by the reduction in the number of positive cases we have when comparing the situation with the past. Things are definitively evolving in a very positive way,” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood after the meeting. *“Weightlifting is now a respected sport in the Olympic movement and we take the opportunity to thank the ITA for its tireless efforts in this always sensitive field!”* concluded Mr Jalood.

In **October 2024**, the IWF announced that the 2024 IWF World Junior Championships was the IWF event with the highest proportion of athletes tested before its start.

Out of the 327 lifters attending the competition, 280 (85.6%) underwent at least one out-of competition test in the six months preceding the beginning of the event. As a comparison, for the 2023 IWF World Junior Championships, staged in Guadalajara (MEX) last November, 30.1% of the participating athletes had been tested during the same period.

These unprecedented numbers are mainly due to the new Categorisation Rule, in place since January 2024. Under these new regulations, proposed by the International Testing Agency (ITA) and supported by the IWF Anti-Doping Commission, the IWF's Member Federations are categorised based on the doping risk to the sport and are required to fulfil specific anti-doping requirements.

In detail, and before the start of the Spanish rendezvous in Leon, 147 (out of 171- 86%) male athletes were tested, and 133 (out of 156 – 85.3%) female lifters also underwent doping controls.

“These very significant numbers show our full commitment, in close partnership with the ITA, to ensure the IWF events are fair and clean competitions. The new categorisation rule, enforced since the beginning of this year, is one more tool in this essential fight, as it represents an additional responsibility for our National Member Federations. It is clear that everyone is abiding by these rules – and this is even more important considering the young age of the athletes taking part at the IWF World Junior Championships,” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood.

Finally, in **November 2024**, the International Testing Agency (ITA) released its “Paris 2024 Pre-Games Report” and weightlifting appears as one of the very few sports to have tested all its participating athletes in the period of six months before the Olympics! The IWF had a quota of 120 lifters in the French capital (two more athletes, representing the Olympic Refugee Team, were also part of the competition) and ALL of them were controlled in the lead-up to the Olympic celebration in Paris.

“These numbers and unprecedented level of testing demonstrate our full determination in the fight against doping in our Sport. It also certifies that we had a fair and clean competition in Paris. The IWF, together with the ITA, is taking this matter very seriously and we are happy to see that this strategy is proving successful. I take the opportunity to thank our National Federations for their effort and commitment to keeping weightlifting going in the right direction,” declared IWF President Mohammed Jalood.

Besides being controlled, 100% of the athletes who qualified for the Paris Olympic Games received anti-doping education as per the mandatory IWF/ITA requirements.

Education - Seminars and webinars

IWF/ITA Clean Sport Seminar in Phuket (THA), with about 80 participants

IWF/ITA Clean Sport Seminar in Lima (PER), with over 75 attendees

IWF/ITA Clean Sport Seminar in León (ESP), with around 80 participants

IWF/ITA Clean Sport Seminar in Manama (BRN), with 100 attendees

10. World Weightlifting Day

IWF President praises global weightlifting family on World Weightlifting Day

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood praised weightlifters around the world for their dedication and passion for the sport as the IWF celebrated the inaugural World Weightlifting Day on October 16.

An annual celebration established by the IWF, World Weightlifting Day aims to recognise the efforts and passion of the global weightlifting family. The date holds special significance as the day the International Olympic Committee (IOC) reinstated weightlifting to the Olympic programme and secured its place in the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028.

In a message to the global weightlifting community, IWF President Mohammed Jalood underlined the importance of this symbolic day. *“Today’s celebration of the inaugural World Weightlifting Day is a special milestone that marks the beginning of a new tradition for the global weightlifting community,”* he said.

“I would like to thank our incredible athletes and fans around the world for their outstanding efforts, contributions, and love for our sport. I encourage our global community to use this occasion to celebrate our sport’s rich history as well as the future of weightlifting as we prepare for the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028.”

The 2024 World Weightlifting Day is celebrated a couple of months after a very successful edition of the Paris Olympic Games, where 122 lifters from 58 nations (plus two members of the Olympic Refugee Team) showed to the world the strength and vitality of weightlifting. *“The Olympics are just the tip of the iceberg. For every athlete competing at the Games there are thousands of others in the five continents devoting their lives to the sport they love. This is a considerable effort but with the support of our 194 Member National Federations we are definitively defining a winning strategy for the years to come,”* the IWF President concluded.

A perfect ‘gift’ for the World Weightlifting Day: the first-ever Weightlifting Museum in the world opens in China

The IWF couldn’t have received a better “gift” on World Weightlifting Day! On October 16, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood was in Shilong Town (Dongguan City, Guangdong Province, China) to inaugurate the first-ever museum consecrated to our Sport.

With the local authorities – namely Mr Zhou Jinqiang, Vice-President of the Chinese Olympic Committee and President of China’s Weightlifting Association -, Mr Jalood had the opportunity to visit the facility and congratulate all those responsible for its construction.

“Today it’s a special day for the Weightlifting family in the five continents, as we celebrate the inaugural World Weightlifting Day. This comes exactly one year after the historic decision from the IOC, on October 16, 2023 to confirm the inclusion of our Sport in the programme of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games,” considered the IWF President.

“And to culminate these celebrations, I have the pleasure to be here today and to inaugurate the first museum in the world devoted to weightlifting. We couldn’t find a better occasion to do it! It is an amazing concept and structure, which is surely promoting in the best possible way the extraordinary performances and successful tradition of the Chinese athletes,” continued Mr Jalood.

After being declared officially open by Mr Zhou, the Museum was then visited by all the dignitaries. *“This is a very important tool to preserve the history and heritage of our beautiful Sport. At the same time, it will facilitate additional sports exchanges between China and the rest of the world,”* concluded the IWF President.

Soon after this ceremony, Mr Jalood had the occasion to visit the Shilong Sports School and meet all the young lifters training there.



11. The IWF Refugee Team

In **February 2024**, the IWF announced its Refugee Team for the year 2024, comprised of four athletes: Parisa Jahanfekrian (originally from Iran, but residing in Germany), Aline de Souza and Monique Araujo (both from Brazil, but presently based in the USA), and Addriel Garcia (Cuba/Italy). These lifters were already part of the first-ever programme in 2023, and will therefore have additional opportunities during the upcoming months to compete at the IWF events.

Besides these athletes, directly selected by the IWF, all lifters that are part of the IOC Refugee Team will also join the group. In 2024, the selected coach to manage the team is Aveenash Pandoo, former IWF Coaching and Research Committee Member, currently working as Head Coach in Abu Dhabi Weightlifting Club. The team is completed by Hussein Elsettawi, a physiotherapist.

“After a very successful launch of the IWF Refugee Team in 2023, we are pleased to proceed with the programme. This is once in a lifetime opportunity for these lifters, and I will personally never forget the satisfaction of the two Brazilian lifters who were able to compete at last year’s IWF World Championships in Riyadh. These athletes have experienced quite challenging situations during their existence, but their passion for the sport remained unchanged,” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood. *“I wish all the lifters included in this group the best luck and I look forward to seeing them performing at the highest level in our competitions,”* concluded Mr Jalood.

In **May 2024**, it was announced that two lifters – Ramiro Mora and Yekta Jamali – will be part of the Olympic Refugee Team at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, a group that comprises 36 athletes representing 12 sports. The announcement was made by the IOC President Thomas Bach in Lausanne (SUI): *“We welcome all of you with open arms. You are an enrichment to our Olympic Community, and to our societies”*.

“With your participation in the Olympic Games, you will demonstrate the human potential of resilience and excellence. This will send a message of hope to the more than 100 million displaced people around the world,” continued the IOC President.

Both lifters now selected for the Games in Paris had the opportunity to compete recently, as part of the IWF Refugee Team, at the IWF World Cup in Phuket, Thailand.

Mora, originally from Cuba and based in Great Britain, was born on September 29, 1997 and ranked 18th in the men’s 102kg, after lifting 162-197-359. Jamali, living in Germany and of Iranian origin, turned 20 years old on March 31 and placed 19th in Thailand in the women’s 81kg category (100-125-225).

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood also received the IOC news with enormous joy: *“The IWF is very happy to learn that two lifters – Ramiro Mora and Yekta Jamali – will be part of the IOC Refugee Team competing at the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympic*

Games. After the creation in 2023 of the first-ever IWF Refugee programme, this decision underlines the good work our International Federation is doing in welcoming and including those athletes in our activities. It also showcases the intense work and effort from Ramiro and Yekta – they were both present in our recent IWF World Cup in Phuket (THA) –, who fully deserve their recognition from the IOC”.

“The Refugee Team project is aimed at giving a second opportunity to athletes overcoming extremely challenging situations and bringing them back to the Sport they love. I wish Ramiro and Yekta the best of luck in Paris and I thank them for representing in such a noble way the sport of weightlifting!” concluded Mr Jalood.



12. The IWF Sustainability Programme

Sustainability: start of a successful journey for IWF

Following the launch of the IWF Sustainability Programme in 2023, the IWF Executive Board member in charge of this project Florian Sperl and the IWF CEO Achilleas Tsogas met in March 2024 in Lausanne (SUI) with the representatives of Sporting Giants, our International Federation’s partner in charge of conceiving a Sustainability Strategy, to be presented and implemented from October 2025 onwards.

This process has included so far a thorough assessment of the situation in terms of the IWF sustainability actions (or lack of them), and will proceed with extensive consultation with all stakeholders of the weightlifting community. This approach will allow the elevation of successful case studies already in place on a local or national level, and will also establish the priorities of the Sport family in this field.

During the two-day rendezvous in Lausanne, there was also time for a meeting with IUCN (the International Union for the Conservation of Nature), an organisation with whom the IWF signed an agreement, under “The Sports for Nature Framework”. Four principles guide this protocol, namely: 1. Protect nature and avoid damage to natural habitats and species; 2. Restore and regenerate nature wherever possible; 3. Understand and reduce risks to nature in your supply chains; and 4. Educate and inspire positive action for nature across and beyond sport. The main goal of those actions is, according to the agreement, “to deliver transformative, nature positive action across sports by 2030 and beyond, enabling sports to champion nature and contribute to its protection and restoration”.

Moreover, sustainability efforts are also encouraged by the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and by IOC’s Sustainability Strategy. Finally, it is one of the seven fundamental values identified in the global IWF Strategic Plan, adopted in September 2023.

Florian Sperl, IWF EB member in charge of the project, spoke of an exciting new path of development for our International Federation: *“As a global and influential industry, Sport should also play its part in this important mission. Our ultimate goal is to contribute to a happier and healthier world: sustainable principles also share this philosophy, so this synergy is of course very complementary. We needed an external partner to guide us at this stage, but in the end the effort must be implemented by each and every one of our weightlifting members”.*

13. IWF Partners

In **December 2024**, the IWF announced an 8-year partnership with SBD, a leading global sports brand, designing and manufacturing technical clothing, supports and accessories. This partnership aims to elevate the profile of weightlifting on all five continents through innovative projects and initiatives designed to enhance awareness and foster a positive perception of the sport.

With a shared vision to develop weightlifting at all levels, this collaboration will focus on grassroots growth, sport development, and athlete support. The agreement also highlights a strong commitment to promoting inclusion, ensuring the sport remains accessible and welcoming to participants of all backgrounds.

IWF President, Mohammed Jalood stated: *“This partnership with SBD marks a significant milestone in the evolution of our sport. Together, we are committed to creating opportunities and building a sustainable future for weightlifting around the world.”*

SBD CEO, Benjamin Banks considered: *“We are delighted to enter into a long-term partnership with the IWF. This is a very exciting opportunity for us to establish our business within weightlifting, as it will enable us to enhance our offering to sponsored athletes, coaches and our customer base across the globe, whilst supporting the IWF’s long term objectives.”*



14. Institutional relations

In **April 2024**, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood was appointed as Visiting Professor of the Sports Science Faculty of the University of Ningbo (CHN). That was the highlight of an IWF delegation visit to China, who had the opportunity to be in Fuzhou and Ningbo (host of the 2026 IWF World Championships). On this occasion, Mr Jalood was accompanied by the IWF General Secretary Antonio Urso and the IWF CEO Achilleas Tsogas.

“I am very honoured to receive this prestigious distinction from the University of Ningbo. I share it with the entire weightlifting family, working very hard for the development of our beautiful Sport on the five continents. China is a great powerhouse in weightlifting and Ningbo will surely be an excellent host of our World Championships in 2026!” declared the IWF President after receiving his tribute.

The first two days of the visit were spent in Fuzhou, where the Chinese National Championships took place – the IWF delegation was invited to attend four A Sessions of the event and also visit the outstanding Majiang Weightlifting Training Centre, a world-class facility for the preparation of Chinese and international lifters.

On April 27, the group joined Ningbo, chosen in early December 2023 as the host city of the 2026 IWF World Championships.

“We had a very fruitful meeting with the organisers and excellent conditions will be provided to all participants in our showcase. I sincerely thank all Chinese authorities for their commitment and enthusiasm in the staging of the 2026 IWF World Championships, as well as for their devotion to weightlifting,” concluded Mr Jalood.

In **May 2024**, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood and the IWF General Secretary Antonio Urso met in Yerevan with the Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr Nikol Pashinyan, to discuss the preparation of the IWF World Championships, to be staged in the country in 2027. It will be the first time that the IWF showcase will be held in Armenia, a decision taken by the IWF Executive Board last March 29 in Phuket (THA), with the occasion of the IWF World Cup.

“The level of commitment by our friends in Armenia is amazing and the personal interest and involvement of the Prime Minister are a solid guarantee that we will have a great competition in Yerevan! Both at the government and national federation level, the support and professionalism are outstanding. I have no doubts that these Championships will be a milestone in our history and will inspire many young lifters in Armenia – already a very strong nation in weightlifting – to pursue their career. This is also the legacy that was emphasised by the Prime Minister,” considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood after the meeting with Mr Pashinyan.

After the official meetings, both Mr Jalood and Mr Urso had the opportunity to enjoy a guided visit to the historical capital of Armenia, Yerevan, one of the world's most ancient inhabited cities.

Also in **May 2024**, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood was in Azerbaijan, where he had the opportunity to discuss new ways of developing weightlifting in the country with the national authorities. While in Baku, Mr Jalood met with Prime Minister Mr Ali Asadov, the Minister of Youth and Sports Mr Farid Gayibov, and representatives of the Azerbaijan National Olympic Committee and Weightlifting Federation.

During these three days, Mr Jalood visited Baku's High-Performance Training Centre, a facility that could become an IWF Academy in the future. The complex includes high-level training facilities (the national team of Azerbaijan is doing its preparation there), but also excellent conditions for athletes' accommodation. A presentation on this venue will be made by Azeri representatives at the IWF Executive Board meeting next December in Bahrain (during the IWF World Championships), so that it can eventually integrate the IWF Academy project, already active in China (Fuzhou) and Cuba (La Habana).

"All authorities are quite enthusiastic about this project, as they want to elevate the level of weightlifting in Azerbaijan. The performances of the younger athletes in the country are already quite encouraging, but the sport and political officials are determined to develop a new weightlifting culture in the country, namely in the fundamental area of anti-doping," considered Mr Jalood after the visit.

In **July 2024**, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood was in the House of Switzerland in Paris, during the second day of the Olympic Games. Located in the gardens of the Swiss Embassy in France, the House of Switzerland organised a reception to pay a tribute to Lausanne, the Olympic capital, and the city hosting the IWF headquarters.

Mr Jalood had the opportunity to meet the highest Swiss dignitaries, including the President of the country, Mrs Viola Amherd, the Mayor of Lausanne, Mr Grégoire Junod, the Canton de Vaud authorities, but also colleagues from other International Federations and the IOC.

"Switzerland and Lausanne are very important for the IWF. Our headquarters are in the Olympic capital and we have been always very welcomed by the Swiss authorities. Lausanne gathers many of the most important international sports organisations in the world, including the IOC, so it is a privilege for the IWF to be located there," declared Mr Jalood.

In **September 2024**, the IWF announced that its membership to the Global Esports Federation (GEF) has been accepted and the Sport of weightlifting is now part of this exciting new family. The IWF application request was made in the final days of July and

on August 1, the GEF President Chris Chan confirmed the membership status of our International Federation.

“I would like to warmly welcome the IWF into the Global Esports Family. We are greatly honoured to have IWF as a Member of the GEF,” Mr Chan wrote in his letter.

In charge of the promotion, support and development of the worldwide esports ecosystem, the GEF has presently 180 members in the five continents. With a mission to cultivate competition along with developing communities and the connection between sport, esports and technology, the GEF celebrates the universality of global esports through the staging of international, continental, and events throughout the year. The annual Global Esports Games is the flagship event for the Global Esports Federation.

In **October 2024**, the IWF President Mohammed Jalood was in Golem, Albania, for the founding Congress of the Balkan Weightlifting Federation. This regional organisation assembles 11 National Federations – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Northern Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Türkiye – and aims at creating opportunities and competitions for the weightlifting community in this area of Europe.

At the Congress in Golem was also elected the first Executive Board of the organisation, led by Elez Gjoza, President of the Albanian Weightlifting Federation. The other members of the EB are: Nedim Masic (BIH, General Secretary), Talan Unlu (TUR, Vice-President), Irena Mitrovska (MKD, member), Damjan Canzek (SLO, member), and Amar Music (CRO, member).

The headquarters of the Balkan Weightlifting Federation will be located in Tirana, the capital of Albania.

15. Financial Reports

IWF Financial Reports can be found in the IWF website. These documents correspond to the audited version of the Financial Statements, duly approved by the IWF Congress.

Links to the most recent versions:

[2023](#)

[2022](#)

[2021](#)