

Attn: FIDE office

Attn: The Ethics commission of FIDE

I am writing following the letter I have received from the FIDE Ethics Commission regarding my case.

I acknowledge that some part of justice was made. The Respondents, viz.

(Ms Natalia Zhukova (Resp. no. 1)  
Ms Alisa Galliamova (Resp. no. 2)  
Ms Lanita Stetsko (Resp. no. 3)  
Ms Anastasia Bodnaruk (Resp. no. 4)  
Ms Dina Belenkaya (Resp. no. 5)  
Ms Jovana Rapport (née Vojinova) (Resp. no. 6)  
Ms Svetlana Matveeva (Resp. no. 7)  
Ms Marina Guseva (Resp. no. 8)  
Ms Anna Tskhadadze (Resp. no. 9)  
Ms Tatiana Ivanova (Resp. no. 10)  
Ms Natassia Ziaziulkina (Resp. no. 11)  
Ms Anastasia Savina (Resp. no. 12)  
Ms Evgenija Ovod (Resp. no. 13)  
Ms Melia Salome (Resp. no. 14)  
Ms Ekaterina Kovalevskaya (Resp. no. 15)

were found guilty of breach of code 2.2.11 of the FIDE Ethics Code, which reads:

*"Any conduct likely to injure or discredit the reputation of FIDE, its events, organizers, participants, sponsors or that will enhance the goodwill which attaches to the same."*

But I think that the measures taken are too mild and are encouraging unsporting behavior.

Basically, the sanction, in the case of Zhukova, applies for making false accusations and discrediting my image and the image of FIDE. I consider that a 3 month suspended ban is a very light sanction for making false accusations and discrediting my name.

But you are not taking into consideration the attack she made on me and how this helped her to gain an indisputable advantage in our direct encounter, a conduct which is similar to cheating. I don't see anything like that mentioned in your letter.

This decision doesn't take into consideration the effect this attack had on me back then, on my chess career afterwards, nor the direct gains Zhukova obtained from the attack. Zhukova attacked my reputation and during the tournament I had to defend myself, to write letters instead of preparing for our encounter. All of the sudden my mind was busy with something different instead of my chess games. She confiscated my good tournament and turned it into her own good tournament. She beat me in our direct encounter and even won the event. I lost to her and to the rest of my opponents (including Alisa Galliamova -she signed the letter and also benefited from beating me, in the last round of the

European Championship) when only half a point was enough to qualify for the World Chess Championship. I was also very close to winning a prize.

Another ethical thing I have noticed during the reading of the Anti-Cheating Report is that Zhukova denied to have drafted and collected the signatures, but many respondents(as written in the ACC report) said that they were approached by Zhukova to sign it. I was told the same by my friends who saw her at the Delphinarium during the free day, that Zhukova drafted the letter and collected signatures. Also, I don't think the letter came from nowhere, or wrote itself, and Mrs. Zhukova is the first to have signed it. So, on another ethical angle, isn't Zhukova's behavior a form of lying and of impeding of the investigation? In any country in the world there are severe punishments for that.

Another question to FIDE: Isn't this mild punishment a way of telling other players that they can do this again? They would only risk a suspended ban which is only a joke(for people without character) if they would get a chance to win a good prize in a strong tournament. Unfortunately, people without character are everywhere, that's why you need firm rules and punishments to make sure attacks like that don't happen again.

Coming back to my situation, yes, I lost a lot of things during that Championship. My good name and reputation was stolen from me and also my balance was affected for a long time. When you are innocent and fall victim to false accusations your whole life turns upside down. You start asking yourself all sorts of questions and your mind is diverted and cannot focus. During the year that followed I have lost a lot of rating also (about 100 elo points) and my spot in the Olympic Team. So there was also serious financial losses I endured because of that.

Another thing I want to touch upon is that in your letter, you assert that there was an inappropriate handling of the situation by the officials.

I totally agree with that. In a normal institution(like FIDE should be), when a decision like that is reached, measures of additional investigations are taken. Why did this happen? How did the officials handle the situation? What were the mistakes?

Why did the organizer allow for the letter to be published, thus making it official? How did the main arbiter react and how he should have reacted instead? Why did they allow for such a bad thing to happen?

And another point: You mention the punishment was mitigated because a lot of time passed since. Who's to blame for that? A situation like that, which affects the image of chess players and the reputation of FIDE itself, should have been on the list of extremely urgent matters of discussion, not postponed for 2 years. Who was affected by this postponement? I was affected first because I have waited for a long time to have an official statement about the case. But also FIDE's image was affected by this postponement.

In conclusion, I was greatly prejudiced, both reputation wise and financial wise, and the FIDE measures so far did not take into consideration the situation as a whole.

I am expecting from FIDE officials and from The Ethics commission of FIDE a reply which deals with the addressed issues.

Mihaela Sandu

9th of May 2017