

I have decided to stand as I think it is important the membership of English chess has a clear choice. The choice is between one of hostility & fight towards FIDE, which I feel antagonises, or one of dialogue & attempting to change things from within. I was not happy about the ECF's lawsuit against FIDE in 2011. From my attendance at the Finance AGM in April I could sense that many others felt the same. This is something I have felt in Yorkshire & the NCCU where we have had our own fight against isolationists on other issues. I have never thought lawsuits, especially in a sport as financially starved as chess, is a way to go. I see parallels between English chess & their fight with FIDE and the English FA & FIFA. The FA is not winning theirs! We do have another example & one that shows that gradually working on change from within can work and that is through the excellent example set by our NOC.

My objective if elected is to get dialogue between the ECF and FIDE going once again. For me this means working hard to get more ECF people, especially from a new generation, onto FIDE Committees. We have a lot of talented individuals whose experience in domestic chess should be serving the wider international community. You already look at the wonderful example set by Jana Bellin (Medical Commission) and the years of excellent and dedicated service by Stewart Rueben (numerous other committees). However, English chess is more than just them. I also feel the negative attitude towards England in the wider developing world also needs to be addressed especially if we want to make friends & influence people. Another area that needs to be addressed is getting more FIDE qualified trainers so that our great reserve of GM & IM talent can get more paid opportunities coaching teams at events such as the Olympiad. This is why I feel well qualified for this job. I have had involvement with FIDE since my first Olympiad in 1986. I was Botswana's FIDE delegate in 1991, 94, 95 and 1996. In that time I have built up good contacts. I was zone president, Southern Africa (1994-98) & since 2006 have been secretary of the Development Commission. For the first time, if elected, England will have a delegate more familiar with the developing chess world than the developed. If you feel building bridges is the way to go then this has to be a good thing.

This brings me to my FIDE voting record. Some may perceive me as being pro FIDE. Firstly let me remind everyone that it is the board that decides & the delegate will only do as the board bids. However I will always try & argue for what I feel is the best way to go. With that in mind my track record shows a lot of opposition to FIDE. In 1994 as Botswana Delegate & Zone President I got the whole of my Zone to support the Kouatly campaign for President. We felt strongly that that was the right thing to do. The 1994 elections were by far the most dramatic ever with meetings & General Assembly going on till after 2am. It was the elections where Campomanes & Kasparov formed a very late alliance to stand against Kouatly. The election was very close & long drawn out. At the crucial moment the votes that helped Campo cross the winning line came from England and the USA. In the end my zone ended up on the losing side. This did them no favours. So one thing I learnt from that was not wanting to hear about the moral superiority of the supposed western chess nations. In 1995 as a member of the Central Committee I voted against Campo in the vote of no confidence & in 1996 I ended up on the opposition ticket led by Sunye Neto that stood against Kirsan. In 2006 as International Director I argued strongly that the ECF board should support Bessel Kok's campaign. The vote was won 6-2. However I did have serious doubts about the Karpov campaign in 2010.

Those of you who do not know me then let me introduce myself. I am the co-founder with AJ Dunnington of the White Rose team in the 4ncl started upon returning in 1997. My involvement in the successful 'White Rose' continues. I was International Director between 2003 & 2006. My most important contribution was getting the ECF to pay minimum players fees out of their own budget. This was radical at the time & stopped the situation that happened with selection for European Championship in Plovdiv (Sept 2003) where players were written to & asked if they would consider playing for free. The entire European Championship in Gothenburg 2005 was financed by the ECF. I have served as President of the NCCU & Yorkshire. When taking on the Yorkshire President's (& vice Pres) role I encouraged a number of good people to get involved with the committee. Yorkshire at the time was perceived to be loners both in the NCCU & especially in the ECF. I led the committee to build bridges with the ECF & Yorkshire supported the membership scheme & later ran its own MO. I continued to do the same when becoming NCCU President. I have since argued for the Yorkshire, Leeds league & the NCCU to support the new ECF membership & game fee proposals. There were many who thought the North (& Yorkshire) would isolate itself from the rest of the country & were surprised when it did not happen. Chess in the county has flourished, winning 3 county championship titles in 2009, (I captained the OPEN team) & 2 teams reaching the 2012 finals (we lost both matches including my U160s). We have 6 Yorkshire based teams playing in the 4NCL. Yorkshire is in very capable hands and looking outward as continued county championship successes, growing local leagues, improving junior chess development and above all excellent website testify to. A lot of excellent talent is waiting ready to serve the country & the world. I live in Otley, near Leeds.