



prgroup@1plus1.tv
media.1plus1.ua

Interim President of International Fencing Federation (FIE)
Emmanuel Katsiadakis

We highly appreciate your support of Ukrainian fencers and appeal on behalf of the Ukrainian media community, the National Fencing Federation of Ukraine and sports persons.

On February 24, 2022, the Russian army unleashed a bloody, full-scale war in Ukraine. Until now, Putin's regime continues to demolish Ukrainian settlements with missiles, kill thousands of people, and claim the lives of the best Ukrainian athletes who have defended the country since the beginning of the war. 179 Ukrainian athletes and coaches died on the front lines. Moreover, Russia cynically destroyed more than 111 sports facilities, including the fencing hall in Kharkiv and the Mykolaiv Professional College of Physical Culture, where Olympic champions Olha Kharlan and Olena Khomrova and other outstanding champions studied. All classrooms, a dormitory, and a fencing hall were damaged.

Beyond that, Russia continues to use sports as a means of propaganda. Russian athletes openly support the war in Ukraine, and also join concerts and rallies of the Kremlin regime.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Ukrainian media industry in collaboration with sports federations, associations, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine have started an active fight against the aggressor on the sports front. In June, the 1+1 media group together with the best football player in Europe in 2004, head coach of the national team of Ukraine (2016-2021) Andrii Shevchenko launched the "Sports Front" communication campaign. The purpose of which is to block Russian national teams, boycott Russian athletes who support the war or did not make a statement about it, and comprehensive support for Ukrainian sports.

Legendary football player Andrii Shevchenko, world judo champion Heorhii Zantaraya, bronze medalist of the Olympic Games Hanna Rizatdinova, bronze medalist of the Olympic Games Stanislav Horuna, legendary goalkeeper Oleksandr Shovkovskii, Olympic champion and silver medalist of the 2016 Olympic Games Oleh Vernyaev joined the project and made their statements. Ukrainian fencer, Olympic champion Olha Kharlan also became the ambassador of the project. Videos with ambassadors of the "Sports Front" are broadcast as part of the national telethon of the leading TV channels of Ukraine "Yedyni Novyny" (United News) and have wide distribution.

"Every day I feel a bolt of pain that war brings to people. It pierces my heart like a sharp saber. And so every time I hear about the threat of a missile attack on my native Mykolaiv. The city where my parents, all my relatives, friends, coaches are now. They have to hide in basements to survive. All Ukrainians have to fight for their lives every day.

We athletes must fight for them on our front. Let's do not be silent, as Russian and Belarusian athletes do, and act as a team. Our final blow is the complete isolation of Russian and Belarusian sports in the world," Olha Kharlan said in a special video message.

Video: <https://youtu.be/Hf3mh6yURGA>

We are convinced that while the war in Ukraine continues, Russian and Belarusian athletes have no place in world-class sports. This thesis is supported by every Ukrainian and millions of people around the world. After all, sport venues have always been a place for recognizing not only the professional qualities of athletes, but above all moral and ethical ones.

In this regard, on November 26, during the Congress of the International Fencing Federation, we ask you not to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate in international competitions under any status, including neutral.

We count on your support on the sports front. With faith in Victory!

Comprehensive information about the signatories who signed the open letter can be found [by the following link](#).