Vessela Letcheva

Candidate for ISSF President

TO SERVE SHOOTING. TO SHAPE ITS FUTURE!



Our sport has a rich history and strong traditions, but the world is changing.

The ISSF must respond.
My program is built around these strategic priorities:

Strengthen the Olympic and global position of shooting

We must protect shooting's long-term place in the Olympic programme and give our sport a stronger international voice. For the first time, sport shooting has been excluded from the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, marking yet another setback and a reversal of progress previously achieved in securing the sport's place on the Olympic stage. I will build closer ties with the IOC, National Olympic Committees and other international organizations.

Athletes, youth and federations at the centre

We must secure the future of shooting through action today. We need to invest in coaches, judges, sports science, modern facilities, attractive competitions. We must support athletes throughout their careers and develop young talent. Strong Member Federations are vital to our future.

I am committed to establishing a network of educational and training centeres across all continents, ensuring higher remuneration for referees, and allocating a share of the ISSF's revenues directly to athletes in the form of prize money for major competitions.

Modernise and innovate

Modern communication, digital tools and new technology can help the ISSF improve competitions, education and administration. They can make shooting easier to follow, more visible and more attractive to audiences around the world.

I am committed to establishing a dedicated Marketing and Partnerships Committee, engaging leading professionals to create high-quality, modern content for television and other media platforms, strengthening our social media presence through, and implementing the changes necessary to modernise our sport.

Ensure financial stability and sustainable development

The ISSF must strengthen its finances, find new sponsors and commercial partners, and use its resources openly and efficiently. We should consider new ways to provide practical support to Member Federations and specific development programs.

I will make the ISSF's annual financial reports public, and each federation will receive them directly to ensure transparency and the principles of good governance.

Federations are our key stakeholders. That is why they should receive a share of the ISSF's global sponsorship revenue, following the model of the IOC and other international federations.

Lead through cooperation and responsibility

The ISSF must maintain an open dialogue with National Federations and Continental Confederations. Our decisions should be guided by transparent management, education, environmental responsibility and cooperation across our sport. In the interest of full transparency, I will ensure that all meetings of the governing bodies are livestreamed, allowing all member federations to follow the proceedings and remain fully informed.

THE CHALLENGES

NEW OLYMPIC REALITY – WIDE RANGE OF YOUNG SPORTS:

The IOC is changing its approach, focusing not only on sports but also on individual events. It increasingly values the experience of athletes and spectators, global reach and innovation. The Olympic program also gives greater attention to gender equality, young audiences and modern urban sports.

CONTINENTS VARIFY IN THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN OLYMPIC SPORT:

Global reach is becoming more important in the selection of Olympic events and disciplines. A big number of national federations from different continents are still facing difficulties regarding their participation in major championships.

SHOOTING SPORT IS NO LONGER PART OF YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES AND FISU WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES:

Shooting has been a medal sport since the 2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. At Dakar 2026, it is part of the engagement programme instead. This is an alarming sign and a negative trend that we cannot ignore. Shooting is also absent from the Chungcheong 2027 FISU World University Games. We have already seen reductions in Olympic disciplines and athlete quotas. Shooting has also lost its former place as the first medal event of the Games.

SHOOTING SPORT IS NOT IN FOCUS OF MAJOR SPORTS BROADCASTERS - SHOOTING SPORT IS HARDLY UNDERSTANDABLE:

Shooting receives too little attention or is completely absent as content from major international sports broadcasters. Public interest in our sport has declined in recent years, while complicated rules make competitions hard to follow. This also makes it harder to attract sponsors, advertisers and audience. Other sports are gaining popularity quickly through digital media, engaging stories and opportunities by focusing on investments and modern technologies. Successful broadcasts offer audiences exciting events they want to watch. Fans also want emotion, a sense of belonging, shared values and athletes they can admire. All of these raise serious questions about the future of our sport at the Olympic Games.

STRATEGIC VISION

Sport shooting has a proud heritage, but in a rapidly changing world, we must embrace progress or risk being left behind. Competition among sports for the public's attention is constantly growing. Some of the traditional sports have made revolutionary changes to attract audiences. Our sport needs greater visibility, stronger partnerships and rules that spectators, fans and the media can understand.

I have spent more than four decades in sport, first as an athlete and later in different leadership roles. Sport has given me opportunities, friendships and challenges that have shaped who I am.

I am standing for President of the ISSF because I am ready to give back.

Over the next four years we must bring together the best knowledge, technology and resources to prepare shooting for the future.

We need a strong, respected and financially stable ISSF that supports shooting communities around the world. With the support of our international family, I will lead our sport forward.

Our resources are limited. That is why we must be bold in our ideas, innovative in our approach and precise in our actions. Just as our sport teaches us to be.

Strategic and effective actions begin with taking an honest look at our weaknesses and challenges. We cannot solve problems unless we first recognise them.

THE SOLUTIONS

My vision is based on three pillars: a stronger voice within the Olympic Movement, a modern approach to the development of our sport, and ISSF that serves its community.

1. A stronger voice within the Olympic family

Protecting shooting's place in the Olympic programme must remain one of our highest priorities. The ISSF needs regular, professional dialogue with the IOC, future Olympic organisers and other Olympic partners. We must anticipate changes instead of reacting after decisions have been made.

We must develop our own system for assessing our sport in line with the IOC's new approach to the Olympic programme. We need to strengthen our advantages in visibility, popularity and access to young people so that shooting remains a strong candidate for future Summer Olympic Games.

We should show shooting for what it is: a modern, high-tech, inclusive and gender-balanced sport with prestige and attractiveness to young generation.

2. Developing and modernising shooting sport

We must embrace modern technologies to enhance our sport and make it more engaging and appealing to television audiences worldwide. We have to establish and maintain consistently high standards for all competitions organized by the ISSF. Our new identity must be associated with modern and attractive competitions and events. We need to invest in and provide comprehensive support to event organisers to ensure the highest standards of experience for both athletes and spectators, to attract world-class professionals in management, marketing, and the media. We should exchange experiences with other sports that have successfully established themselves as highly rated and popular with the audience.

Education and science are vital to shooting's future. Federations should be able to train their own experts, reduce travel and education costs, and create more opportunities for coaches, officials and other professionals. **Education should not depend on where people live or how much money they have.** The ISSF should lead efforts to make high-quality education more accessible around the world.

I will bring all our members, shooting experts and professionals from related industries for open discussions. All of our decisions will be made by consensus among the stakeholders. Together, we will agree on practical solutions and clear next steps.



My priorities:

- *Bring globally recognized expertise into shooting. Work with specialists from other sports and industries to improve how we organise and promote competitions;*
- *Strengthen shooting's image. Present it as a modern, prestigious and innovative sport built on excellence, precision, discipline and success;*
- *Attract new partners and investment. Build a stronger international image to appeal to sponsors, investors and the media;*
- *To update competitions without losing what makes shooting unique. To change the format of the finals and to make them more exciting and easier for wider audiences to follow. Rules must be clear and predictable;*
- *To coordinate calendars with Continental Confederations and avoid unnecessary clashes, while creating a clear competition pathway for youth.*
- *We should increase daily allowances for Technical Officials, and reducing ISSF fees;*
- *We must expand shooting's reach around the world, especially by increasing participation and development in the Americas, Africa and Oceania;*
- *Make our athletes role models for younger generations;*
- *Promote shooting all year, not only during the Olympic Games.Use World Championships, World Cups and Continental competitions to reach new audiences and maintain interest.*
- *Establishment of training and educational centers on every continent, managed by the ISSF;*
- *Strengthen cooperation between Continental Confederations and the ISSF Academy. Invite our most experienced experts to teach at the Academy;*

- *Link shooting education with academic programs. Work with universities and colleges to include shooting-related courses and seek academic recognition for ISSF qualifications and certificates;*
- *Promote sustainable competitions by reducing waste and using environmentally responsible materials and technology. Help Member Federations adopt practical solutions based on scientific evidence;*

3. ISSF that serves its community

My guiding principle is simple: the ISSF exists to serve its Member Federations, athletes and the entire shooting community. An international federation must do more than manage rules and events. It should be a strong, professional and trusted organisation that supports its members, brings people together and helps the sport grow.

My priorities:

- *Support fair geographical representation in ISSF administration. We should use the knowledge and experience of professionals throughout our international shooting family and build teams that work together across borders;*
- *The ISSF must secure, through its global sponsors and partners, funding for the organization of major competitions, as well as a financial support for new facilities for national federations;*
- *To make ISSF administration more professional and efficient, with skilled staff, clear duties and good working conditions;*
- *To cut unnecessary bureaucracy and make administrative procedures simpler;*

Transparent financial management and sustainable funding

Financial responsibility is one of the ISSF President's most important duties. I will take personal responsibility for proposing a clear, realistic and sustainable budget. It will have specific goals and will be prepared in consultation with the relevant ISSF leadership bodies

The ISSF relies heavily on Olympic revenue share. Our organization must be able to attract other sources of funding that meet the needs of its stakeholders and protect the long-term interests of Member Federations.

Spending on the President, Executive Committee and Council members must be carefully controlled and kept in line with the Federation's duties and resources.

Our key investments must support:

- *Member Federations and their development activities;*
- *Organising Committees delivering ISSF competitions;*
- *Athletes;*
- *Education of the judges to ensure high level competition;*
- *Educational programs for federation officials, competition organisers, judges, coaches and athletes;*
- *Improving the international image and visibility of shooting;*
- *Modern technologies, sports science and education;*

MY COMMITMENT

I am ready to build a shooting sport that respects its traditions and welcomes new ideas.

By investing in innovation, visibility, education and international cooperation, we can improve competitions, support Member Federations and create new opportunities for our athletes and the wider shooting community.

As an athlete, I pursued ambitious goals and made my dreams come true. As a sports leader, I set high standards in management. I believe that together we will make the International Shooting Sport Federation a strong, respected, and modern organization with a strong voice in the Olympic family and the international sports movement - a federation that serves all of us and shapes the future.

Every shot counts.
Every moment matters.







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