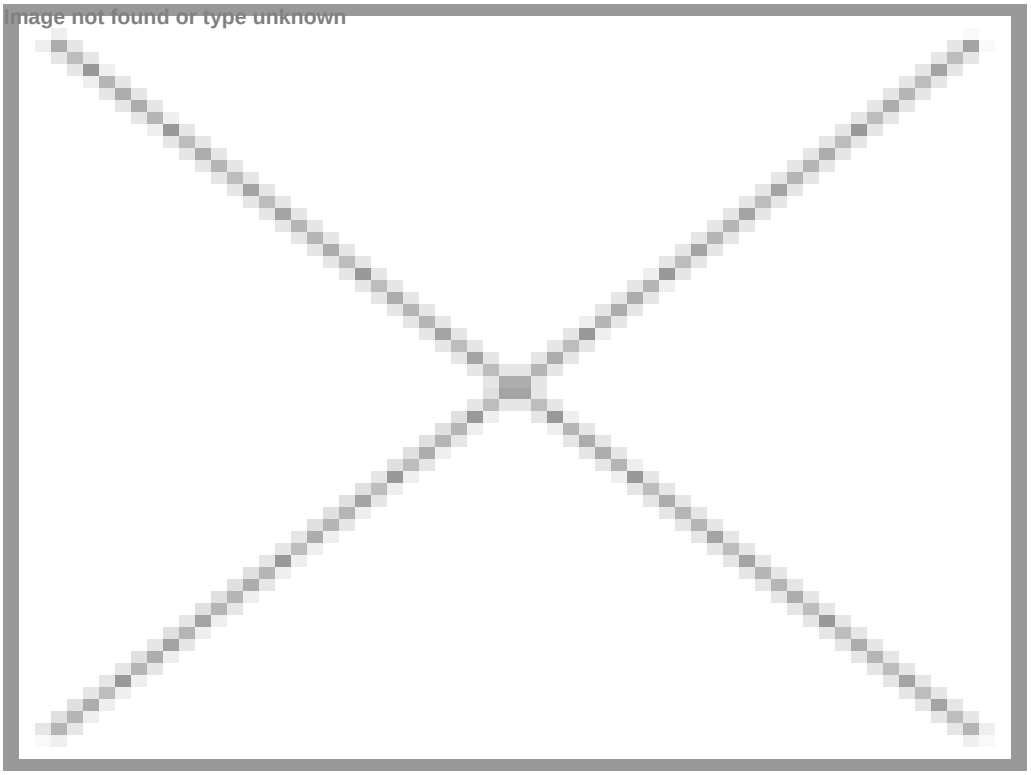
17 JUN 2025

PRESIDENT'S VIEW: ACTION IN BULGARIA AND CUBA UNDERLINES THAT WE ARE A THREE-VENUE SPORT



I previously wrote about the incredible job done by Hungary in showcasing the 'art of the possible' by hosting and promoting an indoor Pentathlon. We will see another example of this in August when **Kaunas, Lithuania** hosts the UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Championships in Europe's second-biggest basketball arena.

We are very excited and supercharged about the entertainment potential of indoor, and we have seen before how Pentathlon can draw a crowd in Lithuania – the 2018 Pentathlon World Cup Final for example.

We visited Kaunas in May to discuss and help promote our upcoming flagship event, and it's clear that the National Federation leaders Aistis Baronas and Justinas Kinderis, along with UIPM Coaches Committee Chair Paulius Aleksandravicius, are doing a great job.

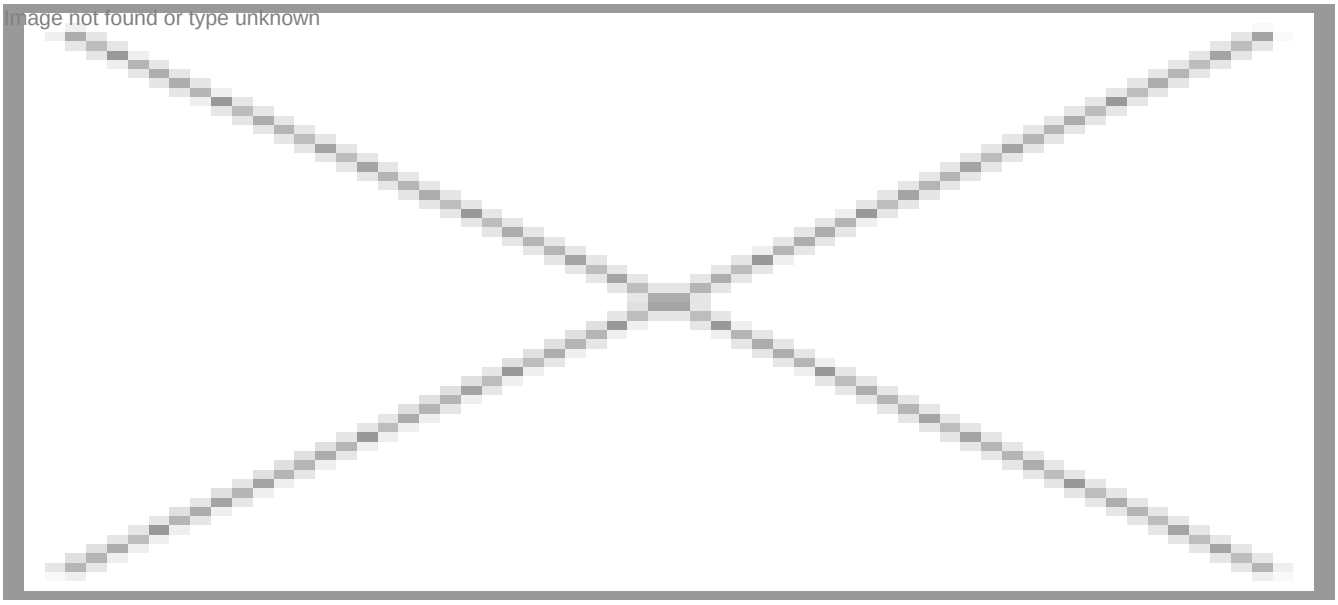
After Budapest, my next two competitions illustrated the point that we have more than one exciting venue / hosting solution for UIPM Sports today – we actually have three. Why is this important?

Because we can host Pentathlon everywhere in all conditions.

Next up was the Pentathlon World Cup in **Pazardzhik, Bulgaria**. The competition went well with only one day affected by rain. We have trusted long-term organisers in NF President Andrey Kuzmanov and Secretary General Kameliya Aleksandrova, and it was nice that the competition was visited by Petar Kulenski, Mayor of Pazardzhik, a sports enthusiast and former volleyball player.

After the new-look indoor solution that we saw piloted in Hungary, Bulgaria used the traditional Pentathlon Arena model, with all disciplines conducted in close proximity to each other within an established outdoor sports complex.

Finally, we have a third venue category solution, and it's what I like to call the iconic destination that offers endless exciting possibilities.

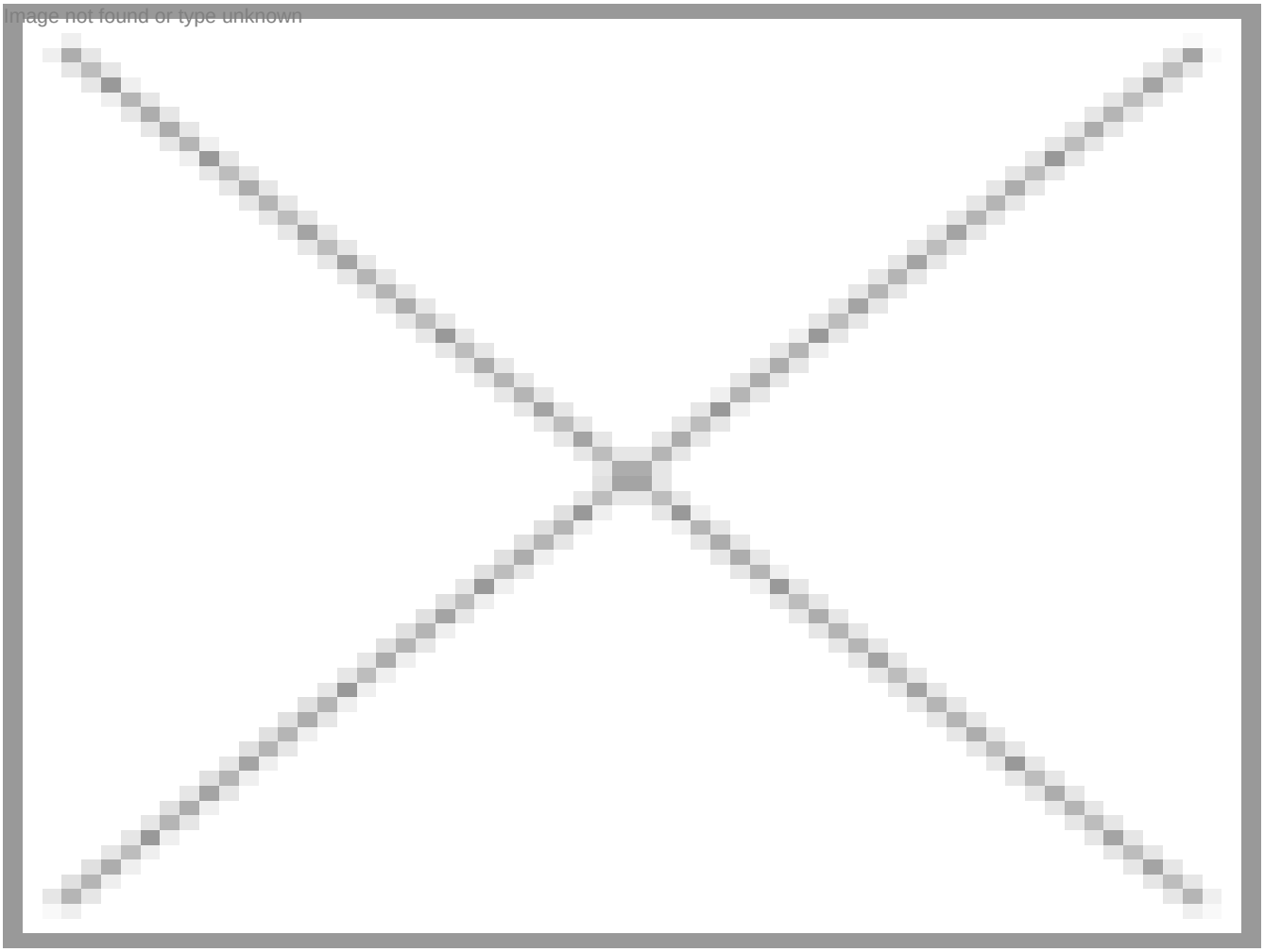


Anyone who has been to **Varadero, Cuba,** will confirm that it boasts one of the most beautiful, pristine and iconic beaches in the world. It was a privilege to be there for the Pentathlon, Obstacle Laser Run and Biathle event that energised the Pan American athlete community at the start of an American Olympic cycle.

Since the introduction of Laser Run, numerous improvements to our sport have made life easier for organisers and given them the flexibility to think creatively. The Obstacle course set up on Varadero Beach looked absolutely stunning, and of course the ocean was right there and our community is very familiar with beach venues as a solution for Laser Run, Biathle and Triathle. And, cleverly, Cuba achieved a first with Fencing bouts taking place under lights on a tennis court!

Cuba has a strong Pentathlon tradition dating back to Jose Ramon Fernandez, who was a leading figure in the Cuban Government under Fidel Castro and was President of both the Modern Pentathlon Federation and the National Olympic Committee. Jose passed away a couple of years ago in his 90s, but his legacy is strong.

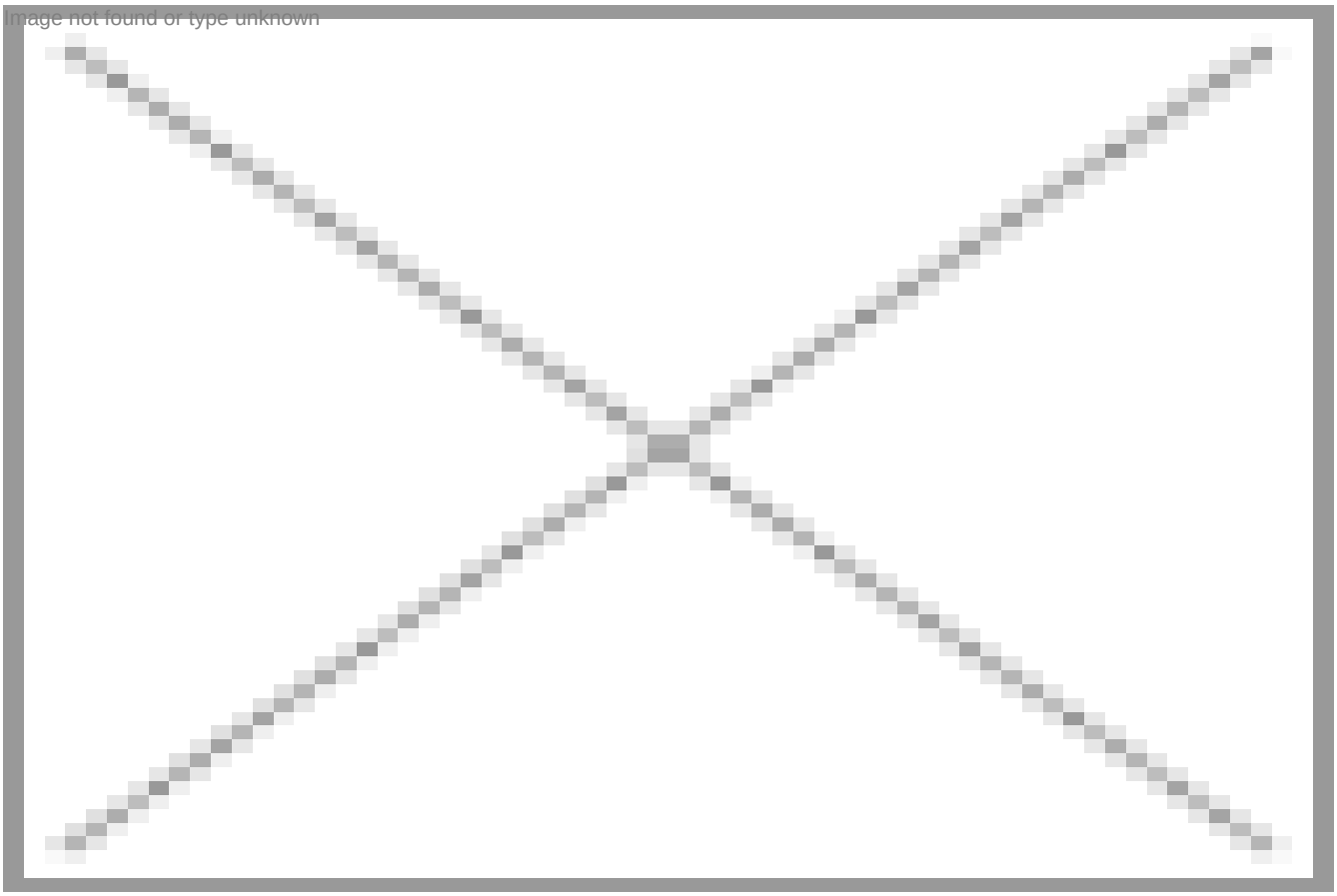
Besides the excellent competition, Genadijus Sokolovas (the Americas representative on the UIPM Coaches Committee) was in Varadero delivering coaching and training seminars in the evenings that were well attended. This competition propelled our Pan American nations towards LA28 and now it's a case of harnessing that momentum. I would encourage all members of our community to attend training camps and events in Cuba in the future – stay tuned!



From Havana I made the short trip to **Mexico City, Mexico** for some really encouraging meetings regarding the Pan Am Games. Mexico has been a strong player for many years, increasingly producing multiple athletes capable of winning at the highest level.

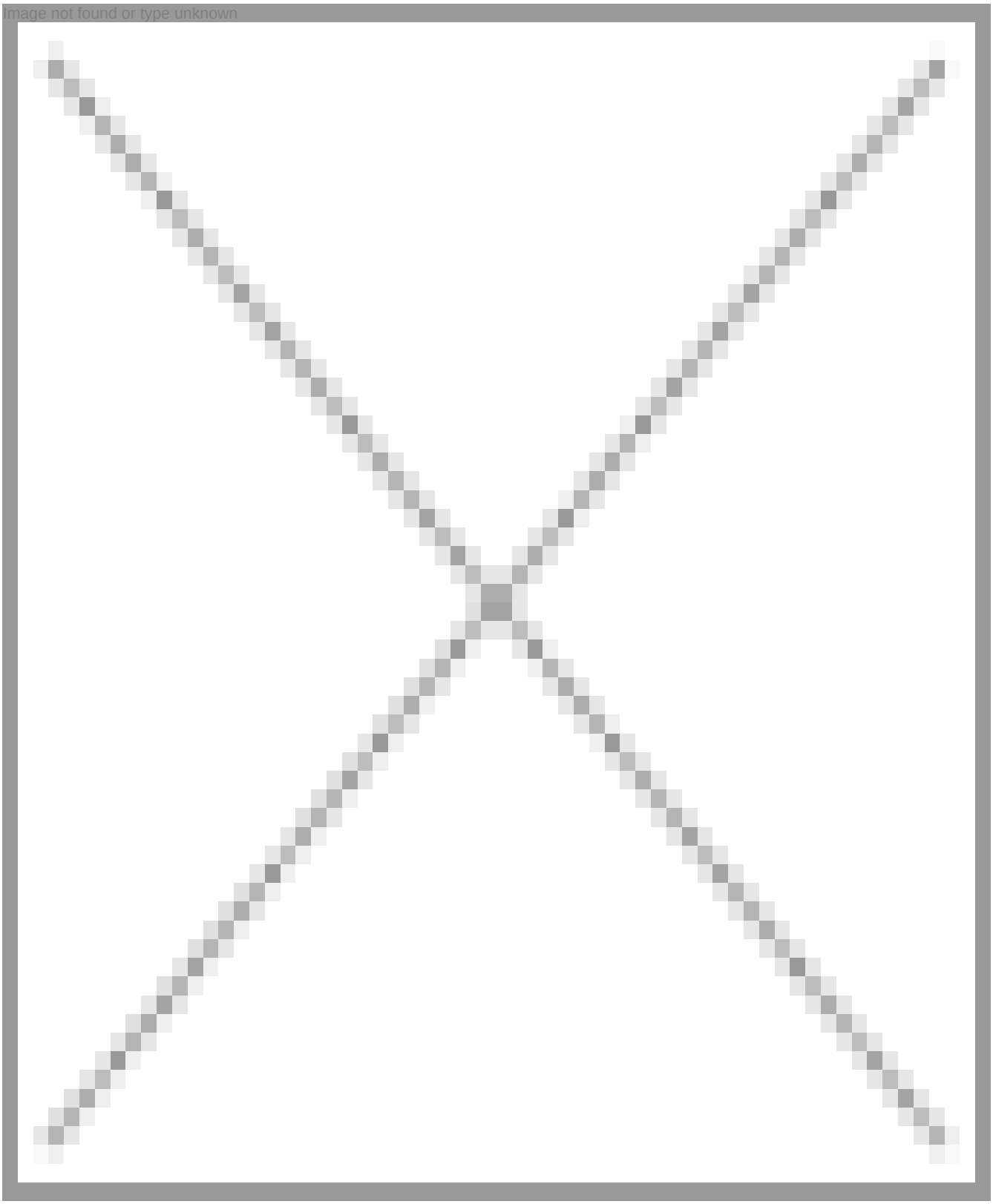
It’s especially important in the current cycle that we make the most of the proximity of the Olympic Games to the Americas, in terms of time zone and distance. Together with NF President Juan Manzo (former UIPM Vice President), I had very fruitful meetings with NOC President Maria Jose Alcala, as well as long-term Pentathlon friends like Ivar Sisniega and Horacio de la Vega and the Minister of Sport, Rommel Pacheco, regarding Mexico and our participation in the Pan Am Games.

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In support of our UIPM Vice President, Ana Irene Delgado, I had the opportunity to spend time in **Washington DC, USA,** attending a ‘Diplomacy Through Sport’ event that she organized at the headquarters of the Organization of American States – where Ana Irene serves as Panama’s representative.

The OAS has a very ornate building close to the Capitol, and there were Ambassadors from some 40 member states there. I was delighted to walk into this historic building on Washington Mall and, while guests were assembling, it was super to see a highlights video from Pentathlon World Cup Budapest playing on loop.



As Fencing is so close to my heart, it was enjoyable to watch a demonstration match between a team from USA and one from Italy. I was the only IF President in attendance, while the International Fencing Federation (FIE) was represented by its European Confederation President.

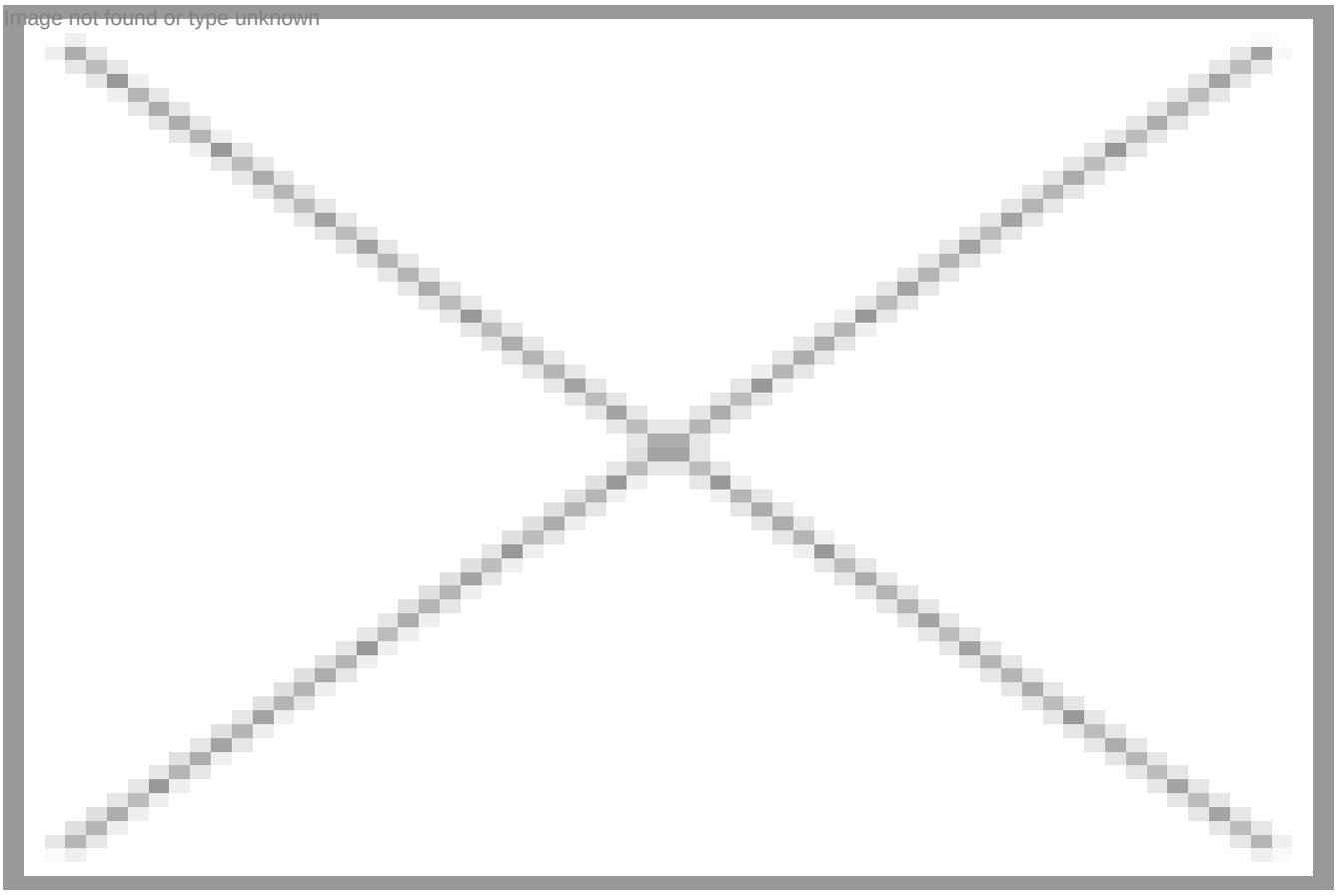
Another political and diplomatic commitment came up in early June with my first attendance as UIPM President at the ASOIF General Assembly in **Lausanne, Switzerland**. ASOIF is the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations and it's a crucial advocacy body for us as a Member IF.

Council members were elected and there were presentations from LA28 and Brisbane 2032, and I

was happy to hear their plans for the Games and for our sport. This trip provided an opportunity to interact with other IFs, and we received a lot of congratulations on the changes in our sport's format that have been implemented at elite level during this Pentathlon World Cup season.

Certainly there were feelings of transition about this event, with the legendary Lord Seb Coe stepping off the Council and newly-elected Members being welcomed in. The outgoing ASOIF President, Francesco Ricci Bitti, was deservedly recognised – Francesco is a strong supporter of Pentathlon too.

Kirsty Coventry, the IOC President-elect, addressed the Assembly and delivered objectives for IFs and stressed cooperation between the IOC and IFs. We enjoyed her speech and the message of unity was strong and clear.



Speaking of transitions, also in Lausanne we had a private meeting with the outgoing IOC President, Dr Thomas Bach, and Sport Director, Kit McConnell. It was very encouraging. We thanked the President for his years of service and for the interest he has taken in the success and development of our sport. The same goes for Kit, with whom we will continue to work in his new capacity as Brisbane 2032 Sport Director. We were introduced to the incoming IOC Sport Director, Pierre Ducrey, during the General Assembly and the relationship is strong. We have always been aligned with the goals of the IOC via Olympic Agendas 2020 and 2020+5.

As the ASOIF gathering coincided with the International Athletes' Forum (IAF), we were joined in Lausanne by IOC Member Aya Medany and Paris 2024 Olympic champion Ahmed Elgendy, and we had time to sit down and catch up with the current UIPM Athletes Committee Chair, Sam Curry. As an athlete-first federation, it's essential to make the most of any chance to connect with the athlete community, to listen and learn.

All in all, it felt very affirming to be in Lausanne, considered by many to be the Olympic capital of the world, surrounded by people who have a key stake in Pentathlon’s future.