

Press release

The 2011 IIHF World Championship

IIHF President René Fasel satisfied after Slovak inspection

IIHF president René Fasel performed the second part of his inspection visit in Slovakia on Wednesday afternoon.

Along with Slovak premier Robert Fico and Slovak ice hockey federation president Juraj Široký, Fasel inspected the reconstruction work at the Bratislava Ondrej Nepela stadium. "As an IIHF representative I am very glad that Slovakia – the Hockey country - has been allocated the organisational role for the 2011 World championship. *Having completed the inspection I can state that the national federation in cooperation with the government is able to complete this arena to allow it to be fully prepared for next year's championship.*" Said René Fasel at the short briefing, he went on to say: "In the past we have come up against situations where the organisers have finished the stadiums at the last minute – be it in St. Petersburg with the Chodkyna hall in Moscow or in Riga. *In the Czech republic we had to postpone the championship by a full year. In Slovakia's case I have been convinced from the offset that everything will be OK. An excellent championship awaits us next year. I am sure that Slovakia can handle it.*"

SIHF president Juraj Široký was also satisfied. "I think that without the World Championship it would be very hard for us to have a hall of this nature. On behalf of SIHF I guarantee that the 2011 World Championship will be organised to the kind of level that Slovakia can be proud of. I believe that in just under a year's time we will be standing in front of a completed, full hall, eagerly awaiting Championship games." Stated the head of Slovak hockey.

Alongside Fasel and Široký, Slovak premier Robert Fico made no secret of his satisfaction with the works progress at the stadium, in which the domestic extra league team Slovan Bratislava will find a new home. "I'm convinced that all the obligations Slovakia has undertaken will be fulfilled to the letter. In spite of the fact that Slovakia – just like other countries – is in the midst of a deep financial crisis, so therefore I am very happy that we have adopted the decision to financially support this important reconstruction. It's a generally known fact that a sum of approximately 61 million Euros has been set aside from the state budget for the work on this hockey stadium. At peak times, some 250 to 370 people will be employed here. I have to admit that the significance does not merely apply to hockey fans - who I support and trust, but will harvest further successes for Slovakia and its economy. As I have been informed, everything is going according to plan. We are all looking forward to the moment the stadium is finished so we can all come here to shout 'go for it Slovakia!' "declared Fico whilst standing directly on the future Ondrej Nepela rink. On Tuesday René Fasel visited the second setting for next year's event - MS Košice The IIHF boss went to check out the Košice Steel Arena and infrastructure in the Eastern metropolis. "I was pleasantly surprised with the Košice hall. I like it a lot and I think its totally appropriate for the tournament. I think that the atmosphere is going to be fantastic. The players will have great conditions here. Even though the home team will not be playing here, fans can look forward to seeing Canada, the USA, Sweden and Switzerland. I'm convinced that the championship is going to be played out at the highest level," said René Fasel after the inspection of the Košice hall, and went on to say: "The large dressing rooms interested me the most in the Steel arena. I've been through a number of championships – but I've never seen this amount and size of dressing rooms."

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