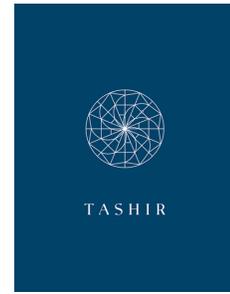


WORLD CHESS
THE BEST MIND WINS



PRESS RELEASE

World Chess Candidates Tournament to take place in Moscow's Historic Central Telegraph from March 11 to 29, 2016

The Qualifier for the World Chess Championship Match To Go Digital in the multifunctional technological hub DI Telegraph

January 28, Moscow, Russia – The FIDE World Chess Candidates Tournament 2016 will take place in Moscow's digital hub, the DI Telegraph space in the historic Central Telegraph building from March 11 to 29, 2016. Eight of the world's top grandmasters will compete for a chance to face the reigning World Champion Magnus Carlsen later this year. The €420,000 prize fund is also at stake. Tashir Group is the general partner of the Tournament.

The Candidates Tournament, considered one of the most important and grueling in the sport, will be played over 14 rounds and will feature GMs from six countries: Sergey Karjakin and Peter Svidler (Russia), Hikaru Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana (the USA), Viswanathan Anand (India), Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria), Levon Aronian (Armenia) and Anish Giri (the Netherlands).

The event is organized by Agon Limited, owner of the WORLD CHESS brand as well as the owner of commercial rights to the FIDE Chess Championship cycle. The tournament's general partner is Tashir Group, Russia's largest diversified industrial holding as well as one of the largest developers in the country. The event is also supported by the Russian Chess Federation.

The choice of the Central Telegraph building, Moscow's digital hub that is home to many of Russia's tech start-ups, as the Tournament venue is indicative of the organizers' ambitions for the World Chess Championship cycle events and plans for taking chess digital, enriching the experience of tens of million of people who follow the game online.

"Tashir Group traditionally supports major international chess events and this year is not an exception. We are thrilled to be the World Chess Candidates Tournament general partner and to bring this very exciting event to Moscow to the delight of many chess enthusiasts. We also hope this will increase popularity of chess in Russia", says Zara Agemian, head of marketing and communications for Tashir Group.

“The sport went through a swift transformation: from an elite club game that it was mere 15 years ago it became one of the most popular games ever, with over a billion downloads on smartphones, millions of people from all over the world playing online every second and kids learning chess in schools. The sport turned out to fit perfectly to the age of smartphones, and we are delighted to host the tournament at the venue that represents digital culture”, says Ilya Merenzon, head of WORLD CHESS.

VIP Program at the Tournament

The Candidates Tournament is not only a major sporting event, but also a platform for business leaders, international political establishment and thought leaders to meet and connect. The curated VIP program will take place during the whole duration of the Tournament.

Beluga Noble Russian Vodka is the Candidates VIP program partner. The brand will introduce its inaugural line of bitters, Hunting by Beluga.

The VIP program will be launched on March 10 with the World Chess Candidates Tournament gala opening event at the Moscow’s Pashkov House. Serzh Sargsyan, the president of Armenia, will be the guest of honor at the event.

A VIP lounge will be set up at the venue for hosting special events, such as tournaments between grandmasters and businesspeople, politicians and famous athletes, as well as meetings and special hospitality events. Beluga Hunting bitters will be a perfect addition to the VIP lounge set up that is being designed by the leading Moscow architects.

On March 29, there will be a closing ceremony of the Tournament and an award ceremony for the winner who will face the World Chess Champion Magnus Carlsen in the US in November of 2016.

Public program

The World Chess Candidates Tournament will be accompanied by a city-wide public program for both children and adults that will serve popularization of chess and celebrating the sport in Moscow, the city that is one of the world’s chess capitals.

About FIDE:

The World Chess Federation or Fédération Internationale des Echecs, (FIDE), is recognised by its members and the International Olympic Committee as the international federation in the domain of chess, the supreme body responsible for the sport of chess and its Championships. FIDE has the sole rights to organise the World Chess Championships and the Chess Olympiads.

About Agon Limited:

Agon Limited is the official partner of World Chess Federation (FIDE) and owner the WORLD CHESS brand as well as of commercial rights to the World Chess Championship cycle. The company aims to develop and commercialize chess, create favorable environment for partners, players, and brands, and to significantly expand the broadcast coverage of the sport.

Agon Limited became owner of commercial rights in 2012. The company successfully managed the 2012-2013 Grand Prix cycle, the 2014 World Championship Match, and the 2015 Rapid and Blitz World Championships. The company operates **worldchess.com** website that is the official broadcasting platform of the Championship cycle.

About Tashir Group:

Tashir is a diversified industrial holding founded in 1999 and comprised of over 200 companies in various sectors of Russian economy, including construction, manufacturing, finance, energy, development, and retail. The company employs over 45,000 people and has offices in over 25 cities in Russia and former USSR countries. ‘Tashir Group’s founder and president is Samvel Karapetyan. The company is headquartered in Moscow.

Tashir Group’s primary business focus is development and management of commercial real estate projects, including retail. Tashir is a leading developer in Russia and has built over 2.5 million square meters of commercial and residential real estate.

About Beluga Hunting bitters:

Beluga Russian Noble Vodka, which is admired all over the world, will showcase its brand-new product at the Tournament – a line of bitters, Hunting by Beluga, which includes Beluga Hunting Herbal and Beluga Hunting Berry. It is made on Mariinsk Distillery (founded in 1900), in Siberia. The line of bitters was inspired by hunting lifestyle and its traditions – one of the most favorite leisure activities for the nobility — just like chess, a game favored by the elite throughout the ages.

Official Hotel of the World Chess Candidates Tournament:

Four Seasons Hotel Moscow is the official hotel for the tournament. The Four Seasons, located in the building that once was the legendary hotel 'Moskva', is a unique combination of historic heritage and contemporary design with amazing views onto the main Moscow attractions — the Kremlin, Red Square, St. Basil Cathedral, Bolshoi Theatre and more. The hotel features 180 luxury rooms and suites, a selection of restaurants, a chic bar and the luxurious Amnis Spa.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Maria Yassakova
Communications Manager, World Chess
yassakova@agonlimited.com
media@agonlimited.com
+7 968 718 84 14