Address by Prime Minister Jüri Ratas at the opening of the headquarters of the World Draughts Federation

Esteemed presidents of the World Draughts Federation
and Estonian Draughts Federation
and fans of mind sports,

It is my great honour and my great pleasure to be attending the opening of the new headquarters of the World Draughts Federation here in the Paul Keres Chess House in Tallinn, which has been the beating heart of Estonian draughts for more than 30 years.

I would like to recognise and thank the federation's current president, Janek Mäggi, and his predecessor Harry Otten for their many years of support and hard work leading to such an achievement. I would also like to thank the Estonian Draughts Federation and all fans of the sport who have contributed to its success. I would also especially like to thank Pirita Sports Centre director Aavo Aunroos, whose dedication to sport generally and whose support for draughts in particular are equally impressive.

In mind sports, Estonians have made a name for themselves over the years as both competitors and event organisers. Estonia is a well-known country in draughts circles: one or two tournaments are held in Tallinn every year, and in the last decade we have organised more international championships than any other country. The headquarters of the European Draughts Confederation were also based here from 2007-2017.

Entrusting the management of the world's mind sports to Estonia stands as recognition of all that has been done so far and is a major win for Estonian draughts. It is also a fitting gift for our republic just days before it celebrates its centenary.

Only last year, on the 1st of October, I had the honour of being part of the opening of the Draughts World Championships at the Euroopa Hotel and meeting many of the game's greatest players and exponents. Today I am very pleased to be able to say that the bold plans and ideas that were discussed at that event have become reality. The World Draughts Federation is now being led by an Estonian and its headquarters have relocated to Tallinn for the next four years.
These are achievements of which we can truly be proud, and for which we can truly be grateful.
Thank you all!