



*Dear Ingmar and Sabina*

*Sadly, the whole world has now witnessed issues of welfare and terrible cruelty within our wonderful sport. We all find this heartbreaking, but it is a “wake up call” for the vulnerability we now face from our respective stakeholder positions and, of course, for the sport as a whole.*

*It is correct that cruel practice is exposed, and the influence of social media makes this immediate. By the same token, social media exacerbates negative influence, and it needs to be turned to a positive. The reality is that our sport has now been put at serious risk; the behaviour of the minority has been a gift to the critics of our sport. It has offended any decent human being with love and respect for animals as living creatures. They come first; not the ego of individuals or money. The perception of the sport has been damaged and we need to make a joined-up concerted effort to remedy it.*

*The risk is so significant that it could jeopardise the perception of Dressage and Para dressage as an Olympic discipline and its future within the Olympic movement could be finished if we do not take care. It is one thing to be thrown out of the Olympics to make room for new sports to be included; but quite another to be thrown out for perceived cruelty and inappropriate conduct.*

*As stakeholders, we are united in our wish, and request, that the FEI exploits every potential avenue at its disposal to influence and remedy the current situation, and that it is seen by the world to be doing so.*

*The practicalities of appropriate jurisdiction of authority outside the competition environment needs to be overcome so that the influence of the FEI, as world governing body, has teeth and that it bites. There are enough lawyers with good experience and talent to find a way.*

*We hope the FEI can bring influence over individual countries who are members and push for measured and appropriate law enforcement at local country level where jurisdiction exists and legal action can be brought.*

*The sport, and all of us, will be judged by the perception of the outside world of what our governing body does - inside the arena, outside the arena and in day-to-day training.*

*We all unite to support the FEI and its initiatives and confirm our desire and expectation of working with you to make a terrible situation better as quickly as possible and as effectively as we can make it.*

*Best regards,*

*David Hunt  
President IDTC*

*Isabell Werth  
President IDRC*

*Hans-Christian Matthiesen  
President IDOC*