

## **THE MOST QUALIFIED TEAM TO LEAD EUROPEAN CHESS**

*Interview with Mr. Almog Burstein, Treasurer on Silvio Danailov's ticket in the forthcoming ECU elections.*

### **How did you become a member of Silvio Danailov's ticket?**

It is very simple. Three months ago I was invited by Silvio Danailov to join his ticket. So, after reading the program and seeing who the other candidates on his ticket are, it took me less than 24 hours to give him a positive answer.

### **What did you like in the ticket?**

The people as well as the plans. Everyone knows Silvio Danailov's contribution to chess for many years, and I am sure he will be an excellent successor to Boris Kutin as ECU President. Tomasz and Ion, our candidates for Deputy President and Vice President respectively, are also very well experienced people with high chess, business and organizational abilities. And Sava, who is going to be the Chief Arbiter of the coming Olympiad, is our ultimate candidate for General Secretary of the ECU! All of us represent very active federations with a long chess tradition that have been organizing for so many years many important tournaments such as Olympiads, World Championships and European Championships.

### **And what about you? What is your contribution to the ticket?**

Look, I have been involved in international chess life for almost 40 years! As early as 1976 I was Deputy Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Haifa Chess Olympiad, which was the first Olympiad to use a computer and to be run according to the Swiss System. Nine times - more than anyone else in the world - I was a member of the Olympiad Pairings Committee, and since 1994 the Chess Olympiads were run according to the Burstein System which I developed. Fifteen years ago I was a member of FIDE Central Committee and since 2004 I have been the Delegate of Israel to FIDE and ECU.

### **So, why Treasurer?**

First of all, I am an economist and accountant by profession, being, among other posts, the Finance Director of the Faculty of Medicine at the Tel Aviv University. Secondly, I was involved in the Israeli political life for 12 years and held public positions such as Chairman of the Hod Hasharon (my hometown) Worker Council, CEO of Shinui (the Liberal Party of Israel) and Deputy Mayor of Hod Hasharon in charge of finance. Thirdly, I am a publisher of textbooks and the Business Development Director of Bookware Ltd. – the company which has developed the first Hebrew electronic book. So, I am sure I am capable of being the ECU Treasurer in particular and Board Member in general.

**By the way, do you also *play* chess?**

Of course. I like to play and may say that I am quite successful as an amateur player. In simultaneous exhibitions held in Jerusalem I drew against World Champion Garry Kasparov (in 1996) and won against the world's best woman player, Judit Polgar (in 2005). In 2007 I won the title of Deputy World Amateur Champion and got a FIDE rating of 2100!

**Will your team win the elections?**

I sincerely think so. With all due respect to the other teams, I think ours is the best and the most qualified to lead European chess for the next four years.

**Thank you.**

You are welcome.