

The President

FFME General Assembly

Paris, 11 April 2026

Madame President, dear Sandra, dear delegates, dear friends of the French Federation of Mountaineering and Climbing,

I would like to thank you most sincerely for the invitation to take part in your General Assembly. It is an honour and a genuine pleasure to be here with you.

Today, more than ever, it is essential for us to meet, to listen to one another, and to engage in dialogue. We are living in profoundly complex times.

Respect and inclusion sometimes seem in danger of becoming empty words, while violence, destruction, and war too often take centre stage.

Let us never forget that every child who is killed is always—without exception—one too many. Every child who dies is a symbol of humanity's failure and of a society unable to protect its children, regardless of religion, origin, or passport.

In the face of this bleak reality, we—women and men of sport—have a responsibility: to nurture hope for a better world.

Sport must remain a space in which we believe in building connections, a space for peaceful confrontation, growth, respect, and dignity. A space where fundamental values are protected, as well as those who embody them: our athletes.

Let us show that there are still places where we can grow together in peace. Let us turn differences of culture, opinion, and background into a source of richness rather than an obstacle.

Many of our countries are today directly or indirectly affected by conflicts. Political and media pressures are constant, and we feel their consequences. That is why we must firmly defend the independence and neutrality of sport.

Is this difficult? Yes.

Is it sometimes perceived as a mission impossible? Perhaps.

But let us remember: was it also not considered a mission impossible to enter the Olympic Games? The Paralympic Games? And yet, we succeeded. Together.

We also succeeded thanks to you, thanks to the FFME, thanks to the quality of your leaders, your volunteers, and your events.

The President

France has played—and continues to play—an essential role in the history and development of our sport. The quality of its organisations is internationally recognised, and I would like to highlight a recent example: the excellence demonstrated by Laval, which was honoured this year with the World Climbing Sustainability Award for the organisation of the 2025 Para Climbing World Cup, in recognition of an exemplary commitment to sustainability.

I also cannot fail to mention your athletes, your champions, who have inspired entire generations and continue to write history.

And allow me as well to congratulate the French Olympic champions in ski mountaineering, who recently won historic medals at the Milan–Cortina Games.

I would also like to say a word about governance.

Seeing a woman at the head of the FFME today is a strong signal. A most welcome signal.

“Equal opportunities” must not remain mere intentions—they must become realities. And today, they are.

In conclusion, I must tell you that I always feel at home in Paris.

Forty years ago, I was already climbing in Fontainebleau. The world has changed, society has changed, climbing has changed.

But our spirit has not changed.

Our values have not changed.

Our ability to believe that sport—and climbing—can make society better has not changed.

This is the message we must continue to carry forward, together, with clarity, courage, and responsibility.

Thank you.

Marco Sclaris

World Climbing President