



January 31, 2012

Dr. Jacques Rogge, President
International Olympic Committee
Chateau de Vidy
Case postale 356
1001 Lausanne
Switzerland

Dear Excellency:

Our Federation has written to your Excellency on numerous occasions to seek correction of the injustice caused to our Federation and its activity by the WKF and IOC. As well, we have written to your Sports Director, Mr. Christophe Dubi with limited success to address these same concerns and issues.

The history of unification between the International Traditional Karate Federation (ITKF) and the ex-World Union of Karate-do Organizations (ex-WUKO) - now renamed World Karate Federation (WKF) - is well documented. Consequently, we fail to understand why the IOC continues to participate in the genocide of our activity and sport – the Traditional Karate discipline represented by the International Traditional Karate Federation.

The IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport formally determined in 1986 that two distinct disciplines of karate existed. In fact, their findings go further and define the Traditional Karate discipline as that which is governed by the ITKF. Indeed, the 101st Session of the IOC ratified their findings and recommendations. Still, each time we have written to the IOC for justice, that is to recognize and support their own Court's decision – we have been dismissed and informed that the WKF is the only International Federation for karate recognized by the IOC. Yet this decision of recognition was based on a unilateral decision of former IOC President Antonio Samaranch made in 1998 and supported the following year by the IOC Congress (1999) when the issue was still, once again, before the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport. Thirteen years have passed since that time and the IOC has continued to ignore our repeated requests for correction. Rather, the IOC through its complacency has allowed the WKF to systematically attack and undermine the very existence of ITKF and unilaterally adopt a position of unfounded authority by claiming to represent all karate. In essence, this is nothing more than an active attempt at genocide of our activity.

More concerning is the role the IOC has played in this attempt. Nations around the world look to the IOC for clarification. Government funding and sports sponsorship is structured largely around the decisions of the IOC. Consequently, when Sports Ministers from around the world have sought clarification, the IOC has systematically ignored the decision of its own Court of Arbitration that determined and defined the two disciplines of karate and more specifically identified Traditional Karate as that governed by the ITKF. Instead, the IOC has acted as though the ITKF does not exist telling National Sports Ministers that there is only one kind of karate – that of WKF. However unintentional this may be, it has caused great financial damage and organizational harm to our Federation, its Member Nations and participants world-wide. After many years and a long and uphill battle, Sports Ministers are beginning to understand the fallacy of this notion and have begun to recognize ITKF independently of WKF. But this is a completely unnecessary battle the ITKF has been forced to fight.

Of equal confusion and concern is the fact that the acronym of WKF was the name given to a proposed merger organization between ITKF and ex-WUKO by the former Chairman of the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport, Judge Keba Mbaye and the previous Director General of the IOC and Secretary to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, Maitre Francois Carrard. In fact, it is clearly stated in documents distributed by the IOC Court of



Arbitration for Sport that WKF is defined as a merger organization between ITKF and WUKO. Where is the merger?

Without a doubt the ITKF has a right of recognition by IOC – whether independently, or through unification with WKF. The systematic destruction of our activity is unconscionable. We do not see the complacent role played by IOC in this destruction as being positive, particularly given its role as a significant sports leader in the world.

Rules of Competition define the activity and the objectives therein. The rules of WKF do not resemble the martial art of Traditional Karate in any way. This was proven to the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport and was the underlying reason the Court determined there are two disciplines of karate. That has not changed. In fact, the competition of WKF more closely resembles that of Tae Kwon-do, Kick Boxing or a number of other activities that have International Federations recognized separately by IOC. Furthermore, Executives of the WKF in the past have publicly stated (Black Belt Magazine) that anyone from any martial art is able to compete under WKF rules. Why then, is WKF accorded separate recognition from other IFs representing similar activities – or conversely, why are other IFs (who can participate under WKF rules) given this recognition by IOC? Yet, the IOC does not grant the same privilege of recognition to ITKF which was clearly defined by the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport as governing a distinct discipline of karate.

This is not a theoretical position of ITKF – but reality. In my home country of Canada, I have witnessed personally the persecution of WKF which systematically purged all Traditional Karate Athletes from the National Federation recognized and funded by Sport Canada. This took place in 1995 wherein all ITKF athletes could no longer be members of the provincial or federally recognized Sport Governing Bodies. They were unceremoniously purged from the organization. To this day, no ITKF athlete is allowed to participate within an “umbrella” provincial or federal Sport Governing Body associated with WKF within Canada. Yet, at the time, I was the author of the first Technical Manual used nationally to certify coaches for karate approved by Sport Canada. This manual was later usurped by the WKF National Federation and used by them until recently. My suspension from the WKF National Federation was based entirely on my affiliation and participation in ITKF events. At the time, I was Vice President of the National Federation that suspended me for my lifetime because of my ITKF affiliation. Obviously, they do not represent all karate. We have passed documents demonstrating this genocide by WKF to IOC – but there has been no response to date.

Similar situations prevail throughout the world. Most recently, we forwarded to you a copy of a document from the General Secretary of WKF calling for the “purging” of ITKF from the WKF’s National Federation in Israel. This document was dated 2011. Yet, the IOC remains silent. We have sent communication of copyright infringement by WKF (2009) on our Rules of Competition. Both organizations presented their respective rules to the Court of Arbitration in 1986. These determined the Court’s decision and defined the two disciplines of karate by the Court. Still the IOC does nothing.

Recently, we have approached the newly formed Sport Accord to acquire membership and participate as a non-Olympic sport. However, we have been told that WKF is the member organization and we cannot be allowed membership without WKF approval. Again, this injustice is based on the foundation of the IOC decision which granted unilateral recognition without regard for its own Court of Arbitration decision, or without respect to the ITKF as the sport governing body of Traditional Karate as defined by this same IOC Court.

It is shameful that the IOC Charter speaks to the right of athletes to participate in the sport of their choice yet the IOC ignores the rights of Traditional Karate athletes despite the fact that their own Court of Arbitration defined two disciplines of karate – one of those governed by ITKF. How can such blatant disregard continue to occur within such a revered organization such as IOC? It certainly cannot be on the basis of honesty and fairness.



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Having two separate disciplines of an activity sharing similar names is not a new concept within the structure of IOC. To provide one of many examples, Beach Volleyball and the Classic game of Volleyball both co-exist without issue. More importantly, the IOC does not require Classic Volleyball to compete under the rules of competition of Beach Volleyball in order to achieve recognition within the sport structure of IOC. Why has the IOC made it so different for the two disciplines of karate competition?

Now, the IOC is proposing to further block our existence by considering to recognize only the competition rules of WKF in its 2013 vote to consider new sports in the Olympic Programme. This is a preposterous notion as it completely defies the decision of the IOC recognizing two disciplines of karate competition. We once again must appeal to your sense of justice to correct this wrong. As stated, the recognition of only WKF was based on a unilateral decision of former IOC President A. Samaranch. Documents prove this was completely contrary to the principle and process of fairness approved and supported by the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The IOC Congress takes direction from its Executive Board recommendations – which are often based on recommendations from the IOC President. Certainly, this is how the unification process for karate was derailed in 1999 and the ITKF left to flounder when the WKF was unilaterally recognized outside this agreed process. We ask you once again to right this wrong. What we ask for is simple, that IOC recognizes the discipline of Traditional Karate as defined by its own Court of Arbitration for sport. That is, the International Federation recognized as governing the discipline of Traditional Karate competition. This will allow ITKF to take its rightful place within the organized structure of IOC and will preserve the right of athletes to choose the competition of Traditional Karate as their chosen sport. We are asking for no more than what is rightfully ours as determined by the IOC Court of Arbitration for Sport in 1986 and ratified by the 101st Congress of IOC. This will allow hundreds of thousands of participants around the world to pursue their chosen sport in peace.

Since your election as IOC President, we have provided you with countless copies of the documents that support the ITKF claims of injustice. The documentation provided also proves that ITKF – not WKF, signed the Unification Constitution in the process supported and encouraged by IOC. (A letter from the Joint Working Committee Mediator was sent to the IOC President of the day, Antonio Samaranch). Yet, WKF is the organization that has been rewarded with IF recognition status, representing only one of the karate disciplines of competition. That remains a strange outcome of a process and commitments established and deemed absolute by the IOC itself.

I look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

Richard Jorgensen, Chairman
International Traditional Karate Federation

C.c. IOC Executive Board
NOC Presidents and National Sport Ministers
Christophe Dubi, IOC Sports Director
Christophe de Kepper, IOC Director General
Howard Stupp, IOC Director of Legal Affairs
ITKF Member Federations
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