



ITF ARGENTINE TAEKWON-DO CONFEDERATION

Buenos Aires, July 30 of 2024.

To the entire ITF Taekwon-Do community,

In my capacity as president of the ITF Argentine Taekwon-Do Confederation (CATITF), I wish to express the concern of our institution to the entire community of ITF Taekwon-Do, a sporting discipline that was introduced into the Argentine Republic in 1967 by the Grand Masters Han Chang Kim, Nam Sung Choi and Kwang Duk Chung and that is now experiencing the most profound identity crisis in its entire history.

Let us review some of its background.

This delicate situation is due to the fact that the National Institute of Industrial Property (or **INPI**) registered the historical emblems of ITF Taekwon-Do as a trademark, on May 4 of 2022, to be owned by the International Federation based in Vienna, an entity that belongs to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, a fact that is publicly known. At that time, the INPI did not consider or simply ignored the implications of granting ownership of the sporting name to the mentioned applicant. In other words, the INPI gave this sports brand to the ITF of North Korea, a country with which the Argentine Republic has no diplomatic, political, commercial, cultural, artistic, sporting or institutional exchange, without consulting the higher sports authorities in our country first. This decision collides with the current regulations and laws regarding the institutional sports system in Argentina. Furthermore, the INPI has not contemplated that the two awarded emblems are used without restrictions by multiple institutions that coexist peacefully and freely within this discipline throughout the Argentine Republic, one that has been carried out by thousands of Masters, Instructors and Teachers for more than five decades, thus deliberately damaging the positioning of one of the self-sustained, non-Olympic and most practiced sports in our country.



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On February 21 of 2024, Federal Civil and Commercial Court No. 6 granted a precautionary measure in reference to said INPI-granted trademarks.

The bad faith and the abuse revealed by the “legal representatives” of the ITF based in Vienna (North Korea) through an avalanche of legal letters sent to Municipalities, Sports Secretaries, Institutions, Masters and Instructors, demanding the cessation of the activity, trying to prohibit the development of sporting events, classes, exams, seminars, tournaments, radio productions, television programs, etcetera, to pursue a single harmful objective, both economic and commercial, linked to the ITF of Vienna (North Korea), which has generated a grave structural and economic damage to the sporting development of our discipline.

I will not waste your time, or mine, to answer to the nonsense published through “official communications” by *atftaekwondo.official*, who deceptively attempt to claim the status of official entity.

However, these –I believe- are considerations worthy of noting down.

The information is distorted and the data is inaccurate. The word Taekwon-Do is incorrectly spelled and the entire story is a vulgar attempt to obtain an economic profit at the expense of harming the entire ITF Taekwon-Do community in Argentina. It is in every sense an obvious manipulation aiming at showing themselves as the official entity of the sport.

Moreover, their apparently innocent “official” content has nothing to do with the reckless and abusive legal letters sent by the representatives.

The ITF based in Vienna are devotees of a dictatorial regime, with which they agree politically, and they intend to install a network to extract resources from our country.

North Korea is trying to steal the ITF concept and to show itself through its presence in Vienna as an International Sports Federation.

But the reality is completely different.



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The purpose of the Vienna headquarters is starting to come to light, as published in different media, a network of espionage and covert operations that the regime strategically uses through the ITF in that Austrian city to gather representatives from different countries, obtain allies and resources, so as to support their disastrous dictatorial and armament policies.

<https://www.diepresse.com/18656012/nordkoreas-taekwondo-agentennetz-in-wien>

<https://www.vindobona.org/article/north-korean-agents-in-vienna-a-network-of-espionage-and-currency-procurement>

North Korea, the birthplace of Taekwon-Do?

Nothing is further from the truth. History speaks for itself; ITF Taekwon-Do entered North Korea in 1981 and, by then, Argentina was already showing a superlative development of the discipline. An example of this is that the Third ITF Taekwon-Do World Cup was held in our country, in the city of Resistencia, province of Chaco, in 1981.

The first division of the International Federation occurs in a process that begins at the Rimini Congress in July of 2001.

It was exclusively due to the fact that some members of the entity's Board of Directors were not willing to collaborate with the North Korean regime. For my part, as sports director since 1997, I was an eyewitness of what was happening at the ITF headquarters in Vienna (a time when the International Federation was one undivided organization worldwide).

I shared with General Choi –Master Choi- and other leaders the vision and the general management of the institution, but we were not willing to follow the North Korean regime.

The Vienna-based ITF headquarters offered no other alternative, because the entity was completely controlled by North Korea.

For that reason and no other, we decided to look for a new setting for the headquarters of the International Federation.



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The division occurred due to different circumstances.

The then Master Choi Jung Hwa, son of the founder of Taekwon-Do, was elected president unanimously. Adding to this, the serious illness of General Choi resulted in our organization losing control, while North Korea kept exerting pressure in its escalation to dominate the ITF.

After the death of General Choi in June 2002, a new division emerged. Those who had decided to accompany General Choi after the first fragmentation understood that nothing could be done in the ITF in Vienna outside of North Korea and, thus, the ITF became an entity made up of three perfectly divided fractions: the two majority groups that opposed the regime and a small fraction that chose to negotiate agreements with North Korea.

The current situation.

The Argentine justice system will have the last word regarding the precautionary measure, the several criminal complaints and the main trial that is being carried out in the Federal Civil and Commercial Court No. 3, where it must resolve if the ITF shield (image No. 1), designed for the International Federation in 1965:



and the tree logo (image No. 2), designed in 1980 to be incorporated in the back of the Dobok



are an inseparable part of ITF Taekwon-Do, a sporting, cultural and intangible heritage of humanity, or whether these belong to the ITF in Vienna, which represents only North Korea.



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We must not give up the fight; let us defend our rights, our history and our identity, and protect the institutions, masters, instructors and teachers from this brutal attack to the heart of this martial art, to the sport and to our identity.

Let us be united; let us become aware of the seriousness of this situation, and let us act accordingly, by defending our rights and by stating our arguments clearly and truthfully.

Let us raise the VOICE of ITF Taekwon-Do by focusing on being coherent: may our actions always agree with our words.

Taekwon,

GM Néstor Galarraga

President

ITF Argentine Taekwon-Do Confederation