



July 25, 2011

Dear National Team Members and the Canadian Taekwondo Community;

I hope this message finds everyone well. In light of recent events, I thought it was important to establish some communication between myself, acting on behalf of the National Team on the Board of Directors of Taekwondo Canada, and you – the greater community of athletes that is at the core of the Federation and all of its operations.

As most of you will know, I have occupied the Athlete Representative position for almost 4 years, initially from 2007-2009, and again starting in 2010 and in the current year. It comes of no surprise to most when I say that the last 5 years of Taekwondo Canada's history have often been turbulent and unsettled, with many changes on the political front as we've fought to secure and maintain a positive, forward-moving relationship with Sport Canada, as well as other national and international sport bodies and partners.

I feel very fortunate that I am able to compare my initial experience in 2007 to the professional environment I now find myself in. Although Taekwondo Canada has always seen some extremely competent individuals come and go, there has never been a group and a mandate in place as there is now – one that is extremely committed to the forward momentum and continuous development of our sport organization. I am surrounded by Board members who understand and believe that taekwondo in Canada has transitioned from a traditional practice to a high-performance Olympic sport, and these people not only care, but know what it takes to preserve this fine balance between tradition and a modern, fast-paced, demanding sport environment. It is true that this balance has not always been preserved without conflict. It is no secret that there have been many transparency and communication issues between the board and the taekwondo community in the past. However, it makes me proud to say that these days are getting farther and farther behind us. I have personally witnessed Taekwondo Canada transform into a body that is athlete centered, doing everything they can to ensure that every decision, policy and discussion is fair, well-thought through, and always in the best interest of the athletes. We are finally in a position again where we have a secure and positive relationship with Sport Canada, our main funding partner and also the sport body where most of our direction comes from. With a new CEO, president, and a very capable and diversely experienced group of directors, Taekwondo Canada is finally on track to become a sport body that can be an international leader, and set an example as opposed to one that is lagging behind, struggling to fix problems as was the case in the past. When I was setting out to become a member of the board, I remember writing to the national team athletes that Taekwondo Canada only exists because of, and for, the athletes, and that its actions should reflect this reality. I have now grown to appreciate the complex network of community members





that a sport organization is responsible for, starting at grass root levels to high performance coaches and athletes. Many of these factors were reinforced in our Strategic Planning retreat last month. Although I maintain and have seen confirmation that an NSO can be athlete-centered, I also respect and commend the steps Taekwondo Canada's current Board and CEO have taken to successfully include and manage a multifaceted sport community where all levels, ages, roles, and abilities are included and looked after.

Taekwondo Canada does occasionally find itself in difficult situations, which is to be expected in a time of transition and reformation. Despite these drawbacks, the team is doing everything we can to ensure that all operations move forward as before, and that the main goal and big picture remains in clear view and a top priority. There will always be few individuals who are not supportive of the idea of change and new vision. However, as someone who sits in the boardroom and witnesses first hand the proceedings of our board, and is made aware of all development of the legal front, I can assure the Taekwondo athlete community that the legal application has not been brought forward by individuals who support the forward momentum we have worked so hard to achieve, and they have not been instrumental in our achievements over the last 10 months.

In conclusion, I am happy to speak to any athletes or members of the community about any questions or concerns regarding this recent issue or any other business related to Taekwondo Canada's operations. Despite a personal injury and not having been able to compete for the last while, I am fortunate to have remained an active and involved member of the Board of Directors and I look forward to continuing to serve my fellow athletes in this way in the time to come.

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Sincerely,

Dasha Peregoudova

National Team Athlete Representative

