

## **Statement from the Finnish and Norwegian Taekwondo Federations on the Russian aggression in Ukraine**

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

We, the Finnish Taekwondo Federation and Taekwondo WT Section, part of the Norwegian Martial Arts Federation, are disappointed that World Taekwondo allowed the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in the World Taekwondo Championships, even if they were billed as individual neutral athletes. As their actual neutrality has come under question in the wake of the Championships, we hope World Taekwondo scrutinizes them and their actions thoroughly. The need for this, however, underlines why Russian and Belarusians athletes or officials shouldn't be allowed to participate in any international events as long as the brutal war waged by Russia is still going on.

For years, World Taekwondo's vision has been "Peace is More Precious than Triumph". As Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials were welcomed back to international events, the vision seems to have been just empty words. The people of Ukraine still need our support.

We strongly urge World Taekwondo to prevent the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials in all taekwondo events until Russia's unlawful war against Ukraine has ended.

As our respective Olympic Committees have stated:

1. The situation with the war in Ukraine has not changed.
2. Therefore, we stand firm in our position, not to open for Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials in international sports participation.
3. Now is not the right time to consider their return; that is our position.

If the further participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials as individual neutral athletes is even considered, we would like to have answers to the following questions:

1. Who / which stakeholder is doing the neutrality checking and how?
2. How it will be decided and declared that an athlete does not have links to the army or national security services or to other similar entities?
3. How will the antidoping testing for neutral athletes be organized/secured? Who is doing that?
4. Who can see the results of the neutrality checks? Who has access to the reports, and will these results/reports be sent to the IOC or another stakeholder outside of World Taekwondo?

This statement has been approved by the Presidents of the following organizations:

The Finnish Taekwondo Federation  
Mr. Kari Sirviö

Norwegian Martial Arts Federation  
Mr. Øyvind Andreassen