

# Fwd: Invitation to meet in Lausanne

**From:** André F. Gueisbuhler - FIG Secretary General

**Date:** [REDACTED] May 2017 at [REDACTED]

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Invitation to meet in Lausanne

**To the:**

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Pakour UK and others from your community have contacted the FIG concerning our decision to develop and new discipline in the FIG. FIG understands that you are representing [REDACTED]

FIG is reaching out only to **International Federations** and **major International competition organisers** to explain exactly what we intend to do and how we wish to proceed. The purpose of this meeting is to find common grounds and welcome all those who wish to cooperate with us and the *Mouvement International du Parkour, Freerunning et l'Art du Déplacement* to have this great activity officially recognised not only by SportAccord (new name: GAISF Global Association of International Sports Federation), but also by the worldwide Olympic Family and the IOC and finally to find competitive forms in the programme of the Olympic Games.

President Morinari Watanabe and the FIG kindly invites you (2 representatives from [REDACTED]) to this meeting at our HQ in Lausanne, Avenue de la Gare 12A, 31st May 2017 from 09.00 - 12.00 hours.

We would be happy to host you for lunch at the issue of the meeting. We recommend that you stay at the Hotel Mirabeau (Best Western), which is right accross the street. Please feel free to contact us if you would like us to make the necessary reservation for you.

Many articles could be found in the newspapers and comments and open letters were exchanged and circulated in the various new media which have lead to misunderstanding and serious miscommunication.

We therefore kindly ask you carefully read our recent press release, which represents the only official FIG standpoint and explanation of our intentions.

Looking forward to hearing from you and hopefully welcoming you soon in Lausanne.

Kind regards,  
Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique

André F. Gueisbuhler  
Secretary General



**André F. Gueisbuhler**  
Secretary General

Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique  
Avenue de la Gare 12  
1003 Lausanne  
Switzerland

Phone: [REDACTED]  
Fax: [REDACTED]

## FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE GYMNASTIQUE



### PRESS RELEASE (français suit ci-dessous)

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17th FIG Council in Baku (AZE)

## FIG decision-making bodies greenlight inclusion of a new discipline

*Lausanne (SUI), FIG Office, May 10, 2017:*

Meeting in Baku (AZE) last week, the FIG's decision-making bodies gave their in-principle approval for the inclusion of a new FIG discipline based on obstacle course competitions.

Following its February decision regarding the development of a discipline along these lines, the FIG's Executive Committee and Council - the annual legislative assembly of 44 delegates from five continents - approved the key stages for the discipline's formal inclusion, with a view to organising World Cup series in 2018 and 2019 and World Championships from 2020.

**Sprint and Freestyle**

The FIG expects to include two formats of competitive obstacle course events in the new discipline:

- "Obstacle Course Sprint" is an against-the-clock format.
- "Obstacle Course Freestyle" is based on performances that will be judged.

The courses for these competitions, while mainly artificial, are based on real-world shapes found in urban and natural environments.

The first event under the FIG's auspices will take place on 28 May 2017 during the FISE in Montpellier (FRA). Serving as a model for a proposed urban cluster at the Tokyo Olympics and future Games, the 2017 FISE festival includes several other competitions, notably BMX freestyle, boulder climbing and roller skating under the patronage of the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) and the Fédération Internationale de Roller Sports (FIRS), respectively. Representatives from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will be present to observe the new trends in view of the Tokyo Olympic Games.

For the organisation of these planned competitions and initiations, the FIG has partnered with the *Mouvement International du Parkour, Freerunning et l'Art du déplacement* via its President Charles Perrière (FRA), as well as with the *APEX School of Movement* (USA) and *JUMP Freerun* (NED).

### **The distinction between parkour and obstacle course competitions**

Historically, obstacle courses are not an entirely new phenomenon. Military Gymnastics training in countries like France, Germany and Sweden during the 19th century included techniques for overcoming obstacles.

During the 1990s, David Belle (FRA) gave a new form to this practice of overcoming obstacles by founding parkour, which he defined as "this art of moving through both urban and natural environments, taking advantage of all the constructions and obstacles that were not originally created for this purpose." Made famous by the exploits of a group known as the Yamakasi, parkour served as an inspiration for the obstacle course competitions of today.

Throughout the inclusion process of the new discipline, the FIG is being supported by the *Mouvement International du Parkour, Freerunning et l'Art du déplacement*, established in 2014 by the cofounders of parkour to better lead the practice.

Before the Executive Committee's first decision on the issue in February, FIG President Morinari Watanabe undertook a trip to Lisses in the Paris suburbs to meet the current president of the *Mouvement*, Charles Perrière. In the place where parkour was born, President Watanabe was better able to grasp the non-competitive philosophy behind the creation of parkour and the vision defended by its participants.

"As a well-established international Olympic sport federation, the FIG has agreed to give its support to the development of a discipline that has generated real interest to the whole world," emphasised Morinari Watanabe. "The FIG is doing so with the desire to respect the philosophy that drove the founders of parkour, and to empower them."

"The collaboration between the *Mouvement* and the FIG aims to ensure there is a positive link between obstacle course competitions and the original practice of parkour, by definition a non-competitive physical activity. The appeal of one is able to lead to increased interest in the other, and vice versa," said Charles Perrière.

The FIG itself is not solely focused on competitions. Through the discipline of Gymnastics for All, the FIG encourages all forms of Gymnastics, regardless of age, culture or ability level of participants.

The cooperation between the FIG and these various bodies comes even more naturally as several FIG national member federations, like the Royal Dutch Gymnastics Federation via *JUMP Freerun*, offer parkour activities, while some organise obstacle course competitions up to the national championship level.



Charles Perrière and Morinari Watanabe in Lisses (FRA)

### Key next steps in the inclusion process

During their meetings in Baku, the FIG Executive Committee and the FIG Council approved a roadmap outlining key next steps in the inclusion process.

The FIG will start in early June by convening a meeting in Lausanne for representatives of existing international federations and other interested parties, including major event organisers, to learn more about the FIG's processes, define common goals and establish the basis of positive collaboration.

The next FIG Executive Committee in Vestfold (NOR) at the end of July will decide on the organisation of a series of World Cups in 2018 and 2019, together with the principle of holding World Championships in even years from 2018, although more likely from 2020.

The FIG also intends to collaborate with the *Mouvement* in order to encourage the development of non-competitive practices, bringing its support to the humanitarian actions led by Peace and Sport and the IOC in refugee camps and in Olympic centres in Haiti and Zambia.

The inclusion of a new FIG discipline will also require modifications to the FIG's technical regulations, which should be submitted to the next Council meeting in 2018, together with changes to the FIG Statutes, which should be put to a vote at the FIG Congress in Baku later the same year.

The new discipline, which has not been officially named, is the FIG's eighth, alongside Gymnastics for All, Men's and Women's Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic, Trampoline, Acrobatic and Aerobic.

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**About the FIG:** *The International Gymnastics Federation is the governing body for gymnastics worldwide. It is the oldest established international sports federation and has participated in the Olympic Games since their revival in 1896. The FIG governs seven disciplines: Gymnastics for All, Men's Artistic, Women's Artistic, Rhythmic, Trampoline, Aerobic and Acrobatic. It counts 148 national member federations and boasts a 30-person staff at its international seat in Lausanne (SUI), home of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).*

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GYMNASTICS!**  
FIG-GYMNASTICS.COM

Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique  
Avenue de la Gare 12  
1003 Lausanne  
Switzerland



Phone: +41 21 321 55 10  
Fax: +41 21 321 55 19