

Encroachment & Misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning by FIG

Eugene Minogue

Thu 08/06/2017 19:06

To: André F. Gueisbuhler - FIG Secretary General [REDACTED]@fig-gymnastics.org>; info@fig-gymnastics.org <info@fig-gymnastics.org>;

Cc: Buompane Nicolas [REDACTED]@fig-gymnastics.org>; Claudia SCHOENSLEBEN <[REDACTED]@fig-gymnastics.org>; info@tas-cas.org <info@tas-cas.org>; sportaccord@sportaccord.com <sportaccord@sportaccord.com>; pressoffice@olympic.org <pressoffice@olympic.org>; boa@boa.org.uk <boa@boa.org.uk>; info@uksport.gov.uk <info@uksport.gov.uk>; Sport Resolutions (UK) <resolve@sportresolutions.co.uk>; sport@culture.gov.uk <sport@culture.gov.uk>;

Bcc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Importance: High

📎 1 attachments (16 MB)

Your e-mail 27th May 2018;

Andre,

I am following up on my previous email (*below*) dated 30th May 2017, ahead of the scheduled meeting of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board, tomorrow 9th June 2017 in Lausanne - where it is likely that IOC Executive Board are to assess additional events proposed for Tokyo 2020, possibly including a proposal(s) by Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) relating to 'Parkour' - *a recognised, separate and sovereign sport **that is not Gymnastics***.

As you are aware via various previous correspondence from Parkour UK, as well as by legitimate extension the international Parkour community, we have raised fundamental and legitimate concerns relating to the encroachment and misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning by the FIG. These concerns relating to the encroachment and misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning by the FIG, have now been fully substantiated (*as set out in various previous correspondence, as attached*).

Unfortunately, despite our repeated requests for a meeting with the FIG via transparent and open dialogue, in the spirit of respect and solidarity in order to amicably resolve the concerns we have outlined in our and the correspondence from the wider international Parkour community, these have been and continue to be wilfully ignored.

Therefore, ahead of the scheduled meeting of the IOC Executive Board, tomorrow 9th June 2017 in Lausanne, we have made direct representations the IOC to ensure that the **IOC Executive Board are made fully aware** of the fundamental, legitimate and fully substantiated encroachment and misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning by the FIG.

Such encroachment and misappropriation goes beyond established and recognised ethical, legal and moral limits, as well as being inconsistent with the established principle of solidarity and including but not limited to;

- The International Olympic Committee, Olympic Charter - Aug 2016, 5. Fundamental Principles of Olympism; *Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations [within the Olympic Movement] **shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport**, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.*

Additionally, these principles are also fully recognised, acknowledged and understood by the IOC, as detailed in the report commissioned by the IOC by Dr Belinda Wheaton & Dr Holly Thorpe from the University of Waikato – New Zealand, titled: *Youth Perceptions of the Olympic Games: Attitudes Towards Action Sports at the YOG and Olympic Games* June

2016.

As detailed in previous correspondence, this report project critically examined youth perceptions of the relevance and significance of the Olympic Games, and the Youth Olympic Games. It focused particularly on the attitudes of participants in newer, action sports (i.e. skateboarding, surfing, BMX, snowboarding, **parkour**, kite-surfing), as well as the cultural processes leading up to and following the short-listing of surfing, skateboarding and sport climbing for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The 137 page made **three key recommendations**:

- As the IOC continues to consider new activities for inclusion (e.g., **parkour**, BMX freestyle) in the Olympic Games and YOG, **it needs to recognize that the governance structures of these sports differ from most traditional sports, and those with the most insights and knowledge may not be housed within the expected sporting infrastructure.**
- **We encourage the IOC to continue to work with action-sport specific federations (in contrast to fitting within existing IFs that may not understand and respect the unique cultural value systems and be aware of the important issues within these sports).** While this will involve considerable effort (and mentoring and support) to help them learn the rules and regulations required of Olympic sports, **we feel this approach has the best chance of getting 'buy in' from the core of the cultures, and thus longer-term sustainability of these activities within the Olympic Games.**
- We recommend that there will be important research following the announcement in Rio 2016 to Tokyo 2020. As signalled in this report, as this news is received the International Federations will take on new roles and responsibilities working with national federations, athletes and coaches. **We anticipate that these processes will be complex and political, and much can be learned from this process for future action sport inclusion into and success at the Olympic Games.**

Following the various open letters of support for Parkour UK's position from various other National Federations including, but not limited to [Fédération de Parkour](#) (France), [New Zealand Parkour Association](#) (New Zealand), [Australian Parkour Association](#) (Australia), [Parkour South Africa](#) (South Africa), [Polska Federacja Parkour i Freerun](#) (Poland) & [Finnish Parkour Association](#) (Finland). Additionally, a number of other national communities have also expressed their support for Parkour UK, as well as reaching accords to establish a National Federation for their territory, including but not limited to [Germany](#), [Switzerland](#) & [Sweden](#). Furthermore, other national communities have also issued letters of support including, but not limited to [Denmark](#), [Argentina](#) & [Italy](#).

Therefore, Parkour UK and **by legitimate extension** the international Parkour community, would again like to continue to welcome a meeting with the FIG, at the earliest convenience (*as previously requested on several occasions*) ensuring that the meeting is prefaced with an agreed and binding arbitration agreement referring any dispute to the jurisdiction of the Court of arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland. Any dispute arising from and/or related to the binding arbitration agreement will be submitted exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, and resolved definitively in accordance with the code of sports-related arbitration. The meeting will be to formalise the clarification and understanding via of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formally acknowledge the recognised sovereignty of Parkour/Freerunning.

If a MoU is not established within the previously advised 60 days (by 26th July 2017) or within such other period as we shall mutually agree in writing, **we will take all necessary and appropriate steps to protect the integrity and sovereignty of the sport of Parkour/Freerunning**, our sport, our community.

We continue to welcome a transparent and open dialogue, in the spirit of respect and solidarity in order to amicably resolve the concerns we have outlined above.

If you would like any further information then please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the details below. Thanks #GiveParkourAGo

Eugene Minogue,
Chief Executive



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From: Eugene Minogue

Sent: 30 May 2017 17:30

To: André F. Gueisbuhler - FIG Secretary General; info@fig-gymnastics.org

Cc: Buompane Nicolas; Claudia SCHOENSLEBEN; info@tas-cas.org; sportaccord@sportaccord.com; pressoffice@olympic.org; boa@boa.org.uk; info@uksport.gov.uk; Sport Resolutions (UK); sport@culture.gov.uk

Subject: Re: Your e-mail 27th May 2018

Andre,

Thank you for your email and confirming receipt of our [second open letter](#) (attached) regarding the encroachment & misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning by FIG and/or your member National Gymnastics Federations.

Firstly, I would like to politely request that FIG provide the necessary responses to the various concerns raised in both our open letters and as supported by the International Parkour/Freerunning community.

Secondly, I feel it prudent and somewhat necessary to address the points you have raised in your email below, as your responses do seem somewhat misinformed, despite much of these being fully addressed in our first [open letter](#) (attached).

Open Letters

Parkour UK issued our first open letter of the 31st March 2017 to detail the concerns relating to the (& now fully substantiated) encroachment & misappropriation of our sport, Parkour/Freerunning by FIG and/or your member National Federations, as we have experienced here in the UK with British Gymnastics. We asked legitimate and fundamental questions and invited FIG to engage with a transparent and open dialogue, in the spirit of respect and solidarity in order to amicably resolve the concerns we have outlined above. This has also been reaffirmed throughout all our various communications (emails and open letters to FIG). Unfortunately, FIG have chosen not to engage, but instead to wilfully ignore the legitimate and fundamental concerns from Parkour UK & as well as by [legitimate extension the international Parkour/Freerunning community](#) (as fully substantiated and evidenced in our [second open letter](#)).

At no point have we requested or has FIG been obliged to "correspond with open letters". Quite the opposite, we have reasonably and politely requested on several occasions that we would welcome a meeting with FIG, at the earliest convenience (within 60 days of the date of our first open letter - this is now about to lapse). Unfortunately, this (to date) has been wilfully ignored.

National Recognition Procedures

It is clear that FIG, have actively sought to interfere with National Recognition Procedures, given that following our first open letter (which fully stated and provided the necessary evidence and confirmation that Parkour/Freerunning [has been recognised as a sport in its own right](#) and Parkour UK is [the recognised National Governing Body for our sport](#) throughout the UK as recognised by our 5 Sports Councils - Sport England, Sport Wales, Sport Scotland, Sport Northern Ireland and [UK Sport](#)), FIG held an 'informal' conversation in the periphery of the Sport Accord Convention with the Chief Operating Officer of UK Sport, Mr Simon Morton. During this informal conversation, he was asked by FIG about the recognition status of Parkour/Freerunning as a sport & Parkour UK as the NGB. Therefore, FIG [have](#) actively sought to interfere with National Recognition procedures. Based on this informal and uninformed conversation, your letter dated the 20th April stated: "UK Sport has not been part of the recognition process due to parkour not being part of the current Olympic or Paralympic programme.". Following receipt of your letter, we held a meeting with our Government - the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) & UK Sport on the 18th May 2017 to seek absolute clarification. This [absolute clarification](#) was detailed on our second open letter dated 26th May 2017, which fully clarified the Parkour/Freerunning [is recognised as a sport](#) and Parkour UK [is recognised as the NGB for that sport](#) throughout the UK by all 5 of our Sports Councils - Including [UK Sport](#).

It would also seem, based on your wording in the email below, that FIG still seem not to understand and actively choose not to acknowledge - despite the significant evidence and letters from our Sports Councils - that Parkour/Freerunning/Art du Déplacement has been [fully recognised](#) as a unique, independent and sovereign sport and that [the recognised](#) National Federation/NGB for our sport is Parkour UK. **This is unequivocal.**

Parkour UK is fully au fait with the [recognition policy](#) & procedures of the United Kingdom Sports Councils, of which Parkour UK has been fully through and has achieved the necessary recognition via that UK wide reciprocal policy. Full details of this policy has been set out in both our first open letter and also in [appendix 12](#) (letter from UK Sport) of our second open letter.

In regards to your assertion that "national organisations are, in many countries, requested to be part of an International Federation", for clarification - as part of the UK recognition process, the [pre-application for recognition](#) point 5 requests information regarding affiliation (including international federation). The criteria for this is set out in the policy and states: "Criteria: The organisation must demonstrate direct or indirect affiliation to the UK (or Irish) or international governing body for the sport (as appropriate to the sport), [if such a body exists](#). As guidance, this would preferably be an international federation [that is recognised by or connected to](#) the International Olympic Committee, International

Paralympic Committee or Commonwealth Games Federation.". As of the date of our pre-application (Feb 2013), Parkour UK (**was and still**) is currently the only NGB/National Federation for Parkour/Freerunning anywhere in the world **that has received the necessary independent recognition from the highest sports authorities** (the UK Sports Councils – as detailed above) in our territory.

Additionally, we did fully address this point in our first open letter of the 31st March 2017 (under the heading International Federation), which stated the following:

SportAccord (now GAISF), the International Olympic Committee (IOC) & the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) **do not recognise any International Federation** as governing/representing Parkour, Freerunning and/or Art Du Déplacement. -

This was confirmed

in [<http://sportaccord%20%28now%20gaisf%29%2C%20the%20international%20olympic%20committee%20%28ioc%29%20%26%20the%20world%20anti-doping%20agency%20%28wada%29%20do%20not%20recognise%20any%20international%20federation%20as%20governing/representing%20Parkour,%20Freerunning%20and/or%20Art%20Du%20D%C3%A9placement.>]Appendix 2 of our first open letter - a letter from Sport Accord confirming there was no International Federation for Parkour/Freerunning - additionally, **this is still the case**.

Our current Memorandum & Articles of Association (constitution/statutes) states that Parkour UK in Clause 3, our objects are:

3.2 To act as the representative member for the Territory in international affairs and to seek affiliation to and carry out functions delegated to it by an appropriately registered [recognised by SportAccord, IOC and WADA] international governing body or federation

Therefore, once formal recognition from IOC, SportAccord and WADA is achieved for an International Federation for Parkour/Freerunning, Parkour UK **may** apply for membership with the International Federation to fulfil any duties under our Memorandum & Articles of Association 3.2 (as detailed above) and as may be required by a recognised International Federation, subject to approval from our members/community at an Annual General Meeting (AGM)/Congress.

Also, for additional information and context relating to National Olympic Committees, in our case the British Olympic Association (BOA), again our Memorandum & Articles of Association state Parkour UK will, within clause 3 Objects, 3.14 *to develop and nurture relationships between the Company and the sports councils within the Territory, the British Olympic Association (BOA), United Kingdom Anti-Doping (UKAD) the relevant Commonwealth Games Councils and relevant government departments;*

For a more contextual perspective, it is highly unlikely that any 'new' sport seeking the necessary recognition within its own territory as a sport and as the national federation for that sport with the relevant sporting authorities in that territory, to have an established and recognised international federation (as was and still is the case for Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement). As per recognised international norms, international federations are formed by the process of federating national federations. This is a logical and well recognised principle. Again, this principle was fully acknowledge in the IOC report I referenced in our most recent open letter dated 26th May 2017 (appendix 15). This 137 page report; Youth Perceptions of the Olympic Games: Attitudes Towards Action Sports at the YOG and Olympic Games June 2016, three key recommendations:

- As the IOC continues to consider new activities for inclusion (e.g., parkour, BMX freestyle) in the Olympic Games and YOG, it needs to recognize that the governance structures of these sports differ from most traditional sports, and those with the most insights and knowledge may not be housed within the expected sporting infrastructure.
- We encourage the IOC to continue to work with action-sport specific federations (in contrast to fitting within existing IFs that may not understand and respect the unique cultural value systems and be aware of the important issues within these sports). While this will involve considerable effort (and mentoring and support) to help them learn the rules and regulations required of Olympic sports, we feel this approach has the best chance of getting 'buy in' from the core of the cultures, and thus longer-term sustainability of these activities within the Olympic Games.
- We recommend that there will be important research following the announcement in Rio 2016 to Tokyo 2020. As signalled in this report, as this news is received the International Federations will take on new roles and responsibilities working with national federations, athletes and coaches. We anticipate that these processes will be complex and political, and much can be learned from this process for future action sport inclusion into and success at the Olympic Games.

International "Federations"/Organisation(s)

You have stated in your email below that; *"FIG is an International Organisation"*. It should first be noted that FIG "is the governing body for Gymnastics worldwide" (as detailed on your website), therefore clear that FIG has very specific remit and powers - as set out in your statutes.

Additionally you have stated; *"therefore reached out and invited all International Federations (IF) who are representing Parkour, Freerunning, Obstacle Courses, and L'Art du Déplacement we are aware of."* & *"We have invited the Mouvement, IPF (WFPF), OSF and FIADD."* Again, it should be noted that The Mouvement, the International Parkour Federation (Obstacle Sports Federation - international association for the separate and unrelated sport of Obstacle Course Racing or OCR) & Fédération Internationale des Arts du Déplacement **are not** an 'International Federation' for Parkour/Freerunning/Art du Déplacement.

Again, as fully detailed above and in our open letter dated 31st March 2017; **Any** International Federation for Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement must and should be established by the international Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement community, via a process of federating our NGB's/National Federations – as per established and recognised international norms. Additionally, that any International Federation, must also be built on the recognised principles of Good Governance. As none of the organisations you have referenced in your email below are a) not recognised by any international sports body(ies)/institution(s), b) are not made up of National Federations for Parkour/Freerunning and c) aren't built on the recognised principles of Good Governance - they **are not** International Federation(s) for our sport. This is and has been fully evidenced above.

As you have raised a specific point in your email below: "We understand from FIADD's website that ParkourUK is a member of FIADD and that their President is also a member of your Board.", I will provide the unequivocal clarification in relation to this, although much of this is self-evident in the previous information provided above in addition to our previous open letters.

Parkour UK **is not and has never been** a member of any organisation/group etc claiming to be an 'International Federation' for Parkour/Freerunning/Art du Déplacement, including FIADD. Our position on an international federation was fully set out in September 2014, with this statement - when many of the organisations you have referenced emerged. Additionally, as set out above and in previous correspondence - if/when formal recognition from IOC, SportAccord (now GAISF) and WADA is achieved for an International Federation for Parkour/Freerunning, Parkour UK **may** apply for membership with the International Federation to fulfil any duties under our Memorandum & Articles of Association 3.2 (as detailed above) and as may be required by a recognised International Federation, **subject to approval from our members/community at an Annual General Meeting (AGM)/Congress**. This is in-line with international norms and more importantly the recognised principles of Good Governance.

As part of our first open letter dated 31st March, we did ask what due-diligence FIG has carried out? Particularly given that you are referencing these organisations (The Mouvement, IPF (WFPF), OSF and FIADD) - as it is clear that FIG has failed to carry out the necessary, relevant and required due diligence on these organisations and many of the individuals involved in these.

Due Diligence: FIADD

FIG could have easily been established that Parkour UK is not and has never been a member of FIADD and/or any other organisation claiming to be an 'International Federation' - simply by reading the various correspondence we have previously sent, let alone a simple search of our website. Additionally, it is public available that FIADD was only formally incorporated on the 30th March 2017 and that FIADD who has a sole director (as detailed here with Companies House). Additionally, the person you have referred to as "President" of FIADD, is one of twelve Board Members of Parkour UK - our Board is composed of 12 members (adopted definitions can be found here) - 7 Elected Directors (nominated and elected by 3 x UK wide, 1 x England, Scotland, Wales & NI), 4 Independent Directors (one of which must be the Independent Chair) and the CEO in an ex-officio capacity. Directors in the UK have legal obligations under Companies Act (detailed here), as well as the companies Mem & Arts and also our conflict of interest policy. In short, there is no direct correlation between one of our Board members being the sole director of an unrelated entity and that pertaining membership of that entity. This is simply illogical and misinformed.

Due Diligence: The Mouvement

FIG have continually cited The Movement International du Parkour, Freerunning et l'Art Du Déplacement (MIPFA) as your source of partnership and/or reference for the encroachment and misappropriation of our sport. Again, basic due diligence would have established that, this organisation is not an 'International Federation' made up of National Federations nor built on Good Governance. FIG have cited in several press releases of the work and partnership with the 'Present' of MIPFA - Charles Perriere. However, it would seem that public record information held by Prefecture in France, shows that Chau Belle is the register President of MIPFA and Florian Busi as the Tresorier. this information was received this morning:

Répondre à : pref-associations@essonne.gouv.fr

Bonjour
J'ai le plaisir de vous adresser ci-joint les documents demandés
Bien cordialement

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 n'imprimez ce message que si nécessaire

I have attached a copy of the confirmation of this along with the statutes MIPFA. I would also like to draw attention to these statutes as it stipulates that for a change of Presidency (as well as other changes) congress needs to take place and the various procedures set out within their statutes must be followed. It must also be noted, that several listed members of MIPFA has also publicly stated that they were.

Due Diligence: IPF (WFPF)

It should be noted that there is conflation between IPF/WFPF and USA Parkour. This is evident on their website. Additionally (amongst other elements that the pertinent to due diligence) , it should be noted **that both** an application by the IPF **and** MIPFA for membership with SportAccord (now GAISF) and this was turned down in March 2016.

Therefore, I would urge FIG to undertake some thorough, necessary, relevant and required due diligence on these organisations prior to (in your words) "*a constructive dialogue with the IF's who wish to follow our invitation*".

Summary:

We are our own sovereign sport with independently recognised distinct uniqueness and cultural status. We are Parkour/Freerunning, we are Traceurs/Freerunners.

Parkour UK and by legitimate extension as substantiated in our second open letter (since publication of that letter Singapore & Argentina has also published open letters to FIG supporting Parkour UK's stance - attached for reference) continue to welcome a meeting with FIG, at the earliest convenience (as previously requested on several occasions) ensuring that the meeting is prefaced with an agreed and binding arbitration agreement referring any dispute to the jurisdiction of the Court of arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland. Any dispute arising from and/or related to the binding arbitration agreement will be submitted exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, and resolved definitively in accordance with the Code of sports-related arbitration. The meeting will be to formalise the clarification and understanding via of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formally acknowledge the recognised sovereignty of Parkour/Freerunning. If a MoU is not established within the next 60 days (26th July 2017) or within such other period as we shall mutually agree in writing, we will take all necessary and appropriate steps to protect the integrity and sovereignty of the sport of Parkour/Freerunning, our sport.

We continue to welcome a transparent and open dialogue, in the spirit of respect and solidarity in order to amicably resolve the concerns we have outlined above.

If you would like any further information then please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the details below. Thanks #GiveParkourAGo

Eugene Minogue,
Chief Executive



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From: André F. Gueisbuhler - FIG Secretary General [REDACTED]@fig-gymnastics.org>

Sent: 29 May 2017 10:46

To: Eugene Minogue

Cc: Buompane Nicolas; Claudia SCHOENSLEBEN

Subject: Your e-mail 27th May 2018

Dear Mr. Minogue,

I confirm to have received your e-mail including its numerous appendices.

It is not FIG's policy to correspond with "open letters" and we do not wish to interfere in any National recognition procedures.

UK Parkour is a National organisation and it is our understanding that official recognition in Great Britain is given by UKSports. In most of the countries worldwide, this is done by a governmental authority in charge and the National Olympic Committee. Recognition requirements and conditions vary from country to country, please don't hesitate to contact UKSports for further information. National organisations are, in many countries, requested to be part of an International Federation.

FIG is an International Organisation and we have therefore reached out and invited all International Federations (IF) who are representing Parkour, Freerunning, Obstacle Courses, and L'Art du Déplacement we are aware of.

We have invited the Mouvement, IPF (WFPF), OSF and FIADD.

We understand from FIADD's website that ParkourUK is a member of FIADD and that their President is also a member of your Board.

We are very much looking forward to a constructive dialogue with the IF's who wish to follow our invitation.

Kind regards,

André F. Gueisbuhler
Secretary General



**WE ARE
GYMNASTICS!**
FIG-GYMNASTICS.COM



André F. Gueisbuhler
Secretary General

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