



This matter is being dealt with by:
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Matt Neville, Chair & Non-Executive Independent Director
Jane Allen, Chief Executive Officer

British Gymnastics
Ford Hall
Lilleshall National Sports Centre
Newport
Shropshire
TF10 9NB

OPEN LETTER

Dear Matt & Jane,

RE: The wilful and continued encroachment, misappropriation and attempt to usurp Parkour by the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) and it's member National Gymnastics Federations

As you are aware, Parkour/Freerunning as is a recognised a sport & Parkour UK is the recognised National Governing Body (NGB) across the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with the Home Country Sports Councils - Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland, sportscotland, Sport Wales **in addition to UK Sport** following completion of the [UK recognition process](#).

Context:

Our pre-application for recognition was first submitted in March 2013, our full application for recognition was submitted in August 2015 and was successfully recommended for approval by the UK Recognition Panel in Dec 2015. During 2016 the Boards of the Home Country Sports Councils approved the full application for recognition, with the final confirmation of recognition being confirmed in October 2016. The formal announcement of recognition took place on January 10, 2017 – almost two years ago.

Therefore, as the recognised custodians of the recognised sovereign sport of Parkour/Freerunning in the UK and to protect and promote the integrity, rights, freedoms and interests of our Traceurs/Freerunners, our member organisations & the UK community, as well acting in legitimate solidarity with the international Parkour/Freerunning community, Parkour UK feel that it is necessary and prudent to write to [British Gymnastics](#), as members of the FIG, regarding the proposal being made for members of FIG to vote on at their [82nd Congress](#) in Baku, Azerbaijan on the 2-3 Dec 2018.

Ultra-Vires:

It is being proposed by the FIG to replace [their current statutes](#), which have legitimately been in effect since Jan 2017 (at the point when Parkour/Freerunning as a sport & Parkour UK as the NGB achieved recognition) and these remain the legitimate statutes of the FIG, with [the proposed statutes](#) that have purportedly “*in effect on the 1st Jan 2018*”, without approval by FIG congress.

Therefore, it is patently clear that the FIG have been and continue to act ultra-vires, beyond the governance, authority and scope of the FIG's statutes. Any International Federation can only operate within and may only do what it is authorised to do within its governance, authority and scope of its statutes and also what is permitted in national/international and/or European law.

It is widely understood, published and accepted, that definition of the sport of 'Gymnastics' is that set out in the interpretation section of the [statutes \(2017 edition\)](#) which *inter alia* provides the following discrete definitions for the disciplines controlled and promoted by FIG:

- Interpretation - Definition of 'Gymnastics', 'Discipline' & the listed definitions of the disciplines of 'Gymnastics' (of which Parkour is rightly **not** a discipline of Gymnastics)

Additionally, this proposal and their previous, current and continued ultra-vires action in attempting to unilaterally and illegitimately usurp Parkour are contrary to the current statutes (2017 edition) - Articles; 2.1 - Objects, 2.2, 14.4, 18.1, 29.1, 29.2, 32, 36.3 as well as Appendix 3 – Code of Ethics.

Furthermore, it is detailed in the [‘World of Gymnastics’ magazine nr.85 October 2018](#) (an official publication of FIG) on page 79 – title ‘Decision Time’, paragraph 3:

The other big decision that the Congress must take concerns Parkour. It was in spring 2017 that this urban sport¹ was brought under the aegis² of the FIG, which organised the first World Cup events that took place earlier this year in Hiroshima, Japan and Montpellier, France. For Parkour to be officially recognised³ as an FIG discipline, the General Assembly must ratify the necessary changes to the Federation’s Statutes⁴, as it previously did with Trampoline and Acrobatic Gymnastics⁵, the last disciplines welcomed into the FIG fold 20 years ago.

The proposed statutes (2018 edition) which are being proposed for adoption at the FIG congress, required **a two-thirds majority for ratification**. It is deeply concerning, as well as a fundamental and wilful dereliction of constitutionality and democratic process that, the proposed action to consider and formally vote on the encroachment, misappropriation and the attempt to usurp Parkour as a ‘discipline’ of Gymnastics under the auspices for the FIG, will not be put to recognised National Federations such as Parkour UK and /or the International Parkour community, which is legitimately represented by [Parkour Earth](#), the international Federation for Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement, but, instead this vote will put to FIG’s member National Gymnastics Federations! This derogation from democracy, let alone common courtesy and despite the very significant, legitimate and substantiated concerns of Parkour UK, Parkour Earth and by legitimate extension the wider international Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement community, as set out in various previous correspondence to the FIG (as set out below), to which British Gymnastics has been party of some;

- 31st March - [Parkour UK issues open letter to Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique \(FIG\) re: The encroachment and misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning](#)
- 27th May 2018 - [Parkour UK issues further letter to Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique \(FIG\) re: The encroachment and misappropriation of Parkour/Freerunning](#)
- 31st May 2017 - [Parkour UK issues further correspondence following FIG response](#)
- 8th June 2017 - [Parkour UK makes representations to the IOC](#)
- 24th August 2017 – [Parkour Earth open Letter issued to Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique \(FIG\)](#)
- 14th October 2017 - [Parkour Earth responds to Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique \(FIG\)](#)
- 14th December 2017 - [Parkour Earth issues an Open Letter in response to the meeting with the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique \(FIG\) on 7th November 2017](#)

It should also be noted that the discourse relating to the unilateral encroachment, misappropriation and attempt to usurp Parkour, isn’t limited to Parkour/Freerunning community, but is also the case in [the Gymnastics community](#).

Summary:

It patently clear and fully substantiated (as per the various correspondence referenced above) that there is no connection and/or lineage between the sport of Parkour/Freerunning and the sport of Gymnastics. We are our own sovereign sport with independently recognised distinct uniqueness and cultural status. We are Parkour/Freerunning, we are Traceurs/Freerunners, [#WeAreNOTGymnastics!](#)

Additionally, Parkour/Freerunning has been recognised as a sovereign sport in its own right. Our sport is not a discipline of any existing sport. Parkour UK in resolute solidarity with our fellow members of Parkour Earth, for and on behalf of the international Parkour/Freerunning/Art Du Déplacement community, will not allow our sport to be to be encroached, misappropriated and usurped unilaterally by another sport against our, our members and community’s will.

1 This patently acknowledges Parkour is a separate sport in its own right

2 Confirmation of acting ultra-vires

3 Again, confirmation of acting ultra-vires

4 Further confirmation of acting ultra-vires

5 This is a wilful misrepresentation, as these sports – via their retrospective established International Federations wilfully and therefore, legitimately merged into the FIG as ‘disciplines’ of Gymnastics. This is not the case with Parkour.

Furthermore as it is patently clear and fully substantiated that the FIG is acting ultra vires beyond the governance, authority and scope of their current legitimate statutes (2017 edition) - and the acts they have undertaken to previously and date relating to the encroachment, misappropriation and the attempt to usurp Parkour are unconstitutional and void.

Therefore, Parkour UK respectfully, reasonably and legitimately request that **British Gymnastics shall vote NO or ABSTAIN on the resolution to ratify the proposed statutes (2018 edition) at the FIG Congress in Baku on the 2-3 Dec 2018**. Not to do so would be a direct conflict of interest and would raise significant additional ethical, governance and integrity questions - in addition to (*with prejudice*) possible questions in relation to competition law.

We continue to welcome open and mutually respectful dialogue with British Gymnastics and by extension, the FIG and continue to demonstrate our goodwill and intention to bring this matter to an amicable and reasonable resolution, but must record our continued objection to the illegitimate and unilateral encroachment, misappropriation and attempt to usurp Parkour and upon the sovereignty of the sport that Parkour UK represents.

If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the above details.

Yours in Sport,



Eugene Minogue
Chief Executive

cc: English Gymnastics Association
Gymnastics Northern Ireland
Scottish Gymnastics
Welsh Gymnastics Association

HM Government – Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)
British Olympic Association (BOA)
UK Sport
Sport England
Sport Wales
sportscotland
Sport Northern Ireland
Sport + Recreation Alliance
Sport Resolutions (UK)

Tribunal Arbitral du Sport (TAS) / Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)
International Olympic Committee
Federation Internationale de Gymnastique
Union Europeenne De Gymnastique

European Commission – EU Sport Unit
European Commission – EU Competition Department

Parkour Earth

