Buenos Aires, Argentina
May 10, 2025

To the Authorities of World Taekwondo (WT)
and the Pan American Taekwondo Union (PATU)

- investigations@worldtaekwondo.org
- legal@worldtaekwondo.org
- integrity@worldtaekwondo.org
- comiteetica@panamericantaekwondounion.org
- legal@panamericantaekwondounion.org

From:
Claudio Aranda
CEO – MASTKD
www.mastkd.com

Subject: Urgent Request for Action to Protect Victims of Abuse in Taekwondo Federations

---

URGENT CALL TO ACTION TO PROTECT MINORS AND VICTIMS OF ABUSE IN TAEKWONDO

To the Authorities of World Taekwondo (WT),

My name is Claudio Aranda, CEO of MASTKD, an internationally recognized media outlet specializing in Taekwondo with more than 23 years of global presence. I address you not only as a journalist, but as a Taekwondo professional, a parent, and a deeply concerned citizen regarding the alarming sexual abuse cases that continue to plague our sport—and the inaction of the institutions that are supposed to protect the victims.

We witnessed how, in Costa Rica, it took public and media pressure before any institutional response was issued by WT. Until that moment, the reporting family had never received an official reply, despite having used all formal channels available.

Meanwhile, the Pan American Taekwondo Union (PATU) merely relocated the President's Cup. Mr. Wilmar Alvarado remains listed as Vice President for Central America, continues to attend official meetings, and still appears on PATU's official website holding that position—while on

WT's official website, his name has been removed and he has been banned from participating in official WT events.

Additionally, his daughter, Katerine Alvarado—currently under legal investigation for allegedly practicing as a nutritionist without proper certification by prescribing medical substances and providing unprofessional dietary plans—still holds a position on the WT Athletes' Committee. She was recently seen at the Cadet World Championships in Fujairah, UAE, posing for photos with WT President Dr. Chungwon Choue.

What message does this send to victims and athletes when individuals under investigation continue to hold official roles? Do you realize the moral damage and the public distrust that this generates, particularly among victims who placed their faith in WT seeking justice?

Today, an even more alarming situation is unfolding in Nicaragua, where a 17-year-old girl has reported being sexually abused by the former national team coach, Mario Zavala, who is also the son of the President of the Nicaraguan Taekwondo Federation, Salvador Zavala. According to multiple testimonies and documented evidence, Salvador Zavala allegedly attempted to silence the victim's mother to prevent the case from becoming public.

Since the report was made public and submitted through all official support channels, the minor and her family have been subjected to threats, harassment, and intimidation—allegedly carried out by the federation, police authorities, and government representatives influenced by the accused. Today, this brave young girl lives in fear, confined to her home, while the accused continues to work with minors as if nothing had happened.

Even worse, Salvador Zavala has published photos showing himself armed with a firearm, despite not being a police officer, military member, or official security personnel—further exacerbating the threats to the safety of the victim and those who have chosen to speak out.

How can you expect victims to trust official channels when these channels do not even respond or, worse, alert the accused before investigations can progress?

I have personally experienced institutional cover-up as well. While serving as a Physical Trainer for the Guatemalan National Taekwondo Team, I reported a coach for inappropriate conduct. The response I received from Mrs. María Borello, then Vice President of WT, was to terminate my engagement (without officially dismissing me from the Federation) to avoid scandal—while allowing that coach to continue working freely. One year later, that same coach was hired by the Costa Rican Federation, leading to consequences that are now publicly known. How ironic is it that the then-Chair of WT's Women's Committee decided to remove me to cover up sexual misconduct between a coach and his students, exploiting his position of power?

I am the father of two daughters who practice Taekwondo and the director of a school founded on the very values this sport promotes—or at least claims to. As a 6th Dan Black Belt in Argentina and a 4th Dan Kukkiwon holder, I cannot and will not remain silent while victims are neglected and abusers are protected.

Appealing to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires the protection of minors from all forms of abuse and violence, I respectfully request:

Immediate review and concrete actions regarding the cases in Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The temporary suspension of all individuals currently under WT investigation, including Wilmar Alvarado, Katerine Alvarado, Mario Zavala, and Salvador Zavala, until their legal situations are clarified.

A public statement or official communication confirming that World Taekwondo and PATU are actively addressing these cases, with specific timelines for concrete actions and transparent mechanisms.

A formal written response to this letter, acknowledging its receipt and detailing the actions being undertaken.

This is not a media campaign. It is a call for justice and institutional responsibility. We cannot demand that our athletes uphold Taekwondo's values if our organizations and leaders fail to practice and protect them.

This is about creating safe, fair, and healthy environments in Taekwondo, which is both your responsibility and mine. I am fulfilling my duty—now I ask WT to prove it is fulfilling its own.

Sincerely,

Claudio Aranda
CEO – MASTKD
www.mastkd.com