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October 7, 2015

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*Gyeong Ho Jeon*

Dear Kukkiwon President,

On September 7th, 2015, American Tae Kwon Do United (ATU) sent you a letter stating our serious concerns over the proposed changes to the 3rd-7th dan testing procedure, and we urged you to stop the implementation of that process.

The far majority of Grand Masters and Masters in the U.S. concur with this viewpoint, and they want their voices to be heard. They requested we create a petition, and the ATU will provide them with this opportunity.

#### **Statement to the Kukkiwon**

**The Kukkiwon should immediately stop its implementation of the regional 3rd dan through 7th dan testing program, including the certification of regional judges, as this procedure will seriously harm the development of Tae Kwon Do in the U.S.A.**

**The Kukkiwon must immediately form a task force to reevaluate the structure of its dan testing system.**

As the worldwide headquarters dojang of Tae Kwon Do, the Kukkiwon should be the leader in maintaining Tae Kwon Do's legacy and tradition. At the same time, it should utilize dan testing, educational training and demonstrations, to further develop and innovate Tae Kwon Do technique and theory. It is the Kukkiwon's responsibility to continually improve the philosophical and theoretical understanding of Tae Kwon Do, and increase its value to current society.

The Kukkiwon should understand that as the mecca of Tae Kwon Do, it must be a unifying force among the unique and varied countries in which Tae Kwon Do is practiced. It should constantly communicate with those members, and take all efforts necessary to familiarize itself with the conditions and stage of development of Tae Kwon Do in those countries.

However, the Kukkiwon has come up short with this responsibility. They have failed to update their vision to a modern perspective that keeps pace with our fast moving society. As a result, they have not contributed to the enhancement of Tae Kwon Do to the degree that they should have.

The Kukkiwon should support and provide resources to improve dojang operations and quality. When quality improves, so too will quantity of participants.

The Kukkiwon should more actively involve with Tae Kwon Do dojangs around the globe. The Kukkiwon should develop clearer standards and an instructors' manual for Tae Kwon Do training and teaching. The Kukkiwon should sponsor a newsletter to share information, recognition, teaching strategies and methods to motivate and encourage instructors throughout

the world. The Kukkiwon should create posters to promote Tae Kwon Do and to increase awareness of the Kukkiwon at the student level. Students will develop greater respect and appreciation of the "Kukkiwon", once they have a greater understanding of its relationship and benefit to their dojang. The above are simple steps that the Kukkiwon should have already done, but have not happened.

The plan to have Kukkiwon dan testing become more widespread must be studied and discussed more thoroughly. If the wrong approach is taken, Kukkiwon risks being deemed as a "seller" of black belt certifications. The Kukkiwon dan certification should be regarded with authority and respect. However, the prestige and status of such certification will only be held in high regard if the testing and educational process is held in respect as well.

WTF rules state that international competitors must be Kukkiwon dan holders. However, we wonder how this rule impacts usage of Kukkiwon dan certificates. In the United States, as with all other sports, the athletes must simply be a member of their NGB. Therefore, the athletes are not asked to have a Kukkiwon certificate to be a national team member. A large number of countries could be facing the same situation. The Kukkiwon and the World Tae Kwon Do Federation successfully cooperated to achieve the inclusion of Tae Kwon Do as an Olympic sport, an accomplishment that all Tae Kwon Doists take great pride in. However, at this point, Kukkiwon should lead its own path.

The Kukkiwon should develop its own strength and position. It should put its focused and consistent effort on elevating the credibility and value of its dan certificate. The Kukkiwon must go back to its original mission and core purpose. They must be willing to struggle and persevere. Most importantly, the Kukkiwon leadership needs passion and vision. The time has come for a paradigm shift.

Kukkiwon should have a task force to reevaluate its testing system. Promotion testing is the measuring stick of Tae Kwon Do education, standards and results. The thoughts and opinions of the world wide leaders of Tae Kwon Do should be integrated into the discussion. The study and theory being utilized by those majoring in Tae Kwon Do at the university level should be included as well. Additionally, historians and philosophers who have interest in Tae Kwon Do should be encouraged to contribute their viewpoint.

As the mecca of Tae Kwon Do, the Kukkiwon should serve as a "melting pot" of all Tae Kwon Doists from generation to generation and country to country. By doing so, the Kukkiwon has the opportunity to enhance individual lives and and contribute to global harmony.

We urge the Kukkiwon to exert its fullest effort.



**Taek Sung Cho**

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