



## **IBA National Federations**

### **Cc. IBA Continental Confederations**

Lausanne, 14th June 2023

#### **Open letter about the current situation in boxing**

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Dear National Federations,

I hereby write to provide you with an update on recent developments and to reinforce the importance of unity within our boxing community.

We do not have any issues with the IOC or the Olympic Movement, but rather, we have issues with certain personalities, who continue the way of CK Wu and attempt to destroy boxing through their pursuit of personal benefits. This is absolutely impossible and will not happen, as we are on our way to full independence as an organization. All the past years, boxing was robbed, and today we choose to not allow it anymore. Boxing must be controlled by boxers.

It is truly sad to see certain sports administrators, who should be peacekeepers and call for transparency and honesty but have clearly forgotten about their direct responsibilities, which are to protect every national federation, athletes, and coaches. Instead of keeping the principles of the Olympic movement, they are trying to keep their titles and hide under suits and ties in their imagined pocket corporations. Instead of being true non-profit organizations uniting the whole world with sports values, they make decisions based on various excuses and slogans, which is truly regrettable.

We saved our organization that was on the brink of bankruptcy. Our problems were rooted in the past, and we are not the ones to be blamed for it.

In fact, they started to kill boxing years ago, when they first decreased the number of weight categories in boxing hiding behind "gender equality", simply taking opportunities in favor of one gender at the cost of another. Many states lost their opportunities to win medals and develop the sport in their countries. We gave boxing an impetus, increasing weight categories from 10 to 13 for men and to 12 for women, respectively. We aim to protect each nation, and have given them the opportunity to earn precious-made medals and provide for their families.

It is us who are cleaning the sport of boxing, not the IOC and its members. We develop our sport. The Olympic Games are held once every four years, while we are taking care of all other competitions. We are responsible to children, boxers and coaches, and our mission is to defend their rights and independence. The Olympic competitions are important, but our tournaments give people a chance from a grassroots level to the very top. The peak of the mountain is the IBA World Boxing Championships. Our competitions play a pivotal role in creating conditions for athletes, coaches, and National Federations, not for enrichment of the third parties. Everything that IBA earns belongs to the boxers and coaches. This is one of the most important principles and this is how it should be in all sports organizations.

Nevertheless, the status of boxing as an Olympic sport is the same, as we will welcome our athletes at Paris 2024. I am confident that boxing will be kept in the Olympic program in 2028 and beyond, we will be united and prove this together. We are one of the best international associations which





cares about its members. For them we create all conditions for success and there are no prohibitions for national teams to participate in the Olympics. Moreover, we will provide our full support for them to take part in all tournaments, including the Olympic Games, and we will always support countries with financial difficulties.

As you may already be aware, on 7 June 2023, the IOC Executive Board made a recommendation to the IOC Session regarding the withdrawal of IBA's recognition by the IOC. It is with great concern that we witness the hastily convened online meeting of the IOC Session scheduled for 22 June 2023. The rushed nature of this meeting raises questions about the democratic processes within the organization that oversees the Olympic Movement. It appears that the IOC administration intends to limit the time available to IOC members to fully familiarize themselves with all relevant documents, including the IBA's position. This raises concerns of potential bias and manipulation of facts, transparency, and integrity. The IBA has taken the necessary steps to appeal this recommendation at the Court of Arbitration and Sport (CAS).

I must emphasize that the IOC members are on the verge of making a grave historical mistake for the Olympic Movement. Despite the challenges we face, I want to assure you that the IBA will remain independent and steadfast in upholding Rule 25 of the Olympic Charter, which guarantees each International Federation's autonomy and independence in governing its sport. We will not allow our independence to be compromised, nor will we permit division within our organization.

It is important for us to remain calm and not succumb to panic or provocations. The IBA has no issues with the IOC or the Olympic Movement as a whole. Our challenges lie with a few individuals within the IOC leadership who prioritize personal interests and biases over the well-being of the sport. They protect the corruption methods of CK Wu and there is still no response on why he was never called into question by the IOC.

We do not hide behind suits and ties; we have a direct dialogue with the Boxing Family.

I want to bring to your attention the conclusions of Prof. Richard McLaren, who was appointed by the IBA Board of Directors to investigate past issues within the organization. Prof. McLaren's findings place the primary responsibility for corruption and manipulations in boxing on former President C.K. Wu, who was an IOC Member and Executive Board Member at that time. All these reports are published, were provided to the IOC and always are immediately available for [use](#).

Despite our efforts to draw the attention of the entire Olympic Movement to this matter, the IOC has shown a reluctance to acknowledge the involvement of an IOC member in the destruction of the boxing organization. This reflects a systemic issue within the governing body of the Olympic Movement, rather than any shortcomings within our organization. The IBA has taken significant steps to identify and rectify past problems and implement reforms to prevent their recurrence.

History has shown that some International Federations have emerged stronger and more independent on the way to defend their autonomy. We, too, shall emerge as winners rising above the current situation. The IBA World Boxing Championships, our flagship event, remains a testament to our strength and resilience as seen by the success in Belgrade, Istanbul, New Delhi, and Tashkent.

I would also like to inform you that we are continuously striving to enhance the quality and spectacle of our competitions, as well as increase the attractiveness for boxers. Starting next year, the prize





fund for the IBA Men's World Boxing Championships will be \$10 million, and the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships will have a prize fund of \$5 million. Additionally, the continental championships this year will feature a prize fund of \$1 million, increasing to \$2 million from next year onwards. Beyond that, for the first time in history we will award prize money for fifth place.

Furthermore, we are committed to developing the World Boxing Tour, which will expand to include more countries with the support of the IBA. This initiative aims to provide boxers with greater opportunities to showcase their skills on a global stage. The prize money for Golden Belt Series will be increased to \$500,000, for Silver Belt it raised to \$350,000, and \$250,000 for the Bronze Belt. The prize fund for the ultimate Diamond Belt has increased to \$1,000,000. In addition, for our Champions' Night, we will select boxers amongst the top 15 and they will receive prize money for the pro-style fights.

Lastly, I want to remind you of the existence of the IBA Financial Support Program (FSP). National Federations requiring assistance for participation in competitions, or the implementation of individual projects can avail themselves of the FSP. In the upcoming 2023/2024 financial year, each National Federation will be eligible for a grant of \$50,000 under this program, and in the following year, this will be raised to \$100,000.

Let us not forget that we are one boxing family, and our strength lies in our unity. If we stand together, nothing and no one can harm our sport, and the current challenges we face will pale in comparison to our collective resilience.

I encourage you to remain loyal to the IBA and resist the temptation to align with fraudulent organizations that lack substance. The IBA's worth is demonstrated through our actions, while these fraudulent entities merely exist through websites and press releases. We should not allow such people, who want to make money from boxing to rule our sport. Our sport should be guided by only those, who give it all with their heart and soul.

At the end of August, we will bring all National Federations together for a joint meeting at the Global Boxing Forum to be held during the International Boxing Day celebrations this year. We will be in touch with further information on this important gathering for our boxing family. In addition, the IBA will announce its future plans and make a step forward in its IT development, including e-Boxing competitions.

Please be confident that I am here not to command you, but to be your brother. IBA is your boxing home. No matter what difficult situation you are in, you will always get assistance and guidance here.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to the sport of boxing. Your trust in me. Together, we will overcome these challenges and lead the way towards a bright future for our beloved sport.

Yours sincerely,



Umar Kremlev  
President  
International Boxing Association (IBA)

