



I.T.F. Nederland asked Grand Master Weiler a few questions about his presidency of the ITF

You have been President of the International Taekwon-Do Federation for more than half a year. Can you tell us how you experienced the past few months regarding your new job?

“The time after the elections in Inzell was extremely labor-intensive, because we have suffered several delays, caused by the many administrative issues that were not in order. Moreover, we have also done a number of things that were important to us.”

What was your vision and mission (plan) before you took over the ITF presidency?

“During my "election campaign" I announced my goals. This include:

1. Develop the ITF on all continents.

I started my work in Africa (Ethiopia) 12 years ago. That was extremely difficult because I was alone at first and because of the working conditions that cannot be compared with those in Europe. Nevertheless, the number of members has grown rapidly. Ethiopia already has more than 20,000 members. Three years ago I put together a team that helps me and brings me a lot of enthusiasm and energy that will continue to lead the Africa project. We now have 15 Member States and there is a good chance of having more Member States next year.



Asia is the largest continent, both in terms of population and land area. Asia must nevertheless be subdivided into culture, language, mentality, history, etc. This also applies to Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan or Uzbekistan with the Middle East or the Gulf region that have almost nothing in common. If you compare Southeast Asia with these regions, you will also find completely different circumstances. For that reason it is logical to assemble a team here too, whose members are familiar with these circumstances.

Looking back into the history of the Taekwon-Do, we note that there are 4 countries from Southeast Asia that were at the basis of the ITF in 1966:

- a. Korea
- b. Malaysia
- c. Singapore
- d. Vietnam

The current situation looks sad and I want to change that.

Korea, as the mother country of Taekwon-Do, must be a member of our Taekwon-Do family.

Similar circumstances as in Asia are also present in Central America and the Caribbean. The Caribbean has little in common with North America in terms of culture or language. For that reason, a team is also needed that knows the circumstances.

2. Promote women.

Martial arts are still dominated by men. Women can just as well contribute to the development of the ITF and are better in some areas. So it is not about 'quota women' and because for the GAISF membership we have to prove that there are women on the board and on the committees! (The GAISF stands for Global Association of International Sports Federations, ed.) However, it is about women being equal, because like men they are creative and innovative, able to criticize and propose solutions, have self-confidence, can create for a better atmosphere, have good communication skills, etc.

3. To improve trainers:

We need better teacher training that is not only based on the mastery of the Taekwon-Do technique or the knowledge of this technique. Nowadays it is no longer sufficient to teach or coach Taekwon-Do students during the competitions. Coaches need basic knowledge in the field of training theory, anatomy and physiology, first aid, management of the training process, training planning etc. Especially when we have to remember that we have to teach many children.

In different countries, trainers must be in possession of a proof that they have the required knowledge and wearing only the "black belt" is not enough.

4. To preserve the legacy of General Choi Hong-Hi:

Times are changing and progress is unstoppable. You notice it in all areas of life.

However, we must not forget that we are students and successors of General Choi Hong Hi (as it is also stated in our rules) that the Taekwon-Do martial arts have developed, which we now practice and which he passed on to us. This is not just a challenge for us but also an obligation. General Choi's wish was that the Taekwon-Do developed by him should retain his originality and should not be influenced by other martial arts from outside.

Taekwon-Do is more than just a competitive sport. Our ex-president Grandmaster Tran Trieu Quan already put it forward:

Taekwon-Do is a martial art, a sport, a way of life and a means to our society - and we should never forget that.

5. Promote teamwork:

It is important that the board of directors and committees work closely together to provide better service to our members. Only teamwork leads to success and I will raise this point.

6. Membership in an umbrella organization, e.g. GAISF:

This goal requires hard work and we need time for it. We also need the help of our members! We already meet a number of conditions for applying for membership, for example: women on the board of directors, women's committee, coach committee, athletes committee and so on. Other goals can be found in my ['President's Message'](#)."



What have you achieved so far? And which plans have you set in motion?

1. We have women on the board for the first time
2. We have a women's committee for the first time.
3. We have established other important committees (Coaching committee, Athletes Committee, Business and Marketing Committee, etc.) to improve our structure and service to our members and because they are essential for applying for membership at the GAISF.
4. We now represent women in more than half of the committees.

5. We have started the new "Adapted Taekwon-Do" project to train trainers to prepare and support them in dealing with people with physical or mental problems = inclusion or special education. The response so far is overwhelming.
6. We have started providing information to our members also to be published in Russian. And the Russian-speaking countries are very grateful for that.
7. We are working hard to ensure that the ITF in Korea, the motherland of Taekwon-Do, gain a foothold. The event in April 2020 should be the starting signal for it.

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8. We are in the process of getting our papers, documents and finances in order to become more transparent.
9. I have been in Africa, Asia and Central America and South America, the Caribbean and Europe for the past 6 months and have attended 51 meetings with representatives from 41 countries to discuss issues, receive ideas and suggestions and whenever possible to take this into account.”

What can we expect from you between now and for example a year?

“Further projects that are currently being implemented, must be started (e.g. the training of trainers must be improved on the basis of training methodology, medicine, pedagogy etc., a Taekwon-Do App is being developed as a platform for our members to exchange experiences, for information and services, competition rules must be adjusted, etc.)”

What can you tell the Dutch Taekwon-Doists?

“Taekwon-Do in the Netherlands has a long history. I.T.F. Nederland was in my opinion always a strong nation among the international competitions, at least in the individual disciplines. I know a lot about the higher graduated Masters personally and hope the experience of the elderly are passed on to the youngsters.”

Unfortunately, he is not familiar with the teacher training course of I.T.F. Nederland when I asked Grand Master Weiler. The teacher training corresponds to the international ambitions of the ITF and is also recognized by the Dutch government.

I.T.F. The Netherlands wants to grow. Can you help us (ITF) with this?

“Of course, help also depends on the goals and ideas of the I.T.F. Nederland.

I can advise you that the work is spread over many shoulders in order to relieve the experienced forces and to involve the next generation. As you may know, I was president of the ITF in Germany for 18 years and from this experience I can say that you should take care of the succession in time and also positions should pass. For now and in the future.”

You were at the IIC in Amsterdam last year and at the Do Course in Amsterdam more than half a year ago. What impressed you the most?

He answers that Amsterdam is an expensive city. 😊

I would have liked a different and better division for the IIC, but that certainly also depended on the program structure. For example: The seminar ended on Saturday at 4 p.m. and could have lasted another hour longer.

The boat trip was too expensive and there was not enough space.

It was also extremely loud and decent communication was almost impossible.

“The "Do" course was very well and professionally organized and has proven to be very important. Many I spoke to were very positive about the extension of the Do Seminar. I am I.T.F. Nederland very grateful for the organization and support of the Seminar.”

When can we welcome you back to the Netherlands?

“That depends on my schedule and the event in the Netherlands.”

I.T.F. Nederland thanks Grand Master Weiler for his answers and wishes him success as President of the ITF for the coming years.

Finally

For responses or feedback, please mail to: communicatie@itf-nederland.nl

Sabum Bernd Raue