

AETF Annual Representatives Meeting 2026

Strategic Consultation Report

Listening to Our Members - Building the Future of European ITF Taekwon-Do

La Nucia, Spain | 19-20 June 2026

Prepared for the AETF Board and National Associations

1. Foreword

The first AETF Annual Representatives Meeting in La Nucia marked a significant step in the development of the All Europe Taekwon-Do Federation. It was designed not as a formal Congress, not as a reporting session, and not as a meeting where the Board would simply present information to the members. It was intended as a genuine consultation with the National Associations of Europe.

The central idea was simple: if the AETF wishes to build a stronger future for European ITF Taekwon-Do, it must first listen carefully to the realities being faced by its members. Every National Association operates in a different environment. Some enjoy strong government recognition and access to public funding. Others operate almost entirely through volunteer effort, limited resources and considerable political complexity. Some are large and well established, while others are developing and require practical support. Yet, throughout the weekend, it became clear that many of the underlying challenges are shared across Europe.

This report seeks to capture the substance of the discussions as fully as possible. It should not be read as formal minutes. Rather, it is a strategic consultation report: a record of the themes, concerns, ideas and possible actions that emerged from the meeting. Its purpose is to support the AETF Board in future planning and to demonstrate to National Associations that their voices were heard and will help shape the direction of the Federation.

The discussions were honest, constructive and forward-looking. Delegates raised challenges openly, but the atmosphere remained positive and solution-focused throughout. The meeting confirmed that there is a strong desire across Europe for closer cooperation, more frequent communication, stronger development support, improved visibility, and a clearer strategic programme for the coming years.

AETF President, Tomaz Barada, opened the meeting with a clear message

The meeting was not intended to be the Board speaking and everyone else listening. Its purpose was to create a platform where every National Association could have a voice.

2. Executive Summary

The AETF Annual Representatives Meeting brought together representatives from sixteen National Associations, together with members of the AETF leadership, for a weekend of strategic discussion, collaboration and planning. The meeting was held in La Nucia, Spain, in the surroundings of the Barcelo La Nucia Palms Hotel and the AETF Administrative Offices at Camilo Cano Sports City.

The meeting centred on three core questions. First, what are the biggest challenges currently facing National Associations? Second, what should the AETF do differently or better to support its members? Third, what should the strategic priorities of the AETF be over the next three years?

Across the discussions, a strong consensus emerged around several interconnected themes. Recognition was repeatedly identified as a central challenge because official recognition influences access to funding, facilities, credibility and government support. Media visibility was also identified as essential, since without a stronger public profile it becomes more difficult to attract members, sponsors, political support and public understanding. Financial sustainability was highlighted as a pressure affecting nearly every National Association. Membership growth, education, volunteer development and stronger communication were identified as the practical mechanisms through which long-term progress can be achieved.

The representatives also expressed strong support for maintaining a constructive relationship with the ITF while ensuring that Europe has a strong and organised voice in international discussions. The importance of unity, cooperation and open dialogue was recognised, alongside the reality that political, organisational and historical divisions must be handled carefully.

The meeting produced a number of practical proposals, including the creation of a Recognition or Sports Political Advisory Team, the development of club-growth resources, increased online education, regular meetings of National Associations, stronger committee visibility, a coordinated European media strategy, a shared resource library, and earlier development of the 2027 AETF programme.

Key Findings

- Recognition is one of the most important long-term strategic issues for ITF Taekwon-Do in Europe.
- National Associations require practical support, not only policy documents.
- Membership growth depends on stronger clubs, better instructor support, improved retention and better visibility.
- Financial sustainability is directly linked to recognition, sponsorship, event quality, education income and grant access.
- Media visibility must be treated as a strategic priority rather than an optional communication activity.
- Education should extend beyond technical content to include governance, club management, leadership, coaching, safeguarding and administration.

- Regular communication between AETF and National Associations should continue beyond Congress and Championships.
- The Representatives Meeting should become a permanent annual feature of the AETF calendar.

3. Meeting Background and Purpose

The meeting represented the first occasion in AETF history where member countries were invited to participate in a dedicated open forum focused entirely on discussion, challenge-sharing and strategic planning. The published AETF report (<https://itfeurope.org/1staetfrepresentativesmeeting/>) described the event as historic and groundbreaking, noting that it brought together representatives from sixteen member countries for a weekend of discussion, collaboration and planning.

The purpose was deliberately different from Congress. Congress is the formal constitutional and decision-making body. The Representatives Meeting was created to provide space for wider reflection, honest discussion and member-led strategic input. It allowed National Associations to speak about their own realities and to hear the realities of others.

The meeting was also intended to help the AETF leadership understand where support is most needed. Over the last year, the AETF has developed committees, digital systems, ranking structures, educational initiatives and new partnerships. The Representatives Meeting created an opportunity to test whether those developments align with the needs of National Associations and to ask what should be built next.

Purpose of the Consultation

1. To listen directly to National Associations and understand the challenges they face.
2. To identify common issues across Europe and distinguish them from country-specific concerns.
3. To gather practical ideas for how AETF can better support members.
4. To identify strategic priorities for 2027-2029.
5. To begin developing the first draft of a 2027 AETF programme based on member input.
6. To strengthen trust, cooperation and dialogue between the AETF leadership and member countries.

4. Attendance and Representation

The meeting was attended by representatives from the following National Associations, listed alphabetically:

- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- England
- Greece
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Netherlands



- Norway
- Romania
- Scotland
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Wales

Several countries were represented by more than one delegate. This level of participation gave the discussion a broad European perspective while still allowing open conversation and detailed contributions.

5. Method and Structure of the Consultation

The consultation used a combination of structured discussion, working-group reflection, priority voting and open forum dialogue. The intention was to avoid a passive meeting format. Delegates were asked to contribute actively, listen to each other, and search for practical solutions rather than simply list problems.

The meeting programme moved from broad reflection to practical planning. It began with an opening address and a review of the first year of the new AETF leadership. It then moved into strategic discussions on challenges, member support and future priorities. A special strategic discussion was held on official recognition and ITF unity. Delegates then considered the development of the 2027 AETF programme and concluded with an open forum and action planning session.

Consultation Principle

No topic was considered too difficult and no opinion was regarded as unwelcome. The meeting was founded on the principle of open and constructive dialogue, encouraging representatives to speak honestly about the challenges facing their National Associations while maintaining mutual respect and professionalism throughout the discussions. Participants were invited not only to identify problems but also to propose practical solutions and share examples of successful initiatives from their own countries.

This consultative approach created an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, ensuring that every National Association had an equal opportunity to contribute to shaping the future direction of the AETF. The emphasis was placed on listening, understanding different perspectives, and working collectively to develop strategies that would benefit the entire European ITF Taekwon-Do community.

6. Review of the First Year of the New AETF Leadership

The President reviewed the first year of work since the 2025 elections, using the practical structure of the annual report. The review highlighted that the first year had been focused on building foundations: establishing working structures, activating committees, improving communication, modernising systems and creating new development pathways.

One of the key messages was that the AETF has moved from intention to implementation. Committees have become active, the official ranking system has been launched, umpire development has been strengthened, digital communication has improved, and a clearer strategic framework is beginning to guide the work of the Federation.

The review did not present the first year as complete or perfect. Instead, it framed the achievements as foundations. The question placed before the representatives was therefore: what should be built next? This question shaped the tone of the weekend.

Areas of Progress Identified

Governance and Transparency

The Board has placed a strong emphasis on improving governance, transparency and communication throughout the organisation. Regular Board meeting summaries have been published to keep member countries informed of key decisions and ongoing projects, while communication with National Associations has become more open and consistent. This commitment to transparency has helped strengthen trust between the Board and its members.

Committee Activation

One of the Board's key objectives has been to revitalise the AETF committee structure. Over the past year, committees have become increasingly active, organising workshops, producing reports, developing educational initiatives and contributing to strategic projects across a wide range of areas. This renewed engagement has enabled committees to play a more meaningful role in supporting the Federation's objectives.

Modernisation and Digital Development

Considerable progress has been made in modernising the Federation's digital infrastructure. Improvements to the AETF website, communication channels and administrative systems have enhanced the organisation's professionalism and accessibility. These developments have also improved the visibility of AETF activities and provided more efficient methods of communicating with member countries.



European Ranking System

The introduction of the European Ranking System has created a structured framework for recognising athlete performance while providing a transparent basis for competition seeding. The ranking system has also encouraged greater participation in officially recognised ranking tournaments and contributed to the overall development of high-level competition throughout Europe.

Umpire Development

The establishment of the Active Umpire Programme and the introduction of the European Qualifying Umpire Course (EQUC) represent significant milestones in the development of European umpires. Together, these initiatives provide a clear pathway for education, qualification and continuous professional development, helping to improve consistency and standards at AETF events.

Technical Development

The Technical Committee continues to play a vital role in maintaining the technical standards of the Federation. The Committee plans to support instructors and National Associations by organising an official AETF technical course, the committee were also present at the EQUC to provide technical support during the umpire training.

Athlete Programmes

Athlete development has become an increasingly important focus of the Federation's work. The establishment of the Athletes Committee, increased consultation with athletes and the organisation of elite training events have strengthened athlete representation while providing new opportunities for development both on and off the competition floor. The presence of an athletes corner at the European Championships was a very positively received initiative and the organisation of the 1st AETF Athletes Summer Camp this August is eagerly awaited.

Partnerships

The Board has continued to strengthen relationships with commercial partners, educational institutions and other organisations. These partnerships have enhanced the Federation's resources, increased opportunities for collaboration and helped reinforce the AETF's position within the wider sporting community.

Major Events

The successful organisation of the European Championships, European ranking tournaments, the Elite Stage programme and an expanding calendar of educational events has demonstrated the Federation's ability to deliver high-quality activities across multiple areas. These events continue to

provide valuable opportunities for competition, education, networking and the ongoing development of ITF Taekwon-Do throughout Europe.

7. Strategic Discussion One: Challenges Facing National Associations

The first major discussion asked each National Association to identify the biggest challenges it currently faces. Although delegates spoke from different national contexts, a set of common themes became clear. The following subsections consolidate those themes in detail.

7.1 Membership Growth and Retention

Membership growth was one of the most frequently raised concerns. Delegates recognised that recruitment is only one part of the issue. The greater challenge is often retention: keeping students involved beyond the initial beginner stage, retaining teenagers during examination years and university transitions, and keeping adults engaged when work and family commitments increase.

Clubs across Europe face competition from many other sports and activities. Children and teenagers have more options than ever, while parents are often under financial and time pressure. Representatives noted that clubs must become more professional in how they present themselves, communicate with families, and demonstrate the wider value of Taekwon-Do beyond physical training.

A recurring point was the need to help clubs become sustainable organisations. Many clubs are built around one instructor. While this reflects dedication, it creates vulnerability. If that instructor becomes ill, moves away, loses motivation, or becomes overburdened, the entire club may be at risk. National Associations therefore need stronger club structures, succession planning and leadership development at local as well as regional and organisation level.

Delegates also referred to the importance of sharing what works. Some countries have successful recruitment campaigns, school programmes, beginner courses, family classes or retention systems. These examples should not remain isolated. AETF can help collect and distribute them so that every National Association benefits from the experience of others.

7.2 Volunteer Fatigue and Succession Planning

Volunteer fatigue was a significant theme. Many National Associations depend on the same small group of people for competitions, administration, finance, communication, coaching and governance. This creates pressure and limits the capacity for development.

Delegates noted that volunteer structures must be renewed. Younger people should be encouraged into leadership roles earlier, and they should receive training, mentoring and recognition. The issue is not only finding volunteers for individual tasks but building a pipeline of future administrators, organisers, coaches and leaders.

In some associations, the problem is not lack of goodwill but lack of knowledge. Volunteers may be willing to help but may not know how to run a tournament, manage safeguarding requirements,

prepare grant applications, communicate with the media or serve on committees. AETF education should therefore include administrative and leadership skills, not only technical and sporting topics.

7.3 Government Recognition and Sports Authority Relations

Recognition was repeatedly identified as one of the most important strategic challenges. Delegates explained that recognition by Ministries of Sport, National Olympic Committees or national sports authorities can determine whether an organisation has access to funding, official facilities, school systems and public legitimacy.

In some countries, recognition is complicated by the presence of several Taekwon-Do organisations or multiple ITF groups. This can create confusion for government agencies and weaken the position of ITF Taekwon-Do. Representatives stressed that the issue is not purely political; it has practical consequences for athletes, clubs and instructors.

The idea of an AETF Sports Political Team or Recognition Advisory Team emerged from this discussion. Such a group could help National Associations prepare documentation, understand recognition pathways, learn from countries that have succeeded, and develop strategies for engaging with ministries, Olympic committees and sports councils.

The AETF should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. Recognition systems differ widely between countries. Support must therefore be flexible, practical and based on shared experience rather than rigid instruction.

7.4 Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability was identified as both a National Association issue and a club issue. Rising travel costs, venue hire, accommodation, insurance, equipment and event organisation place pressure on members. For countries with little or no government support, the challenge is even greater.

Delegates noted that financial sustainability is linked to recognition. Official recognition can open access to grants, subsidies, facilities and credibility with sponsors. Without recognition, associations are often forced to rely on membership fees, competition income and volunteer fundraising.

There was interest in sharing successful funding applications and sponsorship models. Some countries have experience with public grants or local authority support; others have developed commercial partnerships or event-based income. AETF could gather examples and create a resource bank to help members improve financial planning.

Financial sustainability was also linked to the need for stronger event structures. Well-organised competitions, educational seminars and ranking events can generate income while also delivering value. However, event quality must remain high, and smaller countries may need support to host successful events.

7.5 Facilities and Access to Training Spaces

In some cases, access to facilities was highlighted as a barrier to development. Clubs and National Associations may struggle to secure appropriate venues for regular classes, national squad training, seminars or competitions. Costs are increasing, and in some places public facilities are more accessible to recognised sports.

This challenge again connects to recognition and visibility. If ITF Taekwon-Do is seen as a credible, well-organised sport/martial art with strong youth, health and community value, access to facilities may improve. AETF can support this by helping members present stronger evidence of the social and sporting value of Taekwon-Do.

7.6 Governance, Administration and Compliance

Governance requirements are increasing across sport. Safeguarding, anti-doping education, data protection, financial reporting and child protection obligations are necessary but can be difficult for volunteer-led associations. Delegates indicated that administrative support and templates would be valuable.

AETF can assist by sharing sample policies, forms, role descriptions, reporting templates and guidance documents. This would reduce duplication, improve consistency and help smaller associations meet modern standards of governance.

8. Strategic Discussion Two: How AETF Can Better Support Members

The second strategic discussion asked delegates to identify what the AETF should do differently or better to support its members. The discussion moved quickly from general ideas to practical forms of support. Delegates were not asking the AETF to solve every national issue, but they did ask for tools, coordination, advice, visibility and opportunities for shared learning.

A strong message emerged that AETF support must be flexible. A large, recognised National Association with professional structures has different needs from a smaller developing country. The AETF should therefore offer a menu of support rather than one standard model.

8.1 AETF Resource Library

A central online resource library was one of the most practical ideas discussed. This could include templates for governance, safeguarding, grant applications, recognition documents, competition organisation, sponsorship proposals, media releases and club development plans. The objective would be to reduce duplication and allow member countries to benefit from work already done elsewhere.

8.2 Mentoring and Peer Support

Delegates supported the idea of mentoring between countries. More established associations could assist developing ones in areas such as event organisation, recognition, administration, coaching structures and fundraising. Mentoring should be practical, respectful and based on partnership rather than instruction.

8.3 Regular Online Meetings

There was strong agreement on the wish for regular Zoom meetings between AETF leadership/committees and member associations. These could be short, focused sessions on specific topics such as recognition, sponsorship, media, club growth, umpire development or coaching education. Regular contact would prevent the Representatives Meeting from becoming an isolated annual event.

8.4 Committee Visibility and Workshops

AETF committees should not only work internally. Their activity should be visible to National Associations. Committee workshops, updates and open sessions would help members understand what resources are available and would encourage greater participation in the work of the Federation.

8.5 Practical Support for Smaller Countries

Developing associations may require direct assistance with structures, planning, documentation and event delivery. AETF can support them by identifying priority needs and connecting them with experienced individuals or committees.

8.6 Education Beyond the Dojang

A recurring idea was that education should include club management, governance, communication, leadership and funding. Instructors are often technically strong but may need support in business and administration. AETF education should help clubs become stronger organisations as well as stronger martial arts schools.

9. Strategic Discussion Three: Priorities for the Next Three Years

The third strategic discussion asked what the AETF priorities should be for the next three years. A wide range of topics was raised, including membership growth, media visibility, technical development, official recognition, ITF cooperation, financial sustainability, youth programmes, umpire development and coaching education.

Following discussion and priority voting, three dominant themes emerged: Recognition, Media and Visibility, and Financial Sustainability. These should not be viewed as separate silos. They are strongly connected. Recognition improves access to funding. Visibility supports recognition and sponsorship. Financial sustainability enables education, events and development. Membership growth supports all three and is supported by all three.

Recognition

Recognition was widely regarded as one of the most important priorities for the future development of European ITF Taekwon-Do. Delegates emphasised that official recognition by governments, National Olympic Committees and sports authorities strengthens the credibility of National Associations while improving access to public funding, training facilities and political support.



To assist member countries, representatives proposed that the AETF develop practical support mechanisms, including a recognition advisory team, template documentation, case studies from successful National Associations and increased engagement with government and sports authorities.

Media and Visibility

Improving the visibility of both the AETF and its National Associations was identified as another key strategic priority. Representatives agreed that a stronger public profile would support recruitment, attract commercial partners, increase sponsorship opportunities and enhance the legitimacy of ITF Taekwon-Do within the wider sporting community.

Suggested actions included the development of a European media toolkit, greater promotion of athlete stories and success stories, coordinated social media campaigns, improved event coverage and more consistent communication across all AETF platforms.

Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability was recognised as essential to the long-term success of both the AETF and its member organisations. Delegates highlighted the importance of developing funding models that reduce dependence on volunteers and membership fees while providing greater financial security for National Associations and event organisers.

Recommendations included providing guidance on funding opportunities, developing a European sponsorship strategy, sharing examples of successful grant applications, and promoting sustainable event management models that can be adapted by member countries. These measures would help National Associations strengthen their financial position while supporting continued growth and development.

10. Recognition of ITF Taekwon-Do

Recognition requires a dedicated section because it was one of the strongest and most complex themes of the meeting. Delegates viewed recognition not as a symbolic objective but as a practical necessity. When ITF Taekwon-Do is recognised by public authorities, National Associations may gain access to grants, official facilities, school programmes, coach education frameworks and wider sporting legitimacy.

The discussion recognised that each country has its own system. In some countries, recognition is managed through a Ministry of Sport. In others, it is linked to an Olympic committee, a sports council or national federation structures. The presence of other Taekwon-Do organisations can create further complications, especially where public authorities prefer to recognise only one body per sport.

Discussion included the idea of supporting countries to build a strategy for recognition. This may include documentation explaining ITF Taekwon-Do, evidence of membership, governance standards, anti-doping policies, safeguarding policies, competition structures, education pathways and

international affiliation. AETF could play a valuable role by providing standard materials and examples while allowing each country to adapt them to its own legal environment.

Proposed Recognition Support Model

1. Create a Recognition Advisory Team with knowledge of sport politics, governance and international relations.
2. Collect case studies from countries that have achieved recognition or government support.
3. Prepare template letters, presentations and policy packs for use with ministries and sports councils.
4. Offer one-to-one guidance to National Associations seeking recognition.
5. Provide evidence of AETF structures, events, ranking systems, anti-doping education and international standards.
6. Hold a recognition workshop for interested countries.

11. Media, Communication and Visibility

Media visibility was chosen as one of the top strategic priorities. Delegates recognised that visibility affects nearly every other objective. A sport that is not visible struggles to attract new members, sponsors, government attention and public credibility. Visibility also strengthens pride among current members and helps athletes feel valued.

The discussion went beyond simply posting more on social media. Representatives suggested a more professional, coordinated and strategic approach. This could include consistent branding, athlete profiles, event highlight videos, human-interest stories, committee updates, sponsor content, educational campaigns and promotional materials that National Associations can adapt locally.

Media Actions Suggested

- Develop a media toolkit for National Associations.
- Create templates for event reports, social media posts, press releases and sponsor announcements.
- Increase athlete storytelling, including profiles of champions, volunteers, young leaders and officials.
- Use short video content to promote events, education and committee work.
- Coordinate campaigns around major AETF events and international days relevant to sport, health, women in sport and youth leadership.
- Encourage each National Association to appoint or develop a media contact.

12. Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability was selected as a top-three priority because many of the ambitions discussed during the meeting require resources. Development, education, travel, events, media production and administration all carry costs. If the Federation and its members rely only on volunteer effort and membership fees, long-term progress will be limited.

The discussion highlighted that financial models differ widely. Some National Associations receive state support; others receive none. Some have recognised status and can access facilities or grants, while others must operate commercially. Therefore, AETF support should not assume one funding model but should help countries identify realistic opportunities based on their own environment.

There was particular interest in sharing successful funding examples. A successful grant application, sponsorship proposal or event budget from one country may be adapted by another. This practical sharing could have immediate value.

Financial Development Actions

- Create a funding and sponsorship section within the AETF resource library.
- Share sample grant applications and budget templates.
- Develop European-level sponsorship opportunities that also benefit National Associations.
- Explore education, ranking events and livestreaming as sustainable revenue-supporting activities.
- Provide guidance on event budgeting and risk management.
- Link financial strategy with recognition strategy, since official recognition often opens access to public funding.

13. Membership Growth and Club Development

Membership growth should be treated as a long-term development strategy rather than a short-term recruitment campaign. AETF cannot grow sustainably unless clubs and associations grow sustainably. Strong clubs create strong National Associations, which in turn create a stronger European Federation.

Clubs & associations need support in practical areas: how to attract new members, how to retain them, how to communicate with parents, how to structure beginner programmes, how to create assistant instructor pathways, how to plan succession, and how to avoid complete dependence on one instructor.

Participants also discussed the importance of adults. Many clubs are strong in children and junior sections but weaker in adult recruitment. Adult beginners can become long-term members, volunteers, parents of junior members, future instructors and committee members. AETF and National Associations should consider how clubs can better promote Taekwon-Do to adults as a martial art, fitness activity, self-development pathway and community.

Club Development Toolkit

- Sample beginner course structure.
- Social media templates for club recruitment.
- Parent information sheets explaining the value of Taekwon-Do.
- Retention checklist for instructors.
- Assistant instructor development pathway.
- Club succession planning guide.

- Guidance on school demonstrations and community events.
- Advice on welcoming adults and returning members.
- Basic club business planning template.

14. Education, Technical Development and Leadership

Education was discussed as a cross-cutting solution. Technical excellence remains central to ITF Taekwon-Do, but the needs of National Associations extend beyond technical seminars. Modern sporting organisations require education in coaching, governance, safeguarding, anti-doping, media, event organisation, leadership and administration.

The Technical Director and the Technical Committee remain central to technical standards. At the same time, the meeting highlighted the need to complement technical education with wider organisational development. Masters and Grand Masters could also play an important mentoring role, helping instructors and National Associations with leadership, standards and long-term development.

Education should be delivered in multiple formats: in-person seminars, online webinars, recorded modules, committee workshops and practical toolkits. This would allow smaller or geographically distant countries to participate without excessive cost.

Education Priorities

- European technical seminars and Masters workshops.
- Coach education and club instructor development.
- Umpire education and continued professional development.
- Governance and administration training for National Associations.
- Anti-doping, health promotion and safeguarding education.
- Leadership development for young volunteers and future officials.
- Education for media officers, event organisers and committee members.

15. ITF Relations, International Cooperation and Unity

The meeting included a dedicated discussion on ITF relations and wider international cooperation. Representatives expressed support for the ITF and recognised that Europe contributes significantly to the global ITF community. At the same time, delegates stressed that Europe should have a strong, organised and respected voice in international discussions.

The discussion included practical topics such as the ITF World Cup 2026, World Championship 2027 in Paraguay, ITF structures and future cooperation. There was interest in ensuring that European proposals are prepared early, discussed among member countries, and presented in a coordinated manner where appropriate.

The topic of ITF unity was also discussed. Delegates recognised that the divisions since 2002 have created long-term challenges for recognition, public understanding and international positioning.

While political realities remain complex, the meeting reflected a willingness to keep doors open for dialogue where it is constructive and in the interests of Taekwon-Do.

The report does not suggest that unity is simple or immediate. It records that many delegates see cooperation, respectful communication and strategic patience as important principles. Greater cooperation may strengthen the international position of ITF Taekwon-Do, but any steps must protect the identity, values and interests of the AETF and its member countries.

Practical ITF Relations Actions

- Hold European consultation before major ITF Congresses and Assemblies.
- Coordinate European proposals where there is common agreement.
- Ensure National Associations are informed early about international matters affecting Europe.
- Maintain consistent and constructive communication with ITF leadership.
- Continue to strongly support the ITF
- Clearly present European perspectives.
- Keep dialogue open on broader cooperation where appropriate and beneficial.

16. Building the 2027 AETF Programme

A significant part of the meeting focused on the development of the first draft of the 2027 AETF programme. This was important because the meeting was not only about identifying problems; it was also about turning discussion into planning.

The programme discussion considered competitions, ranking tournaments, education, technical seminars, umpire seminars, online education, coach education, athlete programmes, women in Taekwon-Do, youth leadership, Masters programmes, promotion, media strategy, livestreaming, social media and sponsors.

Delegates emphasised the importance of early calendar planning. National Associations need sufficient notice to plan budgets, athlete preparation, travel, accommodation and domestic calendars. A clear European programme also helps avoid clashes and allows countries to make strategic decisions about which events to attend or host.

17. Open Forum and Additional Proposals

The open forum allowed delegates to raise issues that had not been fully covered earlier. The atmosphere remained constructive and practical. Ideas included more regular forums, improved club resources, better support for new instructors, stronger communication between countries and more opportunities for members to share experiences informally.

One recurring point was that valuable discussions should not happen only once per year. The open forum confirmed the need for continuing dialogue. Some topics may be best developed through working groups, while others could be addressed by short online sessions or committee-led workshops.

- Create open forums during major championships or immediately before/after them.

- Use online meetings to follow up on themes from the Representatives Meeting.
- Ask committees to present short practical updates to National Associations.
- Encourage countries to share one successful project each year.
- Develop a calendar of workshops for 2027 covering recognition, media, funding and club growth.
- Use feedback from the meeting to shape Board and committee priorities.

18. Strategic Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Establish the AETF Representatives Meeting as an annual event

The meeting demonstrated clear value as a platform for listening, planning and cooperation. It should become a permanent fixture with a clear annual agenda and follow-up report.

Recommendation 2: Create a Recognition Advisory Team

Recognition is too important to be handled informally. A small expert group should support countries seeking government or sports authority recognition.

Recommendation 3: Develop a European Club Development Toolkit

Membership growth depends on strong clubs. A toolkit should include recruitment, retention, succession planning, marketing and instructor-development resources.

Recommendation 4: Launch an AETF Resource Library

Templates, policies, funding examples, governance documents and media materials should be made available to all member countries.

Recommendation 5: Develop a coordinated media strategy

Visibility should be a strategic priority with consistent content, athlete stories, event reporting, video output and national media support.

Recommendation 6: Provide funding and sponsorship guidance

AETF should help countries learn from successful grant applications and sponsorship models.

Recommendation 7: Expand online education

Online education should cover not only technical topics but governance, administration, safeguarding, coaching, media and leadership.

Recommendation 8: Hold regular online meetings with National Associations

Short, focused online meetings would maintain momentum and allow continued consultation.

Recommendation 9: Strengthen committee visibility

Committees should communicate more regularly with National Associations and provide practical resources.

Recommendation 10: Coordinate European input before ITF meetings

Europe should prepare proposals and positions early so that member countries can contribute and align where appropriate.

Recommendation 11: Support young leaders and volunteers

AETF should encourage leadership pathways for young officials, coaches, umpires and administrators.

Recommendation 12: Develop Annual Calendar/Programme early

The calendar should be planned and communicated as early as possible, including competitions, seminars, education and development activities.

Recommendation 13: Create an annual progress review

Each year, the Board should review progress against the priorities identified by the Representatives Meeting.

Recommendation 14: Encourage peer mentoring between countries

Experienced associations should be invited to support developing countries in areas such as recognition, governance and event organisation.

Recommendation 15: Link recognition, media and finance strategies

These priorities are interconnected and should be planned together rather than separately.

19. Conclusion

The first AETF Annual Representatives Meeting achieved its central objective: it gave National Associations a meaningful voice in shaping the future of European ITF Taekwon-Do. The discussions were broad, honest and practical. They showed that while countries face different circumstances, the main challenges are often shared.

The meeting confirmed that recognition, media visibility and financial sustainability should be treated as key strategic priorities. It also confirmed that membership growth, education, governance, communication and international cooperation are essential supporting pillars.

The event should be viewed as the beginning of an ongoing consultation process rather than a single meeting. Its success will ultimately be measured by the actions that follow: resources created, meetings held, support provided, programmes developed and progress reported back to members.

If the AETF continues to listen, coordinate and support its National Associations in this spirit, the Representatives Meeting can become one of the most important annual gatherings in European ITF Taekwon-Do. It can help ensure that the Federation remains responsive, transparent, inclusive and strategically focused as it builds the future together with its members.