

Paris, France – 31 January 2017



## City of Paris signs major agreement to support refugees through sport with Taekwondo federations as Paris 2024 declares the City ready for “sharing”

**International refugees in Paris can practice sport as a means for social inclusion. Agreement is aligned with Paris 2024 vision of sharing as a way to address key contemporary challenges**

The **Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Bid Organising Committee** has praised a new agreement signed by Dr. Chungwon Choue, President of **World Taekwondo Federation** and **Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation (THF)**, Mrs. Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris and Mr. Denis Odjo, President of **French Taekwondo Federation (FFTD)** in the world-class AccorHotels Arena, a future Paris 2024 venue (Paris Arena 1).

The agreement will offer support to international refugees in the city. The city’s initiative is fully in line with **Paris 2024’s vision of sharing as a way to address key contemporary challenges through sport and the Games.**

The city will work with the federations to empower refugees and displaced persons by helping them stay fit and active through participation in Taekwondo. The initiative will help to use the sport to immerse refugees into the local community – offering them a positive means to socialise, learn about the local area and cultural values and stay healthy through physical exercise.

The initiative in Paris kicked off with the ‘**Discover Taekwondo Workshop**’ at the Humanitarian Aid Centre, which, since opening in November 2016, has helped more than 4,500 refugees from nations including Sudan, Somalia and Afghanistan.

Through the agreement, Paris has been named **Taekwondo Humanitarian Federation Ambassador City.** The announcement reaffirms Paris’ belief in an open and tolerant society and a Games vision to welcome the world to the French capital city in 2024.

**Paris 2024 Bid Committee Co-Chairman, Tony Estanguet,** said:

“This initiative between Paris, the Taekwondo Federations and the Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation is very special. We want to show the people of the world that we are ready to share our city with them, wherever they may be from, and this scheme really highlights that important mission.

“Sport can be an incredibly powerful tool to offer people hope and opportunity when they are faced with very tough challenges, and we are delighted that Paris is supporting those in the Taekwondo community to help better the lives of refugees through participation in this Olympic sport.

“At Paris 2024, we fully support this initiative and it underlines our vision to create a Games of passion and purpose – highlighting through the power of sport that we can support those less fortunate, promote sport and healthy lifestyles and celebrate openness and tolerance by welcoming the world to our city.”

**Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo**, added:

“Paris is an open, sharing city that is committed to helping people improve their lives through sport, innovation and sustainable living.

“This partnership agreement between Paris, the Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation and the French Taekwondo Federation reflects this city’s commitment to use sport as a means of changing the lives of those less fortunate.

“By working on projects like this, we can leverage the power of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to create real positive change across all aspects of society.”

The THF, set up in 2016, is dedicated to using Taekwondo to better the lives of refugees, and has projects running in Jordan, Nepal and Turkey, with future schemes planned for Rwanda, Ethiopia and Djibouti. At the Paris 2024 Games, Taekwondo will take place at the iconic Grand Palais.

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Images:**

Please find attached three images from the launch of the initiative - the ‘**Discover Taekwondo Workshop**’ - at the Humanitarian Aid Centre in Paris.

#### **For further information:**

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