

Report

Visit to the 2023 Pacific Games

26 November – 02 December 2023

Honiara, Solomon Islands (SOL)

Member Relations & Development Department

World Taekwondo

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1. Overview and Schedule

1.1. Background

World Taekwondo Member Relations & Development (WT MRD) annually executes the Development Program to ensure the equitable and continuous development of Member National Associations (MNAs) under the umbrella of World Taekwondo (WT). Meanwhile, the IOC Development Fund (DF) team asked WT to start a DF program targeting the Oceania small island. Since it is difficult to visit the island countries of Oceania every day, WT decided to visit Honiara in the Solomon Islands, where the Pacific Games will be held. Through this visit, WT MRD aims to encourage the development of the National Sport System in the small islands of Oceania through Taekwondo, enhancing international event participation opportunities.

Upon the request of some National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in the South Pacific, planning development projects for the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games in association with the Olympic Solidarity Program of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the involvement of WT was sought. Thus, WT intends to revitalize Taekwondo as a key sport for these NOCs, fostering youth athletes' participation in the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games.

1.2. Objectives

- ◆ Attend the 2023 Pacific Games in the host city to meet directly with MNA representatives from small island MNAs in Oceania for a status assessment and identification of practical needs.
- ◆ Collaborate with the IOC on-site to explore efficient support methods

1.3. Duration

- ◆ November 26, 2023, to December 02, 2023
(Taekwondo in the 2023 Pacific Games: November 28-29, 2023)
(Oceania Taekwondo Championships: November 30-December 1, 2023)

1.4. Destination

- ◆ Honiara, Solomon Islands

1.5. Participants (2)

- ◆ Ms Seungmin LEE
Head of WT Member Relations & Development Department
- ◆ Mr Woongki KIM
Assistant Manager of WT Member Relations & Development Department

1.6. Schedule

Date	Time	Activity	Remarks
Nov. 26 Sun.	14:55	Arrive in Honiara Airport (HIR)	
	18:00	Meeting with IOC, OTU, and ONOC	Heritage Hotel

Nov. 27 Mon.	07:30	Meeting with IOC, OTU, and SOL NOC & MNA	Pacific Crown Hotel
	09:30	Meeting with IOC, OTU, and KIR NOC & MNA	Pacific Crown Hotel
Nov. 28 Tue.	12:00	Meeting with NZL MNA President	Pacific Crown Hotel
	18:30	Meeting with OTU and NMI CDM	Pacific Crown Hotel
Nov. 29 Wed.	13:00	Site inspection of facilities for the Olympic Qualification Event and, for a joint training camp in 2024	
	18:30	Meeting with the President of the KOR Community in the Solomon Islands	INJOY, Chinese Restaurant
Nov. 30 Thu.	08:00	Meeting with SOL MNA	Pacific Crown Hotel
	14:00	Meeting with TGA MNA Vice President	Pacific Crown Hotel
Dec. 01 Fri	11:00	Visit the SOL NOC Office	NOC Office
	14:00	Meeting with Mr Pita Taufatofua (TGA), the IOC Sport Ambassador	Honiara Airport
	15:55	Depart for Incheon Airport via Brisbane	



2. Details of the meetings

During the visit to Honiara, the following objectives were successfully achieved:

Conducted on-site assessments and identified practical needs by meeting with MNA representatives.

Collaborated with the IOC to explore efficient support methods for the NOCs in the South Pacific.

2.1. Meeting with IOC, OTU, and ONOC

2.1.1. Date and Time

- 18:00, 26 November 2023 Sunday

2.1.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	IOC	Ms Sheila Stephens Desbans	Head of Sport Development Unit
2.	SOL NOC	Ms Melinda Avosa	Secretary General of SOL NOC
3.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
4.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
5.	OTU	Mr John Kotsifas	President of OTU
6.	OTU	Mr Stuart Lee	Secretary General of OTU

2.1.3. Details

- Introduction of the IOC project, DNSS (Development of National Sport System).
- Briefing on the 2023 Pacific Games.
- Overview of the current status of Taekwondo in Oceania.
- Discussion about Pacific Games Taekwondo event operational challenges.



2.2. Meeting with IOC, OTU, and SOL NOC & MNA

2.2.1. Date and Time

- 07:30, 27 November 2023 Monday

2.2.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	IOC	Ms Sheila Stephens Desbans	Head of Sport Development Unit
2.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
3.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
4.	OTU	Mr John Kotsifas	President of OTU
5.	OTU	Mr Stuart Lee	Secretary General of OTU
6.	SOL NOC	Ms Melinda Avosa	Secretary General of SOL NOC
7.	SOL MNA	Mr Derick Faisi Afu	President of SOL MNA
8.	SOL MNA	Mr. Wesley Taloga	Secretary General of SOL MNA

2.2.3. Details

Olympic2024 Qualification Tournament

- Coach and referee training needed before the Oly 2024 Qualification Tournament in April 2024.
- Participants' airfare is a significant concern for the OTU.
- IOC may support athletes' airfare and visa fees for the event.
- The organising committee (OC) will prepare accommodation and local transportation.
- IOC support requires a mandatory budget and plan submission for the reimbursement process through the IF.

Joint Training Camp in the Solomon Islands

- WT plans to send a coach and a few athletes to the Solomon Islands in January 2024 for joint training with the Solomon Islands and Kiribati athletes.
- Detailed discussions will follow for equipment, training facilities, and accommodation support for the joint training camp.

2.3. Meeting with IOC, OTU, and KIR NOC & MNA

2.3.1. Date and Time

- 09:30, 27 November 2023 Monday

2.3.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	IOC	Ms Sheila Stephens Desbans	Head of Sport Development Unit
2.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
3.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
4.	OTU	Mr John Kotsifas	President of OTU
5.	OTU	Mr Stuart Lee	Secretary General of OTU
6.	KIR NOC	Mr Nicholas Mcdermott	President of KIR NOC
7.	KIR NOC	Mr Tenoa Betene	Secretary General of KIR NOC
8.	KIR MNA	Mr Nelson Ekeaua	President of KIR MNA
9.	KIR MNA	Ms Teburenga Tiamuera	Secretary General of KIR MNA

2.3.3. Details

KIR NOC Support

- The KIR NOC consistently supports Taekwondo by providing scholarships to 2 athletes (1 for full and 1 for half).

Annual National Championships

- National Championships are held annually around July for a week. Taekwondo events span 2-3 days with approximately 50-60 participants.

WT Support for Equipment

- WT needs to identify suitable storage locations meeting specific conditions for competition mats and Protector Scoring System (PSS) support.
- IOC funds may cover incurred customs fees.
- Planning for support ideally before July 2024.



2.4. Meeting with NZL MNA President

2.4.1. Date and Time

- 12:00, 28 November 2023 Tuesday

2.4.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	NZL MNA	Mr Jinkeun Oh	President of NZL MNA

2.4.3. Details

NZL MNA-NOC Relationship

- NZL MNA is actively working to improve its relationship with its NOC.

- NZL athletes are not participate to Pacific game due to OUT&NOC were not recognized as NF.
- NZL president will visit to WT on Jan to see SG.

MNA Efforts for small islands in Oceania

- NZL MNA is conducting an instruction training course and Poom/Dan grading test through the Kukkiwon Oceania Branch set in New Zealand to support the self-sufficiency of small MNAs in the South Pacific.

Challenges in the South Pacific

- The South Pacific region faces challenges in executing long-term coaching assignments due to a lack of applicants and the high cost of airfare between island nations.

Seeking solutions

- Discussions with Kukkiwon, Taekwondo Promotion Foundation (TPF), and KOICA are necessary to explore solutions and address the identified challenges.

2.5. Meeting with NMI NOC and OTU

2.5.1. Date and Time

- 18:30, 28 November 2023 Tuesday

2.5.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	OTU	Mr John Kotsifas	President of OTU
4.	NMI NOC	Mr Nick Gross	Chef de Mission (CDM), Director of School Programme of NMI NOC

2.5.3. Details

Overview of Northern Mariana Islands (NMI)

- NMI has a total of 19 sports federations, with the football association being a FIFA member. However, Taekwondo is not yet an official sport recognized by the NMI National Olympic Committee (NOC). Despite this, due to its status as a U.S. territory, NMI cannot participate in the Olympics.

Taekwondo Clubs and Challenges

- There are Taekwondo clubs in the Northern Mariana Islands, but they are all individual businesses, making it challenging to assess the current situation.

Challenges Due to Typhoons

- The region faces difficulties in sports promotion due to the large but frequent typhoons, causing disruptions in domestic sports activities and infrastructure.

Potential Benefits of WT Membership

- Becoming a World Taekwondo (WT) member would open up opportunities for coach and referee training through the Oceania Taekwondo Union (OTU) and provide assistance in establishing association statutes and policies.



2.6. Site inspection of facilities for the Olympic 2024 Qualification Tournament and a joint training camp in the Solomon Islands

2.6.1. Date and Time

- 13:00, 29 November 2023 Wednesday

2.6.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	SOL NOC	Ms Melinda Avosa	Secretary General of SOL NOC

2.6.3. Details

Accommodation Arrangements

- Athletes from the Solomon Islands and Kiribati are flexible in staying at accommodations near the basketball court of the 2023 Pacific Games. However, specially invited coaches and athletes should be prepared to reside in designated apartments (Capital Park).



Meal Preparations

- It is suggested to provide meals in the form of packed lunches, aiming to reduce athletes' movement, enhance safety, and focus on efficiency.

Utilization of Training Facility

- The basketball court of the current Pacific Games venue is proposed as a suitable training facility.



2.7. Meeting with a President of the Korean Community in the Solomon Islands

2.7.1. Date and Time

- 16:00, 29 November 2023 Wednesday

2.7.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	SOL KOR	Mr Junyoung Choi	President of the KOR Community in the Solomon Islands

2.7.3. Details

Introduction of Taekwondo for grassroots in the Solomon Islands

- A presentation on the promotion and current status of Taekwondo as a form of grassroots sports was provided, highlighting its role in community physical activity.

Support for Solomon Islands (SOL) MNA

- There are ongoing plans to support the Solomon Islands MNA in integrating Taekwondo into the 2024 school curriculum. The aim is to incorporate Taekwondo into the educational program as part of physical education.

Discussion with WT for Further Support

- Considering the support required for these initiatives, there is a need for future discussions with World Taekwondo (WT) to explore collaboration and assistance.



2.8. Meeting with SOL MNA

2.8.1. Date and Time

- 08:00, 30 November 2023 Thursday

2.8.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	SOL MNA	Mr Derick Faisi Afu	President of SOL MNA
4.	SOL MNA	Mr. Wesley Taloga	Secretary General of SOL MNA

2.8.3. Details

Joint Training Schedule

- The joint training is scheduled to commence around January 20th next year. Efforts will be made to ensure that the necessary support items arrive before this date. Items such as training kick pads and Protector Scoring Systems (PSS) will be sought for support.

Training Sessions

- Training will be conducted twice a day, each session lasting 2 hours. There will be one session on Saturday, and Sunday will be a rest day.

PSS Preparation

- The PSS will be set up a few days before the end of the training to allow athletes to simulate and familiarize themselves with the equipment.



2.9. Meeting with TGA MNA Vice President

2.9.1. Date and Time

- 14:00, 30 November 2023 Thursday

2.9.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	NZL MNA	Mr Jinkeun Oh	President of NZL MNA
4.	TGA MNA	Mr Paul Tatafu	Vice President of TGA MNA
5.	TGA MNA	Mr Yoonpil Baik	Grand Master in TGA

2.9.3. Details

IOC Support for DNSS Project

- The IOC is currently in discussions to support the DNSS project through the TGA National Olympic Committee (NOC).

Training Facilities and Equipment in Tonga

- Tonga lacks a dedicated taekwondo training facility. There is a need for a space, mats, training equipment such as kick pads and Protector Scoring Systems (PSS), and a program with coaches for ongoing training.

Introduction of Taekwondo in School Curriculum

- Tonga MNA is working collaboratively with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Sports to introduce taekwondo into the school curriculum in 2024.

Current Challenges and Initial Operations

- Despite various limitations, Tonga MNA plans to initiate operations using locally available taekwondo enthusiasts and support from South Korea, including uniforms and belts.

Participation in World Taekwondo Championships

- Due to limited information, knowledge, and budget constraints, participating in the World Taekwondo Championships is currently challenging for Tonga team.

Recruitment of Coaches and Training Opportunities:

- The most pressing need is for coaches, but recruitment in the South Pacific is challenging. As an alternative, WT is exploring the option of inviting TGA athletes to Korea for training before March next year. Alternatively, sending experts to the Brisbane Taekwondo Training Centre is being considered.



2.10. Meeting with SOL NOC

2.10.1. Date and Time

- 11:00, 01 December 2023 Saturday

2.10.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	SOL NOC	Ms Melinda Avosa	Secretary General of SOL NOC

2.10.3. Details

Olympic 2024 Qualification Tournament Venue

- The venue for the Olympic 2024 Qualification Tournament is planned to be the current dining hall. Installing partitions to create one court should be sufficient.

Transportation and Accommodation

- Cooperation with the GOC is essential for well-prepared transportation. Athlete accommodations should be close to the venue, with designated hotels for the headquarters and athletes. Referees and teams should not stay together.

Meals Planning

- Breakfast will be provided at the hotel, lunch at the venue, and dinner can be chosen between the hotel and the venue. Advance requests for meals should be collected through application forms. Meals for TD and referees should be arranged at the venue during the competition.

Technical Manual Sharing

- WT will soon share the Technical Manual with SOL NOC.

Roles and Responsibilities

- SOL MNA will focus on technical matters, while NOC will handle logistics. SOL NOC should also be involved in the joint training camp in January 2024.

Inclusion in School Curriculum

- If SOL NOC proceeds with adopting taekwondo into the school curriculum, WT is willing to assist by sending experts to train local teachers.

2.11. Meeting with an IOC Sports Ambassador (TGA)

2.11.1. Date and Time

- 14:00, 01 December 2023 Saturday

2.11.2. Attendees

	Org.	Name	Title
1.	WT	Ms Seungmin Lee	Head of WT MRD
2.	WT	Mr Woongki Kim	Assistant Manager of WT MRD
3.	IOC	Mr Pita Taufatofua	IOC Sports Ambassador

2.11.3. Details

Brisbane Taekwondo Training Centre

- The Brisbane Taekwondo Training Centre, established in Australia, aims to be accessible to teams from Pacific Island nations. It plans to open in January 2024, allowing Oceania athletes to train at any time. The sports facility for revenue generation will operate separately.

Challenges Faced by Pacific Island Nations:

- Pacific Island nations like Tonga, Solomon Islands, and Kiribati lack facilities and coaches, presenting challenging conditions. Considering coach deployment, the local salary standard is approximately \$6,000. However, the key concern is ensuring the sustainability of coaching support.

Visa Challenges and Time Constraints

- Athletes from Tonga face significant challenges in obtaining visas for international competitions, with a processing time exceeding two months, creating substantial difficulties.

Government Initiatives in Tonga

- The Tongan government is actively working to improve the environment for women exposed to violence, utilizing sports as a catalyst for positive change. Taekwondo is identified as a leading sport in this endeavour.



3. Summary and Recommendation

The island nations of the South Pacific face significant challenges in terms of geographical accessibility, resulting in overall poor conditions for training facilities, equipment, and instructors. A common requirement among these nations is the dispatch of professional instructors to cultivate a sustainable local workforce. However, the unfavourable geographical conditions and challenging environment have made it difficult to attract applicants for an extended period. These nations express a desire to revive the past dispatch programs supported by the South Korean government. World Taekwondo (WT) intends to engage in discussions with relevant organizations to explore possible solutions.

As an initial step, WT proposes to dispatch experts to the Solomon Islands for a short-term period to conduct joint training with the Kiribati team in preparation for the Olympic 2024 Qualification Tournament scheduled for April next year. The training venue, accommodations, and other specifics have been identified locally, with detailed matters to be discussed in ongoing consultations.

Moreover, targeting the Kiribati National Championships in July next year, WT plans to support the installation of Protector Scoring Systems (PSS) and other equipment in advance, ensuring a smooth local competition. Continuous assessment and exploration of local needs for sustained support and development strategies are in progress.

Due to the practical challenges of dispatching experts for the Tonga team, consideration is given to inviting the team to Korea for a short, intensive training period.

Based on the above considerations, WT could select the following support projects for South Pacific Member National Associations (MNA):

1. Dispatch of experts for local training and joint training organization.
2. Invitation of local teams to Korea and the Brisbane Training Centre in Australia for concentrated training.
3. Support local competitions by providing equipment (PSS and other necessary gear) for competition-level upgrades.

Additionally, exploring additional support measures for projects aiming to include Taekwondo in school curricula in some countries is deemed necessary.

