

SAMBO UNITY DECLARATION

7 March 2014

We, the undersigned supporters of the sport of Sambo (also known as Cambo, Sombo, Combat Sombo, Freestyle Sambo and other names), including the leaders of virtually every longstanding national level organization dedicated to Sambo in the United States of America, have joined together to make this declaration of condemnation of USA SAMBO, Inc., to correct misinformation disseminated to the public by the leaders of USA SAMBO, Inc., to openly declare disapproval of their conduct and to demonstrate our lack of support for their role as the new FIAS recognized National Federation for the United States, affirming as follows:

1. USA SAMBO, Inc. is the newest of many national organizations conducting Sambo programs in the United States. It was only recently created (in February, 2011) and has never run national championships, contrary to several other American Sambo organizations (some dating back to 1975) that have demonstrated long lasting levels of success with regard to Sambo promotion and development in America. USA SAMBO, Inc. nonetheless sought and obtained recognition by FIAS at the 2013 World Congress (by a vote which was not unanimous), in opposition to the wishes of the vast majority of samboists in the United States. We believe USA SAMBO, Inc. received its final blessing from FIAS as a result of ethnocentric and nepotistic bias, rather than a demonstrated record of success. Other than a figurehead American President, Mr. James Binns, who has never been part of the Sambo community or practiced Sambo, USA SAMBO, Inc. is essentially run by its Vice-President Mr. Mikhail Kozitsky. It is the opinion of the undersigned that USA SAMBO, Inc. and Mr. Kozitsky have demonstrated an extremely poor understanding of American sports culture in their attempt to employ a top-down and approach to Sambo development in a non-democratic, non-transparent, unethical, secretive and dictatorial manner. USA SAMBO, Inc. does not fully understand the structure of sport governance in the United States and has little or no relationships with sports authorities in America. In fact, they have left the vast majority of the grass-roots American Sambo community disenfranchised. USA SAMBO, Inc. clearly lacks the needed skills to advance the sport in the United States.
2. In response to the disarray of the sport of Sambo at the international level, going back over two decades, numerous Sambo organizations have arisen in the United States, all of which have run more events and have at some time had more members than USA SAMBO, Inc.. In an attempt to achieve some unity in the sport, a completely neutral Sambo Tournament was held at the Arnold Classic Sport Festival in 2013, open to all organizations and affiliated to none. In 2014, USA SAMBO, Inc. attempted to take control of the Arnold Classic Sambo Tournament using its newly granted FIAS recognition as leverage; rather than create events of its own or cooperate under the tournament's existing director. This was done with complete disregard of the tournament director's wishes and objection by the bulk of samboists in America who came to participate in a neutral event as part of an attempt at Sambo unity.

3. USA SAMBO, Inc. was invited to participate in the Arnold Classic Sambo Tournament as an organization, on an equal basis with all other Sambo organizations in the United States, its officials were invited to referee, its representatives were given V.I.P. access and allowed to present medals, on an equal basis with all other U.S. Sambo organizations. Rather than cooperate, USA SAMBO, Inc. tried to take over and insist that they were in charge of the event, with illegal, unethical and unsportsmanlike conduct, for which the Arnold Sambo organizing committee had to twice complain to FIAS in writing. Among many inappropriate actions, USA SAMBO, Inc. engaged in the following:
 - a. Set up a Facebook event page in competition with the already established official Facebook even page, creating confusion and implying they were in control of the event. USA SAMBO, Inc. illegally used the official commercial emblem of the Arnold Festival without permission.
 - b. Sent messages to the Arnold Classic Organizers trying to control the conduct of the Sambo tournament, attempting to go over the head of the tournament directors. For example, they insisted that USA SAMBO, Inc. approved mats be used, then offered mats with a demand to the tournament director to pay for shipping.
 - c. Disseminated inaccurate tournament information not authorized by the Arnold Classic Sambo Tournament directors, creating confusion.
 - d. Tried to sell equipment at the event without paying for a commercial booth, and were told they could not.
 - e. Tried to have a USA SAMBO, Inc. general meeting on-site, but were told they could not. A complaint was filed with FIAS on this point and all though the tournament directors were assured that this would not happen again and that there would be cooperation, USA SAMBO, Inc. again attempted a meeting at the headquarters hotel nearby (which no one would agree to attend).
 - f. Allegedly told some organizations and clubs that they could not participate.
 - g. Posted misleading results and accounts of the event with various media outlets, including the FIAS website, continuing to imply they had organized the event under the USA SAMBO, Inc. banner.

The aforementioned actions of USA SAMBO, Inc. went against the spirit of cooperation agreed upon and supported by all other Sambo organizations and created discord instead of supporting unity.

We, the undersigned, in the best interests of the sport of Sambo in the United States, publicly denounce USA SAMBO, Inc. for their conduct and reject leadership without representation and democracy. We support bringing all Sambo groups in this country together, democratically selecting leadership and obtaining the support of the legitimate sporting authorities of the United States. We call on FIAS to take note of the lack of support for USA SAMBO, Inc. by those in America involved with the sport and recommend that their new membership not be finally approved.

ATTACHED: Signed supporting statements

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I support the Declaration of 7 March 2014 in the best interests of Sambo in the United States:

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____