FIFA Statement on allegations of repression against workers’ rights advocates in Qatar

FIFA has taken note of the allegations about repressive steps taken against workers’ rights advocates in Qatar as published in a Daily Mail article of 14 May 2022.

FIFA’s commitment to human rights is steadfast in line with FIFA’s Human Rights Policy (see here) and article 3 of the FIFA Statutes. Since 2016, FIFA has been developing and continuously expanding a strategic human rights programme to embed human rights across all of its activities in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As enshrined in paragraph 5 of FIFA’s Human Rights Policy, FIFA is committed to uphold and promote the highest international labour standards for workers in its supply chain and, in particular, the principles contained in the eight core ILO conventions. In addition, the protection of human rights defenders working to advance human rights in relation with FIFA’s activities is an important priority of FIFA’s human rights work, in line with paragraph 11 of FIFA’s Human Rights Policy and the FIFA Statement on Human Rights Defenders and Media Representatives (see here).

In that respect FIFA is implementing a far-reaching human rights due diligence process in relation to the FIFA World Cup 2022. These efforts are detailed in the Sustainability Strategy for the competition (see here) and the progress report on strategy implementation (see here). In particular, the Human Pillar of the strategy outlines the efforts to protect workers involved in the preparation and staging of the competition, and objective S4 outlines the joint commitments and initiatives taken by FIFA and its Qatari counterparts to respect and help protect the rights of media representatives.

FIFA deems any form of reprisals for workers who raise concerns unacceptable. At the same time, FIFA is not currently aware of concrete evidence that the practices mentioned in the Daily Mail report would take place with respect to workers involved in FIFA World Cup-related projects. We are in touch with stakeholders to better understand the allegations made and, should such practices be confirmed in association with the FIFA World Cup, discuss adequate steps FIFA may take to help protect workers’ rights advocates in relation to its operations.

Furthermore, FIFA encourages everyone who wishes to raise concerns about potential adverse human rights impacts linked to the FIFA World Cup to consider reporting such cases through the human rights grievance mechanism for FIFA competitions, which allows for secure and anonymous reporting (see here).

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