

Update Statement by FIFA's Human Rights Advisory Board Following the Board's Fourth Biannual Meeting

We held the fourth meeting of the Human Rights Advisory Board in Doha, Qatar, over 1-4 October, 2018. This was the first time the Board conducted a country visit with the purpose of enabling us to better understand the current human rights context, progress and challenges connected to preparations for the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, in order to inform our recommendations to FIFA. We were joined on our visit by a member of the FIFA Governance Committee's working group on human rights, Mr. Rainer Koch, in order to connect our work to the Committee's statutory mandate on this topic.

We appreciated the invitation by the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC) and FIFA to hold our meeting in the local context. Our visit enabled us to discuss a range of human rights issues in depth with the SC, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and key staff from FIFA's Sustainability and Diversity Department. The agenda was also designed to benefit from briefings and discussions with the local office of the International Labour Organization (ILO) that is overseeing the technical cooperation agreement between the ILO and the Qatari Ministry of Labour, the Director of the Qatari Government Communications Office, representatives from the National Human Rights Committee, representatives from the SC's Accessibility Forum, and representatives from the Karama Initiative (involving companies engaged in broader construction projects in the country).

We also joined part of a joint inspection visit by the global trade union Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) together with SC staff on the construction site for the Al Rayyan stadium. We want to particularly thank the worker representatives, the BWI team, and the members of the SC's Worker Welfare Unit for enabling us to observe a meeting of the site's Worker Welfare Forum during our visit.

Our discussions took place within the wider context of promised labor law reforms in Qatar, and the importance of the ILO's agreement with the government to strengthen labor standards across the country as a whole. Topics we discussed during our meeting included:

- The importance of supporting the ILO and Ministry of Labor's efforts to ensure the prompt and full implementation of the new law abolishing exit permits for the majority of foreign workers;
- The need for the SC, and the construction sector more broadly in the country, to build on action taken to date in order to better understand the factors that appear to be contributing to a number of 'non-work-related deaths' among workers in the sector (including the physical environment, nutrition, and underlying chronic health conditions) and the relationships between them, in order to take more effective action to prevent such deaths;
- The positive work that has been done by the SC on the stadia sites under its control to improve respect for migrant workers' rights, particularly in the areas of workplace health and safety, accommodation standards, universal reimbursement of recruitment fees and the collaboration with BWI to strengthen the system of worker committees, as well as the challenges that remain given the substantial gap between the current situation in the country and international standards on freedom of association and non-discrimination (for migrant workers in particular);
- Understanding the scope of FIFA's human rights responsibilities when it comes to construction connected to the 2022 FIFA World Cup in the areas of utilities, transportation

and hotels, including a focus on the case of workers from Mercury MENA which was recently publicised by Amnesty International;

- The evolving status of freedom of expression in the country with a new law due to come into effect in 2019 that will apparently eliminate the legal basis for formal censorship of publications;
- The steps being taken by the SC to integrate human rights in safety and security preparations, including the training of public security forces, with a focus on individuals or groups that are subject to discrimination or otherwise vulnerable, particularly due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
- The work being done by the SC to ensure accessibility and to strengthen respect for the rights of persons with disabilities not only in SC sites but more broadly across the country.

We appreciated the insights gained from a range of expert stakeholders in preparing for our visit. This helped us maximize the time spent in discussions on substantive issues while on the ground. As usual, our meetings were organized by FIFA; the meetings were hosted in the Supreme Committee's offices. We appreciated the time and engagement of a range of SC staff, and especially the open and productive exchange we had with the Secretary General of the SC as part of our visit.

Over the coming weeks, we will work on a number of specific recommendations to FIFA in relation to the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, as well as on several other topics, and we will report publicly on those in early 2019.

In the meantime, we anticipate that the Advisory Board's second full report, containing our recommendations from October 2017-September 2018, and FIFA's responses to them, will be published by FIFA during October.

The FIFA Human Rights Advisory Board was established by FIFA in early 2017 to help strengthen its efforts to ensure respect for human rights. The Board is an independent body composed of eight international experts in human, including labor, rights and anti-corruption issues from the United Nations, trade unions, civil society and business who have been appointed for an initial term of two years. The Board provides FIFA with advice and recommendations on all issues that it considers relevant to the implementation of FIFA's human rights responsibilities under Article 3 of the FIFA Statutes, as elaborated in FIFA's Human Rights Policy.

The eight members of the Board provide advice on an independent basis and receive no financial or other compensation for their time from FIFA or from any other football entity.

FIFA publishes the Advisory Board's formal reports on its website. In addition, FIFA and the Board have agreed that all statements and reports produced by the Board will be made publicly accessible via the website of the independent Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC).

All members of the Advisory Board participated in the visit. The members are:

- *William Anderson (adidas)*
- *Rachel Davis (Shift) – Chair*
- *Ignacio Packer (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) – Deputy Chair*
- *Sylvia Schenk (Transparency International Germany)*
- *Theo van Seggelen (FIFPro)*
- *Lene Wendland (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights)*
- *Brent Wilton (The Coca-Cola Company)*
- *Ambet Yuson (Building and Wood Workers' International)*