



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

May 28, 2015

Mr. Joseph S. Blatter
President, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)
FIFA-Strasse 20
P.O. Box
CH-8044 Zurich
Switzerland

Dear Mr. Blatter:

RE: REVOCATION OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION HOSTING THE 2018 FIFA WORLD CUP

The FIFA World Cup is one of the most important international sporting events in the world. It is an event of epic proportions that delivers top-class sporting action and thus has a large social, economic and development impact. The hosting of FIFA World Cup competitions requires a great deal of commitment from a host country to respect key values and moral imperatives commonly shared by the international community that brings with it a whole array of relevant responsibilities.

In 2010, the 2018 World Cup was awarded to the Russian Federation by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association. However, recognizing that sport occurs only within the framework of peace, unity, non-discrimination and respect for human rights, we believe that permitting the Russian Federation to host a world-class event of this magnitude is clearly incompatible with the FIFA's core principles and objectives, based on the following:

Since March 2014, Ukraine has been suffering from brutal interference in its internal, sovereign affairs by the Russian Federation including the military invasions in Crimea and Donbas, illegal occupation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula and orchestration of violent terrorist activities across eastern Ukraine. Russian regular and irregular soldiers, military equipment and weapons continue to flow across the border into Ukraine. As a result of this military aggression, over 6000 people have been killed, tens of thousands have been wounded and millions have been forced to flee their homes.

The dire consequences of Russian aggression in Ukraine have resulted in violations of the fundamental principles of international law and the post-WWII international security order. These acts are of grave concern for the community of nations which have sanctioned the Russian Federation and should also include international organizations, including those engaged in sport.

The Russian Federation's continuing violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine has been strongly condemned by the free world. On March 27, 2014 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution 68/262 "Territorial integrity of Ukraine" in response to the 2014 illegal invasion of and occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. The resolution, which was supported by over 100 United Nations member states, affirmed the United Nations commitment to recognize Crimea within Ukraine's international borders and underscored the invalidity of the 2014 Crimean referendum conducted by the Russian Federation. On April 9, 2014 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe ("PACE") also

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passed Resolution 1988 in which the Assembly strongly condemned Russian military aggression and the subsequent occupation of Crimea, which is in clear violation of international law.

Furthermore, the leaders of the G7 countries – the United States, Canada, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Japan - along with Poland, the Netherlands, South Korea, Georgia, Moldova, Turkey, Australia and the European Union as a whole also condemned the Russian Federation's actions, accusing it of breaking international law and violating Ukrainian sovereignty. Consequently, many of these countries imposed sanctions against Russia or Russian individuals or companies. **It is now time for international sports organizations to add their powerful voice.**

Article 23 of the FIFA Code of Ethics of July 25, 2012 ("the Code of Ethics") expressly prohibits any offence of the "dignity or integrity of a country, private person or group of people through any contemptuous, discriminatory or denigratory words or actions on account of race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason." According to the preamble of the Code of Ethics, FIFA "bears a special responsibility to safeguard the integrity and reputation of football worldwide. FIFA is constantly striving to protect the image of football, and especially that of FIFA, from jeopardy or harm as a result of illegal, immoral or unethical methods and practices."

Yesterday, US and Swiss authorities seized documents at FIFA and "opened criminal proceedings against persons unknown on suspicion of criminal mismanagement, and of money laundering in connection of the allocation of the 2018 and 2022 Football World Cups."

Taking this into account and considering that the World Cup host country usually makes up the "public face" by which FIFA expresses its values to the world, we strongly believe that it is completely unacceptable to have the Russian Federation as the host country for the 2018 World Cup. A country which is engaged in military aggression, human rights violations and support of terrorist activity must not host the most important football event in the world. Russia's behaviour expressly contradicts FIFA's values, and considerably undermines the reputation of world football in general and of FIFA in particular.

In light of the above, we ask FIFA respond to Russia's aggression, fundamental violation of international law and core shared values by immediately withdrawing the right from the Russian Federation to host the 2018 World Cup.

Earlier in its history FIFA contributed to international efforts to end apartheid when it formally suspended the membership of the South African FA between 1964 and 1992. Today your action is strongly needed once again. We hope that FIFA will act in accordance with its stated values and revoke the hosting privilege for the 2018 World Cup from the Russian Federation.

Yours very truly,

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS



Paul M. Grod
National President