



Plenary sitting

8.6.2015

B8-0550/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission
pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure
on recent revelations of high-level corruption cases in FIFA
(2015/2730(RSP))

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Petras Auštrevičius, Ivo Vajgl, Marielle de Sarnez, Johannes Cornelis van
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on behalf of the ALDE Group

**European Parliament resolution on recent revelations of high-level corruption cases in FIFA
(2015/2730(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication of 18 January 2011 entitled ‘Developing the European Dimension in Sport’ (COM(2011)0012),
- having regard to its resolution of 2 February 2012 on the European dimension in sport¹,
- having regard to the Commission White Paper on Sport (COM(2007)0391),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 6 June 2011 entitled ‘Fighting Corruption in the EU’ (COM(2011)0308),
- having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2013 on match-fixing and corruption in sport²,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2013 on organised crime, corruption and money laundering: recommendations on action and initiatives to be taken³,
- having regard to the Commission’s EU Anti-Corruption Report of 3 February 2014 (COM(2014)0038),
- having regard to Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA of 22 July 2003 on combating corruption in the private sector⁴,
- having regard to the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 May 2014 on the European Union Work Plan for Sport (2014-2017)⁵,
- having regard to the ‘Stockholm Programme – An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens’,
- having regard to the agreement on the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive),
- having regard to the Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 23 April 2015 on the reform of football governance,

¹ OJ C 239E , 20.8.2013, p. 46.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0098.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0444.

⁴ OJ L 192, 31.7.2003, p. 54.

⁵ OJ C 183, 14.6.2014, p. 12.

- having regard to Article 2 of the FIFA Statutes, which establishes that the objectives of FIFA include the following: ‘to promote integrity, ethics and fair play with a view to preventing all methods or practices, such as corruption, doping or match manipulation, which might jeopardise the integrity of matches, competitions, Players, Officials and Members or give rise to abuse of Association Football’,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas 14 FIFA officials, including its Vice-President, were arrested on 27 May 2015 by Swiss authorities in Zurich; whereas the arrests were made at the request of the US Department of Justice on the basis of charges of money laundering, racketeering, bribery and fraud;
- B. whereas the 14 FIFA officials arrested are under investigation by the US FBI for corruption involving bribes worth more than USD 150 million;
- C. whereas it is a proven fact that FIFA has operated for many years as an unaccountable, opaque and notoriously corrupt organisation; whereas the recent arrests confirm that the fraud and corruption in FIFA are systemic, widespread and persistent rather than involving isolated cases of misbehaviour, as claimed by former FIFA President Joseph Blatter;
- D. whereas a separate criminal investigation into how the 2018 and 2022 World Cups were awarded to Russia and Qatar, respectively, has also been initiated by the Swiss and US authorities;
- E. whereas FIFA’s re-election of Joseph Blatter as president and its decision not to publish the findings of an internal inquiry into the selection of Russia and Qatar as hosts of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, respectively, show that it has been acting in an irresponsible and unaccountable way and has remained unwilling to reform or to make the changes needed to improve the governance of international football;
- F. whereas the resignation of Joseph Blatter and the arrests of FIFA officials have created the conditions for radical reforms of FIFA’s structures and practices to improve its governance and to fight corruption in the organisation;
- G. whereas the integrity of sports organisations is of great importance, since both professional and amateur sport play a key role in the global promotion of peace, respect for human rights and solidarity, bring health and economic benefits for societies and have an essential role in highlighting fundamental educational and cultural values and promoting social inclusion;
- H. whereas major sporting events provide extraordinary opportunities to spread the values and principles linked to sport;
- I. whereas sport represents a large and fast-growing sector of the EU economy and makes an important contribution to growth and jobs, with value-added and employment effects exceeding average growth rates;
- J. whereas football is a sport with high social visibility that needs to have the highest

standards of governance; whereas the governance of international football is in urgent need of reform;

- K. whereas the situation in FIFA could not have reached the current situation if the national football associations had made every possible effort to prevent this from happening;
 - L. whereas corruption is an area of particularly serious crime with a cross-border dimension and often has implications across and beyond EU borders, and whereas the EU has a general right to act in the field of anti-corruption policy;
 - M. whereas Article 67 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) stipulates the Union's obligation to ensure a high level of security, including through the prevention and combating of crime and the approximation of criminal laws; whereas Article 83 TFEU lists corruption as a particularly serious area of crime with a cross-border dimension;
 - N. whereas, if not addressed urgently and properly, corruption may continue to undermine trust in sports institutions and threaten the integrity of sport as a whole;
 - O. whereas the Commission and the Council have recognised the need for a partnership between football's governing bodies and public authorities for the good governance of the game, which respects the self-regulatory nature of professional sport and which has led to the structured dialogue on sport;
 - P. whereas transparency, accountability and democracy – in other words, good governance – in sports organisations are prerequisites for such a self-regulatory regime, and for the sports movement to effectively and structurally prevent and fight fraud and corruption in sport;
 - Q. whereas the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport condemned the latest developments at FIFA and called for the 'restoration of trust and establishment of a solid system of good governance at FIFA' in his statement of 3 June 2015;
 - R. whereas Parliament has called on football's governing bodies to establish greater democracy, transparency, legitimacy and accountability (i.e. financial auditing by an independent auditing authority) and good governance, and has asked the Commission to provide guidance as to how legitimate and adequate self-regulation can be supported;
 - S. whereas the fight against corruption is one of the priorities of the Stockholm Programme, which is guiding the Commission's actions in the field of justice and home affairs;
1. Endorses the indictment by US Attorney General Lynch which alleges corruption within FIFA that is rampant, systemic and deep-rooted;
 2. Emphasises that the corruption allegations against FIFA and the latter's lack of credibility will have a devastating impact on the entire football pyramid, from the top echelons of professional football to amateur grassroots clubs;

3. Considers it regrettable that the deplorable state of affairs within FIFA is deeply negative for the reputation of football as a whole;
4. Strongly emphasises that football, as a sport, is irrelevant to the culture of corruption and must be protected, by every means, from being stigmatised because of the current developments within FIFA; reiterates that football and sport in general have a profound positive impact on the daily lives of millions of citizens, in particular young people;
5. Is convinced that in-depth structural reforms within FIFA are a matter of urgency;
6. Welcomes Joseph Blatter's resignation as FIFA's president, and the criminal investigations currently being conducted, which should trigger reforms to ensure full transparency and accountability in FIFA;
7. Urges FIFA's Executive Committee to implement structural reforms in order to bring transparency and accountability and to guarantee open, balanced and democratic decision-making processes within the association;
8. Believes that this will require a broad reform process, including a review of FIFA's statutes, structure, codes and operational policies and practices;
9. Believes that the introduction of term limits and independent due diligence for members of the Executive Committee, including the president, together with transparency in respect of decision-making processes and the remuneration of executive and senior management, is essential to restoring credibility and trust;
10. Stresses the need for the FIFA to conduct an external and fully independent financial audit assessing the reliability of its financial statements;
11. Urges FIFA to implement strict ethical standards and a code of conduct for its management and Executive Committee, to be supervised by an independent monitoring body;
12. Calls on all contracted sponsors and broadcasters to demand and support a reform process within FIFA by making public pronouncements against corruption in sport, and to follow up their words with continued pressure;
13. Stresses that, in view of the transnational nature of corruption in sport, efforts to fight it require more effective cooperation among all stakeholders, including public authorities, law enforcement agencies, the sports industry, athletes and supporters, and that emphasis should also be placed on action aimed at education and prevention in this area;
14. Recalls that good governance in sport is a precondition for the autonomy and self-regulation of sports organisations, in accordance with the principles of transparency, accountability and democracy, and stresses the need for a zero-tolerance policy on corruption in sport; underlines the need for appropriate representation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process; notes that best practices of other sports organisations can be adopted;

15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up and prioritise the work and actions relating to good governance within the EU Work Plan for Sport, and to make sure that national associations are fully involved in action aimed at better governance at European and international level;
16. Calls on the Commission, in coordination with the Member States and in cooperation with Interpol, Europol and Eurojust, to take all appropriate measures to tackle any possible indication of corruption by FIFA and national football association officials on EU territory and to fully cooperate with the US and Swiss investigating authorities;
17. Calls on the Member States to enhance European law enforcement cooperation through joint investigation teams and cooperation between prosecution authorities; stresses the need for the introduction and effective enforcement of measures to combat illegal activities in sport and to guarantee the effective integrity of their governing organisations;
18. Calls on the Commission to assess whether the recent agreement on EU legislation on money laundering is sufficient to tackle money laundering by EU-registered sports governing bodies and their officials, and whether any adjustment is needed in order to allow sufficient scrutiny of their bank accounts;
19. Insists that the fight against corruption with regard to the governance of FIFA also be accompanied by clear commitments and measures on the part of FIFA against other forms of corruption, in particular match-fixing;
20. Stresses the need for all future reforms within professional football to include substantial provisions for the protection of the rights of athletes, trainers and teams; underlines, in this connection, the importance of addressing third-party ownership of players in European sport;
21. Recalls the importance of having clear and transparent rules for the awarding of World Cups, and of ensuring the establishment of adequate information and supervision machinery, in order to make sure that this procedure guarantees equality between bidding countries and a final decision based strictly on the merit of their projects;
22. Underlines the utmost importance of the investigation by the Swiss and US justice systems of the decision by FIFA's Executive Committee to award the World Cup in 1998, 2010, 2018 and 2022 to France, South Africa, Russia and Qatar; in this respect calls on FIFA to publish the Garcia Report in full;
23. Highlights the importance of ensuring that the follow-up investigation into past corruption practices within FIFA includes, wherever justified, the removal of all officials involved in financial misconduct, and a review of the decisions to award the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar, respectively; calls for the EU to monitor this process closely and to enable the necessary conditions for an unbiased external investigation;
24. Calls on all international sports organisations, and in particular on the International Olympic Committee (IOC), FIFA and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) to ensure that any country bidding to host a major sporting event undertakes, in

all activities linked with the organisation and conduct of the event, to abide by international standards in respect of fundamental rights;

25. Asks international sports organisations to introduce procedures to verify integrity and mechanisms to prevent, detect and punish all acts of corruption and financial misappropriation;
26. Asks UEFA and the national football associations to step up their efforts to implement fundamental reform measures within FIFA, and in particular the recommendations set out in this resolution, both directly and through the agency of their representatives in the FIFA Executive Committee, by the end of 2016;
27. Calls on the Member States to consider the withdrawal of EU national teams from the 2018 and 2022 World Cups and the blocking of FIFA's financial assets in the EU if the necessary changes do not materialise;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the national football associations, the Association of European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL), the European Club Association (ECA) and the International Federation of Professional Footballers (FIFPRO).