



Julie Verhaar
Acting Secretary General
Amnesty International

Via e-mail:
To: stephen.cockburn@amnesty.org

Zurich, 25 March 2021

Human Rights and FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

Dear Ms Verhaar,

Thank you for your letter dated 15 March 2021 with respect to labour rights and the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. We welcome the continued dialogue with Amnesty International on a range of topics related to our strategic human rights programme, including with respect to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The wellbeing of workers who are involved in the preparation and delivery of our competitions is of utmost importance to FIFA. We believe that the unprecedented efforts by FIFA and the other tournament organisers to safeguard workers who build infrastructure and deliver services for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and the progress achieved in that respect over the past years are a strong testament of that commitment. We will continue to grow and strengthen these efforts over the next two years, with further workers becoming involved in the tournament operation. We will do so in line with the our [Human Rights Policy](#) and the commitments and initiatives outlined in the [Sustainability Strategy](#) for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which outlines the joint commitments by FIFA and its host country delivery partners.

In that respect, I would like to share the following main considerations in response to your letter.

a) Recognition of progress

We note your acknowledgement of progress made by FIFA in recent years in implementing its wider human rights responsibilities following the introduction of the statutory human rights commitment in February 2016, as well as the recognition of the positive impact of systems to ensure decent living and working conditions of construction workers preparing the FIFA World Cup 2022 infrastructure and the significant labour rights reforms adopted by the State of Qatar.

We welcome Amnesty's recognition of this progress, which is in line with similar recent statements by the FIFA's independent Human Rights Advisory Board, United Nations' Special Rapporteurs, the International Labour Organisation ILO, as well as trade unions and other experts in the field.



b) Status and continued expansion of due diligence measures

Over the past years, FIFA has set up a robust human rights due diligence process to identify and address human rights risks associated with the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. As such, from 2016 to 2018, FIFA led the development of a detailed human rights risk assessment with input from a range of human rights organisations, including Amnesty International, and worked with its Qatari partners to develop and publicly communicate joint commitments and actions in the form of the tournament's Sustainability Strategy. Further, in early 2018, FIFA established a Doha-based team with human rights experts at its subsidiary FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 LLC (Q22) who work hand-in-hand with the FIFA Human Rights & Anti-Discrimination Department in Zurich and with the teams at the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC) to deliver on the joint strategy. In parallel, FIFA has worked closely with the SC since 2014 to develop and implement systems to protect workers on FIFA World Cup construction sites, which includes monitoring by the independent expert entity Impactt Ltd. and joint inspections with the international trade union for construction workers BWI, and has regularly engaged with Qatari authorities at different levels on labour rights reform in the country.

Based on the above and the fact that FIFA and Q22 teams are involved in the day-to-day delivery of all human rights-related initiatives of the strategy, lead the implementation of about two thirds of these initiatives, and embed our human rights commitment into policies and management systems, we respectfully but strongly disagree with your statement that FIFA takes a 'hands-off' approach to its human rights due diligence in relation to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. For further information in that respect, we would like to refer you to the October 2020 [Sustainability Progress Report](#) as well as well as the recently published [Fifth FIFA Human Rights Advisory Board Report](#).

That said, any human rights due diligence process is a continuous effort that requires constant review and strengthening and we have taken note of your recommendations. As you are aware thanks to the regular exchanges with our teams and your participation in the development of the sustainability strategy for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, all of these recommendations speak to our ongoing efforts at FIFA together with the other tournament organisers in delivering the sustainability strategy, and we will continue to report periodically on progress in that respect.

c) Integration of human rights requirements in bidding processes

In your letter, you also recommend that FIFA introduces human rights requirements in the bidding and awarding for all of its tournaments. In that respect, we would like to highlight that FIFA has been doing this since November 2017. The most far-reaching processes in that respect were implemented for the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, which will take place in Australia and New Zealand, and the men's FIFA World Cup 2026 which will be hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. Amnesty International provided helpful input into the development of these requirements in 2016, which are published on FIFA.com together with the respective strategies, independent human rights assessments and other relevant documentation provided by bidders who bid for FIFA's flagship tournaments since the introduction of these new requirements.

In closing, please let me assure you that FIFA remains steadfast in its commitment to human rights and to protecting workers involved in the preparation and staging of its tournaments. We are



confident that, through continued engagement, concrete action and thanks to the commitment and dedication of many within Qatar, further improvements will be realised before the start of the tournament in November 2022 and that the changes made will leave a lasting and sustainable legacy in the region long after the last ball has been kicked in 2022.

We look forward to continuing our engagement with Amnesty International along the way.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Cook', is positioned above the printed name.

Joyce Cook CBE, OBE
Chief Social Responsibility & Education Officer