

MEDIA RELEASE

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ENGLAND UNITES WITH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO FIGHT DISCRIMINATION

- * England stands together with 9 other European countries to support season-long campaign for inclusion and against discrimination
- * The FA lobbies for update from FIFA on the introduction of a Migrant Workers' Centre in Qatar, to support new legislation for workers
- * Restates belief compensation should be paid for any injury or death during construction
- * Reinforces position on due diligence with suppliers in Qatar after further visits
- * Three Lions players to meet migrant workers after arriving at the FIFA World Cup

England will join forces with the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Wales in a campaign against discrimination.

Originally initiated by the Dutch, the OneLove campaign will use the power of football to promote inclusion and send a message against discrimination of any kind as the eyes of the world fall on the global game. The message will be symbolised by respective men's national team captains wearing the distinctive OneLove armband.

The FA's public commitment to the campaign will begin for England's UEFA Nations League match against Italy in Milan on Friday 23 September, with captain Harry Kane wearing the OneLove armband. The England team will also be wearing black armbands during both UEFA Nations League matches against Italy and Germany to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

All eight nations that have qualified for the 2022 FIFA World Cup will then adopt the OneLove armband – which carries a heart containing colours representative of all backgrounds – for fixtures at this winter's tournament with the intention to continue through to the end of the season.

England men's captain, Harry Kane, said: "I am honoured to join my fellow national team captains in supporting the important OneLove campaign. As captains we may all be competing against each other on the pitch, but we stand together against all forms of discrimination. This is even more relevant at a time when division is common in society. Wearing the armband together on behalf of our teams will send a clear message when the world is watching."

The FA's support for the OneLove campaign is one part of its wider pledge to demonstrate the values of the organisation and the England team, whilst acknowledging that progress has been made in Qatar since the awarding of the tournament. This commitment includes the England squad inviting migrant workers to the Three Lions' training base in Al Wakrah to engage with players.

For more than a year, The FA has been in dialogue with numerous human rights organisations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations [NGOs] to prepare for Qatar 2022, in order to get a balanced understanding of the key issues in the country and wider region.

Whilst understanding that there is still progress to be made in many areas domestically, the goal has been to learn how to best use our position as a national footballing governing body while ensuring the wellbeing of England fans, players and the support team.

In addition, representatives of The FA have visited the country several times – including as part of the UEFA Working Group on Qatar – and have had regular conversations with local authorities, migrant workers, charities, and organisations on the ground to better understand their day-to-day experiences and challenges.

The FA's position is that any injury or death related to any construction project should be compensated and the World Cup is no different. Equally The FA is supportive of the concept of a Migrant Workers' Centre, and have lobbied FIFA for an urgent update on progress. After the implementation of progressive legislation to give workers rights, the concept of a centre is to ensure that this legislation is implemented, and that there is awareness of the new labour laws and legal support where required.

The FA Chief Executive, Mark Bullingham, said: "We are coming together as a group to wear the OneLove armband until the end of the season as a visible show of support for inclusion in football - something we strongly believe in and have consistently supported.

"Along with the other members of the UEFA Working Group on Human rights, we are pushing FIFA for an update on the concept of a Migrant Workers' Centre in Qatar, to provide advice and help for migrant workers. It is clear that Qatar has brought in progressive legislation in the last few years to give workers rights, so this concept will help this legislation to take effect. We have met a variety of workers in Qatar on our visits to the country and whilst they recognise the substantial progress there are areas in which further support would make a huge difference.

"We continue to push for the principle of compensation for the families of migrant workers who have lost their lives or have been injured in construction projects. Again, we are pushing FIFA for an update on the compensation fund which has been consistently referenced as a safety net where workers and their families have been unable to secure compensation from the construction companies."

The FA has also been consistently clear that the companies it partners with in Qatar must meet the required standards regarding workers' rights and provide strong and rightful support to their employees. The FA's representatives continue to visit the country regularly to speak directly with service providers, as well as liaising with FIFA, which allocates many of the services used by competing teams as the tournament organisers.

Furthermore, as reiterated by the support of the OneLove campaign, The FA's belief is that the game is to be enjoyed and participated in by all, and that it will always use its influence to challenge and oppose hateful conduct.

The FA will continue to request more details on the assurances received from the Local Organising Committee that all fans, including those from LGBTQ+ communities, will be welcome and that the safety and security of every fan is the top priority.

Regular dialogue continues with local authorities on the ground to ensure this is the case, and more forums will be held for supporter groups to share their concerns and to feel The FA's support.

While being mindful of the ongoing challenges both at home and in Qatar, The FA recognises that international tournaments always unite and inspire the nation, and the England team looks forward to participating in the upcoming FIFA World Cup.