

World Cup 2022 in Qatar: Talks between FIFA, German Football Federation and Trade Unions add to pressure for Qatar labour standards reform

- *Unions present conditions for Qatar to keep World Cup*
- *"If Qatar does not respond properly, the World Cup should be taken from them" Michael Sommer*

Brussels, 20 November 2013 (ITUC OnLine): At the invitation of FIFA President Joseph Blatter following an initiative from German Football Federation (DFB) President Wolfgang Niersbach, a meeting at FIFA's Zuerich Headquarters today involving FIFA Executive Member Theo Zwanziger and Michael Sommer, President of the ITUC and the DGB was held to discuss the slave-like conditions on building sites for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The meeting came after increasing pressure for FIFA to respond to the global dispute about labour rights in Qatar where 4000 workers could die before the start of the 2022 World Cup.

Michael Sommer said:

"I am pleased at today's discussions with Mr Blatter, where FIFA made it clear that they take their responsibilities on social policy seriously, and that they will work with the international trade union movement for permanent improvements in the situation of migrant workers in Qatar. Qatar must ratify all the ILO core labour standards and accept objective verification.

The trade union movement has been demanding rights and better working conditions for the 1.3 million migrant workers in Qatar for months. Yet, apart from vague and general statements from the Qatar government, nothing has happened. That is why our position is unchanged: improved conditions for the workers must be on the agenda – now!

FIFA recognises that its international significance brings a responsibility to influence decision-makers in Qatar. Qatar must guarantee the core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), end discrimination and forced labour and allow freedom of association for its 1.3 million migrant workers. The direction being taken by FIFA in this sense is welcome, and respects the concerns of people who live for the 'people's game'. We as trade unions maintain our demand: if Qatar does not respond properly, then the consequences must follow, and the World Cup be taken from Qatar.

Also, German, European and international companies must not only follow economic interests. They must take responsibility for workers on construction sites in Qatar. Concretely, this means that general contractors must stop the wheeling and dealing of their subcontractors immediately and fulfil their responsibilities properly.

The trade union movement will not rest until working conditions in Qatar are fundamentally transformed," concluded Sommer.

To read FIFA's statement on the meeting:

<http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/qatar2022/media/newsid=2227055/index.html>

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 156 countries and territories and has 325 national affiliates.

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