

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

ITUC challenges football associations and sponsors to push for independent FIFA reform commission

Brussels, 17 June 2015 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC is calling on national football associations to push for genuine reform of FIFA through the establishment of an independent commission, and not merely accept that FIFA can suddenly reform itself under a leadership which has failed to end corruption after years of multi-million dollar scandals.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said, "The world of football and the international community at large must act, or corruption in one of the highest-profile international institutions will be legitimised with destructive impacts well beyond FIFA itself. The sheer scale of the corruption investigations and the links of those involved with violations of workers' and other human rights, demand urgent and decisive action. Major FIFA sponsors must also recognise that their reputations and even their own business models are at threat. Sponsors should make this reform commission a condition of any continued relationship with FIFA."

The call comes as Swiss prosecutors announced investigations into hundreds of bank accounts after seizing nine terabytes of computer data from FIFA.

With FIFA's Executive Committee due to meet on 20 July, the ITUC, along with Playfair Qatar, #NewFIFANow and sportswear brand SKINS, has been advocating for the setting up of the reform commission, to be led by an eminent person of international standing such as former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Other business leaders concerned about corruption are believed to be backing the call as well.

The role of an independent reform commission would be to conduct a comprehensive review of the management and governance of FIFA including its Constitution, Statutes, financial policies, committee structure, electoral processes and appointments; implement new governance arrangements; and, once implemented, oversee new elections under the revised governance arrangements. The review would tackle corruption and human rights issues, including workers' rights, long-standing areas of criticism on FIFA.

"With Sepp Blatter announcing that he will step down, there's a chance to undo the damage he has done to FIFA and to reform its management and governance. After year upon year of scandals, the only way to achieve this is through the independent commission," said Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 162 countries and territories and has 328 national affiliates.

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