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Mr Sepp Blatter
President
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FIFA/M/GS

20 September 2013

FIFA Executive Committee 3-4 October: Concern for players in Qatar and workers involved in the 2022 World Cup preparations

Dear Mr Blatter,

We note the deliberations within FIFA over concerns for the welfare of players and spectators in relation to FIFA's decision to hold the 2022 World Cup in the summer months in Qatar and the possibility that this decision may be changed.

The ITUC fully shares the concerns over the health and safety of players and spectators; however, we are deeply disappointed that the vastly more serious situation of the workers building the infrastructure for the Qatar World Cup is not being considered by FIFA. Several hundred migrant construction workers die each year in Qatar, working in intolerable conditions. The migrant labour force there is totally deprived of the internationally recognised human rights that should apply to all workers.

Following our meeting with FIFA General Secretary Jérôme Valcke in November 2011, FIFA issued a press statement reiterating that "FIFA upholds the respect for human rights and the application of international norms of behaviour as a principle and part of all our activities".

The forthcoming FIFA Executive Committee on 3-4 October will, we understand, discuss the holding of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar in light of the extremely high temperatures in the summer months. We would like to remind FIFA that the 1.2 million migrant workers there are forced to work in these conditions, and the extreme temperatures and lack of protection and rights cause an average of at least one death in the construction sector there every day. These are the very workers who will be building the 2022 stadiums and who are already building the infrastructure necessary for the World Cup. A record number of Nepalese workers died in the searing heat of July this year. Thirty-two workers died; many of them were young men in their twenties. Nepal accounts for less than half the migrant workers in Qatar, and reports from other countries-of-origin indicate that similar numbers of workers from those countries are losing their lives in Qatar.

People should not have to pay with their lives for the World Cup to be a sporting and commercial success, and we call upon FIFA at its October Executive Committee to turn the public commitment that FIFA has made on this issue into action. Despite more than two years of dialogue with and entreaty to the Qatar authorities, no substantive steps have been taken by them to guarantee the fundamental rights enshrined in international law. FIFA needs to send a very strong and clear message to Qatar that it will not allow the World Cup to be delivered on the back of the system of modern slavery that is the reality for hundreds of thousands of migrant workers there today. We

hope that the recent changes at the top levels of Qatar's government will enable progress to be made, but to date there has been no indication of this.

Without the necessary changes, more workers will die building the World Cup facilities than players will take the field in the World Cup finals.

We would like also to again address the issue of Mr Zahir Belounis, the French/Moroccan footballer, whose case we first drew to the attention of FIFA in May of this year. Despite many efforts to ensure that his case is resolved justly, Mr Belounis remains trapped in Qatar. We believe that an intervention from FIFA in this case would help ensure that justice is done.

We urge and respectfully request that FIFA:

- Revisit the bid conditions of the Qatar 2022 World Cup to ensure respect for human rights of migrant workers in Qatar in line with the International Labour Organisation's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; and
- Use its influence to help free Mr Zahir Belounis, the French/Moroccan footballer trapped in Qatar.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharan Burrow".

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary