



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

*Agenda: Strengthening transparency and combating corruption
in FIFA governance*



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Message to the delegates

Dear delegates,

It is our honour to welcome you to the council of Fédération Internationale De Football Association (FIFA) of the Kanakia Model United Nations 2024.

Firstly, we would like to introduce ourselves, so you can get to know us better before the conference in November.

My name is Naman Shah and I study in the IBDP2 at Kanakia International School. I specialise with engineering subjects and aim to pursue mechanical engineering in the future. I discovered MUNs in the 5th grade when the seniors of our school organised a mock junior MUN. Well, I did not speak much as I was shy and the delegate of Switzerland. Though, with time I developed an interest in MUNs and I hope to maintain it. Besides this, I am passionate about football and music as well as a movie geek and self proclaimed bowling professional. A piece of advice before the MUN: Be free and speak up! Do not hesitate or shy away! That's me and I am truly eager to meet all of you, old and new faces. See you soon!

My name is Aarav Agarwal and I study in the IBDP2 at Kanakia International School. Welcome to the FIFA Committee at KMUN! I am thrilled to serve as your Assistant Director for this exciting and crucial agenda. As someone who has had the privilege of playing football at the national level, I have a deep passion for the game and a keen interest in its governance. Outside of football, I'm a big foodie and love connecting with people, so feel free to approach me with any questions or even just for a casual chat. I believe that our committee has the potential to spark meaningful conversations and drive real solutions. I encourage all of you to engage fully, think critically, and challenge yourselves to come up with innovative ideas. I'm looking forward to seeing some brilliant debates and solutions from all of you, and I hope we can make this committee both productive and enjoyable!



Introduction and History

Corruption and transparency in European football have long been intertwined, shaping the sport in both positive and negative ways. Over the years, as football has grown from a beloved pastime into a massive global industry, opportunities for unethical practices such as financial misconduct and match-fixing have emerged. From early scandals in Italy and Germany to more recent revelations of financial irregularities, European football has faced numerous challenges. Organizations like UEFA have tried to counter these issues with regulations like Financial Fair Play (FFP), but the struggle to maintain ethical governance continues. The history of European football tells the story of a sport grappling with its growing commercial influence and the pressures that come with it.

Early Concerns and Scandals (1950s-1970s)

Concerns about corruption in European football began to surface as the sport became more commercialized in the 1950s and 1960s. During this time, match-fixing scandals started emerging, particularly in countries like Germany and Italy. One of the earliest and most notable incidents was the Italian "Totonero" scandal in 1980. This scandal exposed players and officials who were found guilty of manipulating matches for betting gains, leading to serious consequences for clubs like AC Milan and Lazio. The heavy penalties that followed highlighted the growing awareness of corruption in football, signaling the start of a long battle against such unethical practices.

The Rise of Financial Mismanagement (1980s-1990s)

As football gained even more popularity in the 1980s and 1990s, the stakes rose, leading to an increase in financial mismanagement. Clubs began engaging in tax fraud, money laundering, and other underhanded financial activities to gain a competitive edge. One example of this period's corruption was the Belgian football scandal in the late 1980s, where clubs were caught falsifying documents to hide illegal payments to players and managers. This era also saw the notorious Calciopoli scandal in 2006, which implicated top Italian teams like Juventus, AC Milan, and Fiorentina in influencing referee selections. Juventus was relegated, while other clubs faced penalties like point deductions, casting a shadow over Italian football.



Increased Scrutiny and Transparency Measures (2000s–Present)

By the 2000s, football faced increasing scrutiny as media and fans demanded greater transparency. Governments and the European Union began to investigate corruption more actively, leading UEFA to introduce the Financial Fair Play regulations in 2011. These rules were meant to encourage clubs to stay within their financial means and promote transparency. However, criticism emerged, with some pointing out that these regulations were not applied consistently, allowing certain teams to continue bending the rules.

The "Football Leaks" scandal, which began in 2015, exposed widespread corruption in European football, revealing secret contracts and shady financial deals involving elite clubs, players, and agents. Despite efforts to clean up the sport, these revelations highlighted the ongoing challenge of maintaining integrity in football.

Continuing Challenges

Even with various initiatives aimed at promoting transparency, corruption remains a persistent problem in European football. The sport's complex financial systems and the pressure on clubs to succeed create an environment where unethical behavior can thrive. Although organizations like FIFA and UEFA have made strides in addressing these issues, ensuring full accountability across European football clubs is still a significant challenge.

Football's history of corruption reflects the tension between the need for ethical governance and the immense business interests tied to the sport. As football's global appeal and economic significance continue to grow, the fight to preserve its integrity becomes even more crucial.

Timeline of Corruption and Transparency in European Football

1950s–1960s: Early Concerns and Emerging Scandals

- 1950s: Football becomes more commercialized in Europe, leading to suspicions of financial misconduct.
- 1960s: Match-fixing scandals start appearing in Germany as football's popularity and financial rewards grow.



1970s: Initial Scandals and Growing Awareness

- 1971: The Bundesliga Scandal in Germany uncovers match-fixing involving players and officials, one of the first major corruption cases in European football.

1980s: Major Scandals and Financial Mismanagement

- 1980: The Totonero scandal in Italy reveals match-fixing linked to illegal betting, involving top clubs like AC Milan and Lazio. Severe punishments are handed out, including relegation.
- Late 1980s: Belgian football scandal exposes falsified financial documents, tax evasion, and illegal payments in multiple clubs.

1990s: Heightened Scrutiny and Regulatory Responses

- 1993: Olympique de Marseille is stripped of their Ligue 1 title and banned from the Champions League after bribing Valenciennes players to underperform.
- 1995: The Bosman ruling reshapes the transfer system and underscores the need for transparency in contracts and finances.

2000s: Globalisation and Scandal

- 2006: The Calciopoli scandal in Italy exposes referee manipulation by top clubs, leading to Juventus' relegation and other clubs receiving penalties.

2010s: Transparency Efforts and Further Scandals

- 2011: UEFA introduces Financial Fair Play regulations to curb financial misconduct.
- 2015: The Football Leaks scandal reveals extensive corruption in European football, exposing unethical contracts and financial mismanagement.
- 2015: The FIFA corruption scandal brings global attention to governance issues, affecting European clubs' interactions with FIFA.

2020s: Ongoing Challenges and Reforms

- 2020: UEFA continues enforcing FFP, but criticism grows about selective enforcement.



- 2022: Investigations into Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain for breaching FFP rules keep concerns about transparency alive.
 - 2023: Juventus faces new legal troubles related to false accounting, showing that corruption remains a problem even for top clubs.
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Impact on Fans and Clubs

Impact on Fans

For fans, corruption in football leads to deep disappointment and a loss of trust. Fans invest emotionally and financially in their teams, only to feel betrayed when scandals emerge. For example, the Calciopoli scandal left Juventus supporters devastated, not only because of the relegation but also because their faith in the fairness of the game was shattered. When fans feel that matches are fixed or manipulated, their enthusiasm for the sport can diminish, leading to a potential decline in engagement.

Impact on Clubs

Clubs caught in corruption scandals suffer severe financial and reputational damage. Fines, loss of sponsorships, and a damaged public image can haunt a club for years. Olympique de Marseille's bribery scandal in the early 1990s resulted in the loss of a Ligue 1 title and long-term financial instability. Clubs may also face sporting sanctions such as relegation or point deductions, which can disrupt their success on the field. After Calciopoli, Juventus struggled to rebuild their reputation and regain their competitive edge in European football.

The legacy of corruption in European football demonstrates the ongoing struggle between financial ambition and the ethical governance needed to preserve the integrity of the sport.

Key Actors

1. Manchester City (England):

Currently under the ownership of Abu Dhabi's City Football Group, Manchester City has been in the middle of many inquiries pertaining to its FFP violations with UEFA. Its fast consolidation within the Premier League



With substantial investments from its benefactors has led to criticism of the club's financial transparency and an increase in state-sponsored ownership systems in English Football. For instance, Manchester City was banned from UEFA competitions for two years in the year 2020 for serious breaches of FFP rules especially in overstating of sponsorship revenues. Despite the fact that the ban was afterwards lifted by the Court of Arbitration for Sports, the case raised issues connected with the financial management and, in particular, the transparency of financial matters at the top level of the European football. These issues make City central to the dispute with UEFA and FIFA that places them at the forefront of championing changes in the financial regimen within football.

2. Paris Saint-Germain (France):

Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) is owned by Qatar Sports Investments which in turn has a clear relation with the Qatari authorities. This ownership model has raised issue, chiefly with respect to issues related to Financial Fair Play. Charges of how PSG has inflated sponsorship figures from Qatari firms to bypass FFP, have continually been leveled, questioned issues of financial propriety in football. The Ligue 1 side made transfers to the headlines in 2017 by signing Neymar from Barcelona for €222 million plus Mbappé. These transfers led to probes on the club's financial machinations that include, UEFA launching probes on whether or not the club was sticking to the fiddick-barry-both (FBP). This focus on the PSG's finances shows that general reform of FIFA governance is necessary in order to guarantee clubs' compliance with the fair and transparent financial rules.

3. Real Madrid (Spain):

It is Real Madrid as one of the most powerful and influential of clubs in world football and influential in defining governance structures of European and international football. Its incumbent president Florentino Pérez has been very critical of the current models of football governance,



Especially with regard to reforms that would portray the elite clubs. Real Madrid's participation in schemes such as the European Super League (ESL) has only added to its importance in current discourses about power, openness, and amalgamated earnings in football. Real Madrid is among several other top clubs in Europe that was part of the process of the foundation of the now-dissolved proposed ESL in 2021. The non-transparent decision-making of such breakaway leagues, which was developing only the superleague that was to be quickly stopped because of fans, governing bodies, and governments, among others, put into question the majoritarian decision-making concentrating in a few big clubs' hands. The ESL scandal drew attention to the fact that sports across football require better governance to be upheld in order to come up with decisions that will benefit the football fraternity as a whole.

4. Barcelona (Spain):

Barcelona FC is perhaps one of the most popular football clubs globally, but it currently has massive issues concerning its finances and leadership. Ever since the club has been facing acute financial problems primarily because of the excessive spending on players' wages and transfers for many years. As a result of the financial turmoil that hit Barcelona recently, he became one of the most integral stakeholders in the debate over how to properly reform financial operations in football. Barcelona took a financial hit late in 2021 when the team disclosed it owed €1+ billion and had to let go of its top talent, Lionel Messi, because the team could not provide his wages anymore. Criticism in the management with allegations of corrupt practices and the poor management of the club's financial strength has rarely been experienced. The process of the Spanish financial collapse in Barcelona has become a perfect example and an indication of the problems in FIFA and UEFA to enhance financial reforms in football.

Solutions Proposed in the Past

1. FIFA's Ethics Committee Reform (2012):

FIFA introduced an independent Ethics Committee aimed at investigating



and prosecuting cases of corruption among football officials. This reform was introduced after widespread allegations of bribery, including vote-rigging for World Cup bids.

2. Financial Fair Play Regulations (UEFA):

Although not a FIFA initiative, UEFA's Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations set a precedent for financial governance in football. These rules aimed to limit excessive spending by clubs to ensure financial stability, but they have been criticised for inconsistency in enforcement.

3. FIFA Reform Committee (2016):

This was implemented after the 2015 corruption scandal, FIFA convened the Reform Committee to rightfully change recommendations. These were such things as limiting the number of terms senior officials could serve, changing and making more transparent the bidding process for such events as the World Cup, and greater visibility in terms of financials.

4. FIFA Governance Regulations Update (2020):

FIFA has continuously been accused of corrupt practices, so it revised some measures in the governance regulations and shifted more focus towards the principles of transparency, integrity and accountability. Some of the component was, an increase in transparency measures by member associations, improvements in the monitoring of FIFA development funds and purging of perceived bias within FIFA decision-making bodies.

5. FIFA Guardians Programme (2019):

This program was launched to act as a measure to avoid the abuse and exploitation of children and young athletes in football. As an effort aimed primarily at protection, the initiative contributes to the enhancement of transparency in youth football systems, which would make all the clubs and associations responsible for youth players.



Alliances and Oppositions

1. Alliances:

- **Bayern Munich & Borussia Dortmund:** These German-based clubs have been associated with solid financial management and equally are on the same page when it comes to demanding financial accountability.
- **Liverpool & Arsenal:** Liverpool and Arsenal have shown their stand against the NDP by supporting financial fair play in football. They support policies that make provision for financial reckless and less and fairness in all the clubs. An example of synergy is in their policy for fair governance and in the responsible management of its finances.

2. Oppositions:

- **Paris Saint-Germain & Manchester City:** On financial regulations that may restrict the amount of spending these clubs can undertake especially if there are issues with their ownership models, these clubs may not agree.
- **Juventus & AC Milan:** These clubs have encountered problems with their financial eligibility and may not welcome rigorous changes that expose their frailty.
- **Paris Saint-Germain & Juventus:** Both Paris Saint-Germain and Juventus are usually criticized concerning revenue streams and expenditure in particular. Each club may not change some rules which lead to stricter financial regulation or more transparency because they may limit financial activities and affect competition advantage.



Glossary

1. FIFA: Fédération Internationale de Football Association – The global governing body for football, responsible for organizing international tournaments like the World Cup and setting regulations for the sport worldwide.

2. UEFA

Union of European Football Associations – The governing body for football in Europe, overseeing major European tournaments such as the UEFA Champions League.

3. Financial Fair Play (FFP)

Regulations implemented by UEFA to prevent clubs from spending more than they earn and to promote financial transparency in football.

4. Match-fixing

The illegal manipulation of the outcome of a football match for financial or betting gains.

5. Calciopoli

A major football scandal in Italy (2006) where top clubs like Juventus and AC Milan were found guilty of influencing referee appointments to manipulate match results.

6. Football Leaks

A series of leaks starting in 2015 that exposed widespread corruption in European football, including secret contracts, tax evasion, and unethical financial dealings.

7. Bosman Ruling

A 1995 European Court of Justice ruling that allowed players in the EU to move freely to another club at the end of their contract, changing the football transfer system.

8. CAS (Court of Arbitration for Sport)

An international institution that settles sports-related disputes, including financial and regulatory issues in football.



9. PSG (Paris Saint-Germain) A prominent football club in France, known for its high-profile transfers and financial scrutiny regarding compliance with FFP rules.

10. Transfer Window

Specific periods during the year when football clubs can buy, sell, or loan players.

11. Sponsorship Revenue

Income generated by football clubs through commercial deals with sponsors, often subject to scrutiny in FFP cases.

12. Relegation

The process of a team being demoted to a lower league based on poor performance or in some cases due to corruption or financial misconduct.

13. European Super League (ESL)

A controversial proposed football league that would have featured elite European clubs outside of UEFA's control, abandoned after public backlash in 2021.

14. Scouting

The process by which football clubs evaluate players for potential recruitment or transfer.

15. Referee Selection Manipulation

The unethical practice of influencing referee appointments to affect match outcomes, as seen in the Calciopoli scandal.

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