



Ms Macarena Sáez
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Human Rights Watch
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Zurich, 9 November 2022

Response to your letter regarding the protection of women's rights at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™

Dear Ms Sáez,

Thank you for your letter to the FIFA President dated 28 October 2022, the content of which has received our full attention. We appreciate the constructive engagement with you and your colleagues at Human Rights Watch on our human rights programme implemented in the context of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ and beyond.

Let me start by reaffirming FIFA's steadfast commitment to the protection of internationally recognised human rights across all its activities. These commitments are enshrined in articles 3 and 4 of the FIFA Statutes as well as in FIFA's Human Rights Policy, reflecting FIFA's responsibility under the United Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ [Sustainability Strategy](#) further specifies these commitments and the strategic programme implemented towards ensuring respect and protection of human rights in the context of this particular tournament.

FIFA implements its comprehensive programme to deliver on the joint strategy together with its Qatari counterparts, and in particular the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy. This includes a set of initiatives to provide an inclusive and safe tournament environment for everyone. In your letter, you specifically raise questions about the steps taken to ensure the rights of women who wish to report sexual violence, as well as regarding access to sexual and reproductive healthcare. In that respect, we would like to share information concerning three sets of measures taken by FIFA and its Qatari partners.

First, event-specific legal provisions have been enacted allowing for the protection of everyone involved in, or affected by, the competition in line with relevant FIFA requirements on safety and security applicable to any FIFA tournament host. In that respect, FIFA has sought and received additional assurances from the Qatari authorities about the implementation of such legislation. Following these exchanges, FIFA is confident that women will have full access to medical care, including any care connected with a possible pregnancy, regardless of circumstances and without questions asked about marital status. Furthermore, Qatari law criminalises assault and perpetrators will be prosecuted accordingly. In that context, FIFA has been assured that women reporting rape or other forms of abuse will not face any questions or accusations regarding possible consensual extramarital sexual relationships and should not fear repercussions of any form on that basis.

Second, the host country is offering specialised shelters and clinics for victims of abuse and has increased the capacity of such facilities significantly for the FIFA World Cup. We are also aware of the Workers' Welfare Department of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy's relevant work with the hospitality sector in Qatar and have ourselves conducted awareness-raising sessions with hotels, including with respect to sex trafficking. For additional information, we would like to refer you to the letter shared on 7 November 2022 by our partners at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy in response to your questions.

Third, FIFA operates a programme to identify potential human rights issues through various channels and to address these in collaboration with relevant third parties, as required. One of these channels is the FIFA World Cup human rights grievance mechanism, which can be accessed on [this website](#). It is available in seven languages and allows for anonymous and secure reporting. Specific procedures for handling cases of sexual abuse are in place, supported by medical, psychosocial and other expert care provided by the host country. Where appropriate, FIFA also involves its own experts on safeguarding and child protection in the assessment and handling of such cases.

In closing, we are confident that the necessary measures have been put in place by both FIFA and our host country partners to provide adequate protection and care for women in the context of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. As per separate discussions with your team at Human Rights Watch, we are available any time in the lead-up and during the tournament should you become aware of a situation that may require our support and intervention, and we thank you in advance for your collaboration.

We trust this information, together with the information shared by the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, addresses the queries raised in your letter and trust that it will be reflected fairly in your report and communications on the matter.

With kind regards,



Andreas Graf
Head of Human Rights & Anti-Discrimination