

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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August 30, 2016

Mr. Federico Addiechi
Head of Corporate Social Responsibility
Fédération Internationale de Football Association
Sent by email to: [REDACTED]@fifa.org

Dear Mr. Addiechi,

Human Rights Watch is preparing a report on the inclusion, in Israel's national football association, of six clubs located in Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank. The purpose of this letter is to share our concerns about the inclusion of the clubs and to invite you to provide information about FIFA's policies relevant to the issue. Our report will reflect all pertinent information that you provide by September 10.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an independent, non-governmental organization that monitors and reports on human rights in 90 countries around the world. All of our reporting is available at www.hrw.org.

We note with appreciation FIFA's commitment to respect human rights and ongoing work to ensure that its policies enable it to realize this commitment. We are concerned that allowing these six clubs to continue playing in the Israeli Football Association, which is a member of FIFA, runs contrary to this commitment.

In January, HRW published a report, [Occupation, Inc.](#), analyzing business activities in Israeli settlements located in the occupied West Bank, through the lens of the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Our research indicates that business activity in Israeli settlements inherently contributes to and benefits from serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. For that reason, we recommend that businesses cease all settlement-related activities, including locating activities in settlements, contracting for services in settlements and supporting settlements and settlement related-activities.

We have researched the six clubs playing in the Israeli Football Association (IFA), whose official, approved fields are located in Israeli

settlements: Ariel Indoor Football Club (futsal) (Ariel), Ariel Municipal Football Club (Ariel), Beitar Giv'at Zeev Shabi (Giv'at Zeev), Beitar Ma'aleh Adumim (Ma'aleh Adumim), Hapo'el Jordan Valley (Tomer), and Hapoel Oranit (Oranit). We note that at least one football field, approved by IFA judges applying FIFA rules, is built on land that is privately owned by Palestinian families who can no longer use or access it. In all cases, the fields are built on land that, whether public or private, belongs to Palestinians and can, under the international rules regarding belligerent occupation, only be used for their benefit or for Israeli military needs. Palestinians are not allowed to enter Israeli settlements, except as laborers who require special permits.

Our research suggests that by allowing these clubs to play in the Israeli Football Association, FIFA is essentially doing business in the settlements, contrary to its human rights responsibilities. We call your attention to the United Nations Human Rights Council decision of March 2016, to establish a database of companies doing business in the settlements. While criteria are still being established for creating the database, inclusion of these settlement teams could lead to FIFA being included in that list.

We are aware of the monitoring committee established to address disputes between the Palestinian and Israeli football associations, including the fate of the settlement clubs. We wish the committee success in resolving these disputes, but we caution that FIFA's human rights responsibilities should not be subject to negotiation.

We would like to ask:

1. Does FIFA have a policy regarding doing business in occupied territory? If so, what is it?
2. Are member associations required to meet ethical or legal guidelines as a condition of their membership in FIFA? If so, please send us any relevant guidelines.
3. Are there membership agreements, contracts and/or other documents outlining the relationship between the Israeli Football Association and FIFA? If so, may we receive copies?
4. When do you anticipate that FIFA will make a decision about whether to allow the clubs to continue to play in the settlements as part of the IFA?

Please send your written response by September 10, 2016, so that we can include it in our publication. We of course also welcome any additional comments or responses you wish to provide, and we will reflect them in our upcoming publication.

I would also welcome a chance to meet and discuss this in person. I could arrange to be in Zurich in mid-September, if that would suit you.

I thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sari Bashi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sari Bashi
Israel and Palestine Country Director
Middle East and North Africa
Human Rights Watch

Cc: Mr. Tokyo Sexwale, via e-mail to: [REDACTED]@sexwale.co.za