

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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August 31, 2016

Mr. Michael van Praag

Vice President

Union of European Football Associations

Sent by email to: [REDACTED]@knvb.nl

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www.hrw.org

Dear Mr. van Praag,

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 UEFA'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 are concerned that allowing these six clubs to continue playing in the Israeli Football Association, which is a member of UEFA, runs contrary to UEFA's human rights commitments.

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, UEFA is essentially doing business in the settlements, contrary to its human rights responsibilities.

We are aware of the monitoring committee established by FIFA to address disputes between the Palestinian and Israeli football associations, including the fate of the settlement clubs. We caution, however, that UEFA's human rights responsibilities should not be subject to negotiation.

We would like to ask:

1. Is UEFA familiar with the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights? If so, has it taken steps to implement the Guiding Principles?
2. Does UEFA consider itself bound by FIFA's human rights policies?

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.

We would also welcome a chance to meet and discuss this in person. Anna Timmerman will be in touch to schedule a meeting for after the elections.

We thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely,



Sari Bashi
Israel and Palestine Country Director
Middle East and North Africa
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Anna Timmerman
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