

19 April 2017

**Letter to FIFA Council Members  
cc FIFA Member Associations**

Dear FIFA Council Member,

**We, the Undersigned, Representing Millions, Urge You to Put  
Human Rights Before Politics and Expel Israeli Settlement Clubs**

We write to you with regards to the seven clubs\* that are participating in the official Israeli football league while being located in illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). We have become gravely concerned by the repeated delays that have beset FIFA's deliberations regarding these clubs, despite crystal clear advice from human rights experts and FIFA's own statutes. We urge you to insist that the Israel Football Association immediately revoke the affiliation of the seven clubs in question, or else face suspension from membership of FIFA. Put human rights before politics.

Last October, UN Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace Wilfried Lemke wrote to FIFA to urge a resolution of the matter of the settlement clubs, ***"in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions and FIFA Statutes within a reasonable time frame"***. We commend his words.

We wish to draw your attention in particular to the reaffirmation within UN Security Council Resolution 2334 that the establishment of Israeli settlements in the OPTs ***"has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law"***. FIFA itself has a legal obligation to avoid contributing to such violations.

The development of FIFA's own human rights policy has formed an important part of your organisation's ongoing programme of self-reform, and your Statute No. 3 now reads: ***"FIFA is committed to respecting all internationally recognised human rights and shall strive to promote the protection of these rights"***. This laudable goal will be judged by the extent of its implementation in real-life contexts, where powerful political actors frequently seek to muffle legitimate calls for justice. It will be a tragedy for us all – and a poor commentary on the progress of self-reform at FIFA - if your policy falls at the first hurdle. We urge you to ensure an outcome that is consistent with this renewed commitment.

We also note the long-standing stipulation under FIFA Statutes that ***"Members and their clubs may not play on the territory of another Member without the latter's approval"***, and that FIFA has acted to prevent violations of this rule in the past. We worry that failure to enforce it now, in a context of grave human rights abuses, would cause further damage to FIFA's fragile reputation. We urge you, instead, to continue to apply this rule with scrupulous consistency, and we remind you of the duties of neutrality and non-discrimination enshrined in FIFA's Code of Ethics.

For all these reasons we urge you to insist that the Israel Football Association immediately revoke the affiliation of the seven clubs in question, or else face suspension from membership of FIFA. This is the only course of action that accords with FIFA's legal and ethical responsibilities.

Finally, we understand from media reports that Mr. Sexwale now intends to present his recommendations on this matter to FIFA Congress next month on May 11, 2017. In the interest of transparency, we urge you to publish his report in full at the earliest opportunity.

We look forward to your earliest response.

Yours sincerely,

**Richard Falk**, Princeton University emeritus faculty member, former Special Rapporteur for Occupied Palestinian Territories, UN Human Rights Council, USA

**Ken Loach**, Director, UK

**Paul Laverty**, Director, UK

**Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro**, Former Brazilian Human Rights minister, Brazil,

**Juan Carlos Oblitas Saba**, Sports Director for the Peruvian Football Federation

**Daniel Fernando Abugattás Majluf**, Former President of the Congress of Peru, former Sports Director for the Peruvian Federation of Athletics, Peru

**Thulas Nxesi**, South African Communist Party Central Committee Member and South African Minister of Sports & Recreation (signed in personal capacity), South Africa

- Federación de Entidades Argentino-Palestinas, Argentina
- Australian Friends of Palestine Association, Australia
- Associoation-Belgo-Palestinienne, Belgium
- Comité BDS-ULB, Belgium
- European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine, Belgium
- Intal, Belgium
- Palestina Solidariteit vzw, Belgium
- Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, Belgium
- Union des progressistes juifs de Belgique, Belgium
- Vrede vzw, Belgium
- Workers' Party of Belgium (PTB-PVDA), Belgium
- BDS Botswana, Botswana
- Ciranda - Comunicação Compartilhada, Brasil
- Comitê do Grande ABC/SP de Solidariedade ao Povo Palestino, Brasil
- CUT-Brasil, Brasil
- Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra, Brasil
- NEPI - Núcleo de Estudos de Política Internacional, Brasil
- BDS Vancouver, Canada
- Canada Palestine Association, Vancouver, Canada
- Concordia Student Union, Canada
- La Coalition BDS Québec, Canada
- Tadamon! Montréal, Canada
- Organización Solidaria con Palestina Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile
- BDS Colombia, Colombia

- Red de Solidaridad con Palestina, Costa Rica
- ICAHD Finland, Finland
- Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP), France
- Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS), France
- BDS France campaign, France
- BDS42, France
- CCIPPP34 (Campagne civile pour le protection du peuple palestinien), France
- Collectif 69 de Soutien au Peuple Palestinien, France
- Coordination BDS à Grenoble 38 France, France
- Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine, France
- Union Juive Française pour la Paix (UJFP), France
- BDS Berlin, Germany
- BDS Hamburg, Germany
- Kenya Palestine Solidarity Movement, Kenya
- Engineering Professions Syndacate, Iraq
- Iraqi social forum, Iraq
- Sport against violence/ Iraq, Iraq
- Gaza Action Ireland, Ireland
- Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Ireland
- Boycott from Within (Israeli citizens for BDS), Israel
- ICAHD, Israel
- AD Sport Against Violence, Italy
- APD Hic Sunt Leones, Italy
- APS Libera Accademia di Roma LAR, Italy
- ASD Atletico Brigante, Italy
- Asd Birilli, Italy
- Asd StellaRossa 2006, Italy
- ASD Università Popolare dello Sport, Italy
- Atletico San Lorenzo, Italy
- BDS Italia, Italy
- Cagliari Social Forum, Italy
- Calcio Popolare Soccavo, Italy
- Comitato BDS Campania, Italy
- Comitato di base NoMuos/NoSigonella-Catania, Italy
- Comitato Pistoiese per la Palestina, Italy
- Commercio Equo e Solidale Coop. Soc. Onlus, Italy
- Coordinamento Campagna BDS Bologna, Italy
- Lunaria, Italy
- Palestinian Community Rome, Italy
- Rete di solidarietà con la Palestina di Pisa, Italy
- Rete Radié Resch - Udine, Italy
- Salaam Ragazzi dell'Olivio-Onlus-comitato di Milano, Italy
- Servizio Civile Internazionale, Italy
- U.S. Citizens Against War (Florence), Italy
- ULAIA ArteSud onlus, Italy
- Un ponte per..., Italy
- Unione Italiana Sport per tutti, Italy
- CPJPO, Luxembourg
- BDS Malaysia
- Diensten en Onderzoek Centrum Palestina (docP), Netherlands
- The Association of Norwegian NGOs for Palestine, Norway
- Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), Palestine
- Gibanje za pravice Palestincev, Slovenia
- BDS South Africa, South Africa
- South African Jews for a Free Palestine, South Africa
- Spanish Network Against the Occupation of Palestine, Spain
- Swaziland Solidarity Network, Swaziland
- Judar för Israelisk-Palestinsk Fred (JIPF), Sweden
- Association Swiss-Palestine, Switzerland
- BDS Switzerland, Switzerland
- Gerechtigkeit und Frieden in Palästina Bern, Switzerland
- Jewish Voice for Democracy and Justice in Israel/Palestine, Switzerland

- Clapton Ultras, UK
- Dorset Palestinian Israeli Peace Group, UK
- Easton Cowboys & Cowgirls, UK
- Friends of Al Aqsa, UK
- Friends of Sabeel, UK
- Frome Friends of Palestine, UK
- Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods, UK
- Jews for Justice for Palestinians, UK
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign, UK
- Palestinian Forum in Britain (PFB), UK
- Pax Christi British Section, UK
- Red Card Israeli Racism, UK
- Republica Internationale, UK
- Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, UK
- Stop the War, UK
- War on Want, UK
- Adalah-NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel, USA
- American Friends Service Committee, USA
- Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights, USA
- Bay Area Women in Black, USA
- Chico Palestine Action Group, USA
- Citizens for Justice in the Middle East, USA
- CODEPINK Women for Peace, USA
- Committee for Palestinian Rights (Maryland), USA
- Corvallis Palestine Solidarity, USA
- Delaware Neighbors Against The Occupation, USA
- Episcopal Peace Fellowship Palestine Israel Network, USA
- Friends of Sabeel - North America, USA
- Green Mountain Solidarity with Palestine, USA
- Jewish Voice for Peace, USA
- Jewish Voice for Peace - Bay Area, USA
- Jewish Voice for Peace, Los Angeles, USA
- Jews for Palestinian Right of Return, USA
- Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land, USA
- Madison-Rafah Sister City Project, USA
- Mid-Missourians for Justice in Palestine, USA
- Palestine-Israel Working Group of Nevada County, CA, USA
- Tennessee Campaign for Palestinian Rights, USA
- The Philadelphia Coalition for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions against Israel (Philly BDS), USA
- Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East, USA
- Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East, Massachusetts, USA
- United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network, USA
- United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR), USA
- United Methodists' Holy Land Task Force, USA
- US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, USA
- Utahns for a Just Peace in the Holy Land, USA

\* Maccabi Ariel (indoor futsal), Ironi Ariel, Beitar Givat Ze'ev Shabi, Beitar Ma'ale Adumim, Hapoel Oranit, Hapoel Bik'at Hayarden, Hapoel Katamon Yerushalaim (primarily located in West Jerusalem but plays some home games in Ma'ale Adumim) – see <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/09/25/israel/palestine-fifa-sponsoring-games-seized-land>