



October 19, 2015

Issa Hayatou
Acting President
International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA)
FIFA-Strausse 20
P.O. Box 8044
Zurich, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Issa Hayatou and members of the FIFA Executive Committee,

In 2013, our organization wrote to FIFA President Mr. Joseph Blatter expressing our deep concern over allegations of unethical behavior conducted by FIFA committee member and President of the Asian Football Confederation Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim al Khalifa. Sheikh Al Khalifa is a member of the Bahraini royal family and previously served as president of the Bahrain Football Association (BFA). As we explained in our previous communications, there is credible evidence that Sheikh Al Khalifa aided and abetted crimes against humanity while he was president of the BFA. In light of news that Sheikh Al Khalifa is seeking election as President of FIFA, we write now to urge you to terminate Sheikh Al Khalifa's candidacy for this position in the upcoming emergency meeting of the FIFA executive committee.

As you may know, in 2011, thousands of Bahraini protestors took to the streets to peacefully call for a democratic government that respects their basic human rights. Bahraini police responded to these protests violently, killing dozens of peaceful activists and arresting thousands. Shortly thereafter, the Government of Bahrain established a committee, through the country's Olympic Committee, to punish more than 150 members of the sporting community who participated in the protests. As a member of this committee, Sheikh Al Khalifa examined photographs of protestors and identified Bahraini athletes to the government's security forces. Security forces used this information to arrest, detain, torture, and publicly defame these athletes.

Although FIFA initiated an investigation in 2011 into the attacks against the players, the investigation was ostensibly dropped after many of the players were released from prison. Despite the releases, some players remain in detention today. Additionally, many other players are suspended from their club teams and are therefore ineligible to be considered for a spot on the national team. Some of them have left their home country for opportunities elsewhere, while suspended players who still live in Bahrain are unable to continue their work as professional athletes. There is no indication that any of the players have been compensated for the abuse they endured while in prison. Further, the perpetrators, including Sheikh Al Khalifa, have contributed to these offenses with impunity.

By helping Bahrain security forces identify football players among the protestors, Sheikh Salman Al-Khalifa has aided and abetted crimes against humanity and violated Articles 13, 23, and 24 of FIFA's Code of Ethics. In light of recent allegations of corruption against FIFA officials, appointing Sheikh Al Khalifa would further damage FIFA's international reputation. We therefore respectfully request that Sheikh Al-Khalifa's candidacy for the position of FIFA president be terminated.

Thank you for your consideration,

Husain Abdulla
Executive Director, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)