

REFERENCE

Player Letter

DATE

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Gianni Infantino
President
Federation Internationale de Football Association
FIFA Strasse 20
Zurich
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SUBJECT

FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

Dear President,

We write to you today as proud players of our national teams, proud representatives of our national player associations and under the umbrella of our international players' association, FIFPRO. It is the highest honour to represent our countries at some of the greatest sporting events, starting with the FIFA World Cup – the pinnacle of every player's career. 736 elite international footballers will have the honour of representing their country at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. Recognising that the game does not go ahead without us, the players, as we are both the product and the labour that brings competition to life.

We write to you at a time of unprecedented popularity of the game and growth in the women's football industry. Our game has never been as popular as it is today – 1.12 billion viewers watched the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup – and we are the first to recognise FIFA's contribution to this success: the World Cup has brought the skill and excitement of women's football to a global audience. The importance of national team football is deeply entrenched – around the world, the industry depends on it as a driver of visibility and commercial interest, and we as players know that national team performance in your competitions is critical in giving us viable career paths.

You, as FIFA, have stated that "*women's football is the **single biggest growth opportunity** in football today, and it remains a top priority for FIFA. Although the game has grown exponentially at all levels, the passion and rising popularity of the sport offers vast untapped potential. FIFA is investing in dedicated funding, human resources and innovative, tailor made development programmes, to bring women's football into the mainstream, where it belongs*". This is both an inspiring and empowering statement, and an ambition we share with you. If millions of girls and women want to start playing football today, that is a testament to the progress we have made together.

But those girls and women enter a world that is profoundly unequal. Many players at the Women's World Cup come into the tournament as amateurs or semi-professional, which undermines their preparation and, in turn, the quality of football we see on the pitch. Many players have no agreement with their Member Associations to ensure they receive fair and equitable treatment, including a guaranteed World Cup compensation, for example, as a portion of World Cup prize money. Therefore, no matter the amount of prize money available, players are not granted a share in what they endeavour



on the field to earn – a share that would support their careers and livelihoods. This is especially true for our fellow World Cup competitors around the world who are still not yet fully professional.

And when we consider the resources at your disposal – FIFA’s contracted revenue on 31 December 2021 stood at \$6.11 billion – it is clear that FIFA can play a huge role in the professionalization and growth of women’s football, creating a legacy of fair redistribution and access for all.

Today, we submit three proposals that are equal, equitable, and set a path for women’s footballers to have viable economic prospects through FIFA’s reach, resources, and already stated statutory commitments to non-discrimination:

- an **equal framework of regulations and conditions** for the Men’s and Women’s FIFA World Cups, including **equal prize money** for senior FIFA World Cups;
- a **global guarantee of at least 30% of prize money** for players who compete in the FIFA Women’s World Cup, paid in a timely manner, so that our sport continues to develop professionally;
- a binding, **global collective agreement** between FIFA and the players that enshrines these commitments.

We anticipate and look forward to changes in regulations that will bring absolute equality between the men’s and women’s tournaments in respect of travel conditions, delegation size, training venues and facilities for the first time in the history of the respective tournaments, setting a new elite standard for women’s football competitions. However, at our last respective FIFA World Cups, **women earned less than 7% of the men’s prize money**. That gap is significant in and of itself and tells only part of the story.

Many of your Member Associations around the world use the prize money awarded via performance and participation in the FIFA Men’s World Cup to finance a wide range of domestic initiatives and programmes; initiatives that are the lifeblood of football, from grassroots to youth development to officiating and coaching in that country. These programmes and initiatives gave us the start we needed to reach our dreams on the world stage. This is possible through the great level of financial reward available to MA’s for their success at the highest level of the men’s international game – qualification and performance at FIFA Men’s World Cups. However, rewards for qualification and performance at FIFA Women’s World Cups do not provide the same level of financial reward and, therefore, cannot provide the same or similar lifeblood to the domestic football ecosystem. Those financial rewards and recognition can extend in impact far beyond any professionalisation of the players.

They could, and they should. Instead, this heavily impacts how countries will disproportionately prioritise their efforts to support the men’s national team over the women’s national team. It also perpetuates the attitude of women’s football being a “cost” rather than a contributor to football in some parts of the world. This is because the same effort and achievement do not yield the same reward. We want our performance to matter, to be significant not only for us but for the entire football family in our countries and around the world.



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This goes far beyond the rewards from one tournament: at stake is our sport’s ability to become professional, accountable and fair. Only collective dialogue and agreements between women’s football players and the organisations that benefit from their work will make a better world possible. FIFA has already taken steps, alongside FIFPRO, to improve conditions in women’s football, by introducing global minimum standards for maternity and pregnancy. We believe we can go further, in a similar spirit of collaboration between players, our unions, and you as the global governing body.

FIFA has an opportunity right here and now – as we countdown towards the 2023 FIFA Women’s World Cup and its regulatory framework is decided – to give our teammates of today and tomorrow the treatment and recognition they deserve. As national team players, we want to leave women’s football in better shape than we found it; we want the next generation to enjoy better conditions and competitive opportunities than we did. And, we want to make our contribution in our countries to our own football community. Together, can we produce lasting change, leaving a legacy inspired by solidarity and collectivism? We know we can, and we want to meet you to discuss how. We hope you share the same ambition.

Please find on the following pages, our signatures as player leaders, signing on behalf of our respective national teams alongside our Unions from around the world as of 19 October 2022.

Kind regards,

The Players & Their Unions

David Aganzo
President

Jonas Baer-Hoffman
General Secretary

