

Open Letter – The 2026 FIFA World Cup and the credibility of football’s core values

Brussels, 03.02.2026

To the leadership of UEFA and the UEFA Member Associations,

We are writing to you as concerned supporters of football in view of the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup that will take place in the United States. Given the global reach and symbolic significance of this tournament, we believe that UEFA and its member associations have a responsibility to raise their voices when the core values of football appear to be at risk.

In recent years, especially during the Trump administration, the United States has adopted policies and used rhetoric that raise serious concerns about respect for international law, democratic standards and the principle of self-determination. This includes repeated statements and actions relating to Greenland. The population of Greenland has at times been discussed as if it were a strategic or economic asset rather than a community with the right to decide its own future.

Such rhetoric, whether presented as negotiation or provocation, reflects a style of power politics that contradicts the values that football is meant to represent. These values include respect, dignity, equality and mutual recognition among nations and peoples. Hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the United States risks normalizing and legitimizing these policies. A tournament that reaches billions of people cannot be separated from its political context. Each hosting decision sends a message about what the international football community is willing to accept or overlook.

UEFA has affirmed its commitment to human rights, inclusion and respect for international norms. These commitments must also hold when economic interests or political pressure become significant. Although UEFA does not organize the World Cup, it represents many of the most influential associations, clubs, players and fans in world football. Its voice carries moral and political weight within FIFA and beyond.

Remaining silent in the face of threats to sovereignty and self-determination, including those directed at Greenland, would undermine the credibility of the values that football claims to uphold. It would create the impression that principles lose importance when powerful host nations are involved.

We therefore call on UEFA and its member associations to take the following steps.

1. Publicly criticize the decision to award the FIFA Peace Award to Donald Trump and explain why this recognition contradicts central values of international football. This includes the commitment to human rights, equality and respect for sovereignty.
2. Use their influence within FIFA to ensure that the World Cup and other FIFA events are not used to legitimize or distract from policies and rhetoric that contradict international norms, including threats to the right to self-determination.

3. Support open discussions about possible consequences, including coordinated boycotts or other measures, if these values continue to be disregarded.

This letter is not directed against football itself, nor against players or fans. It is a call to take the values of football seriously, especially when the global public is paying close attention.

The 2026 World Cup will be remembered not only for goals and trophies but also for the decisions made by football's institutions. We urge UEFA to act according to its principles rather than convenience.

Sincerely,

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