



Mr Mustafa Qadri  
Equidem  
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Zurich, 10 November 2022

## **Response to your letter regarding the protection of workers involved in the construction of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ sites**

Dear Mr Qadri,

Thank you for your letter to the FIFA President dated 21 October 2022, the content of which has received our full attention.

Let me start by reaffirming FIFA's steadfast commitment to the protection of internationally recognised human rights across all its activities. These commitments are enshrined in articles 3 and 4 of the FIFA Statutes as well as in FIFA's Human Rights Policy, reflecting FIFA's responsibility under the United Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The [FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ Sustainability Strategy](#) further specifies these commitments and the strategic programme implemented towards ensuring respect and protection of human rights in the context of this particular tournament.

FIFA implements its comprehensive programme to deliver on the joint strategy together with its Qatari counterparts, and in particular the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC). In that respect, we would like to share three considerations in response to your letter.

First, most of the questions in your letter relate to the overall systems implemented over the past years by the SC's Workers' Welfare Department in relation to FIFA World Cup™ construction sites. As you know, the SC has been remarkably transparent on their mechanisms and related outcomes. This includes detailed information about points raised in your questions, such as the nature of the overall audit and compliance scheme, steps taken to identify and address issues related to wage payments, the efforts to ensure workers can raise their concerns through multiple, safe channels, as well as consequences for contractors who failed to comply with the SC's Workers' Welfare Standards. Information in that respect can be found in the yearly Workers' Welfare Progress Reports published by the SC's Workers' Welfare Programme since 2015.

In addition, the SC has, over the years, systematically invited experts for independent external scrutiny and advice to evaluate and further strengthen their systems. The two most notable elements of the programme in that respect have been: (1) the collaboration with the international union for

construction workers, Building and Woodworkers' International (BWI), which included regular joint inspections on FIFA World Cup sites since 2017; and (2) the invitation for an independent monitor, the UK-based firm Impactt Ltd, to conduct its own evaluations of the effectiveness of the SC's efforts, including through separate independent inspections of contractors involved in FIFA World Cup-related work. Yearly reports have been published on both these collaborations since 2016, jointly between the SC and BWI on their inspection programme, and separately by Impactt on its findings.

We would therefore like to refer you to the reports from the SC, BWI and Impactt published on [this website](#) for further information with respect to your questions on the overall measures taken to protect construction workers on FIFA World Cup sites.

Second, in your letter, you share labour rights concerns from interviews conducted with individual workers who were employed on FIFA World Cup construction sites. We would like to stress that none of the practices reflected therein, if substantiated, are acceptable to FIFA. We would also like to note that it is precisely these types of company malpractice that the workers' welfare programme for FIFA World Cup workers set out to prevent and, where identified, address. As has been found and recognised repeatedly by various independent experts assessing the programme over the years, tens of thousands of workers have in fact benefited from heightened standards through these efforts.

Based on FIFA's own close collaboration with the SC on this topic over the last ten years, the findings of BWI and Impactt, as well as the validation and recognition from other independent organisations in the field, FIFA has every reason to trust in the SC's resolve and commitment to protecting the workers involved in the preparation and delivery of the FIFA World Cup. Against this background, these issues could have been confirmed and duly addressed, as necessary, had the information gathered through worker interviews been shared with either FIFA or the SC sooner for it to be verified, which would have been in the best interest of the workers concerned. Despite the more challenging nature of verifying and addressing such issues once a project has ended, we would nevertheless encourage workers to raise possible open queries through the SC's Workers' Welfare hotline or the FIFA Human Rights Grievance Mechanism.

Third, with regards to long term legacy, FIFA remains in positive ongoing dialogue with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and all relevant authorities in Qatar over initiatives that will benefit migrant workers in Qatar long after the final game of the World Cup. As is widely recognised, the FIFA World Cup has served as a catalyst for labour reforms in Qatar – with innovations implemented by the SC on FIFA World Cup sites often described as an incubator for several of the countrywide reforms – and FIFA is intent on continuing to play its role in that respect together with other organisations in the field.

In closing, while the efforts to ensure the protection of workers involved in the preparation and delivery of the FIFA World Cup has not been without challenges, it is important to recognise the strong systems implemented by the SC for FIFA World Cup construction workers and the measures jointly implemented by the SC and FIFA for workers involved in the hospitality and other service sectors associated with the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. We consider this important because failure to recognise real progress risks undermining the efforts of those who led the charge in bringing about positive change and limits their ability to further push the envelope towards our shared objective of further improving the systems to protect workers' rights in Qatar and beyond.

We trust this information, together with the reports referred to in this letter and the feedback shared by the SC, addresses the queries raised in your letter and trust that that the efforts by FIFA and the SC will be reflected fairly in your report and communications on the matter.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AG', is positioned above the printed name.

Andreas Graf  
Head of Human Rights & Anti-Discrimination