



FIFA's Member Associations approve package of reforms

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Summary

"FIFA is currently going through the worst crisis of its history. The current crisis should also be considered as a unique opportunity for FIFA to renew itself." These are the opening words of the [2016 FIFA Reform Committee Report](#).

The package of reforms has now been approved by the FIFA's Member's Association in an attempt to improve the governance of global football. An Extraordinary Congress in Zurich saw over 85% of Member Associations vote in favour of the reforms.

Some of the reforms respond to the damning exposure of corruption by senior members of FIFA. These include a separation of political and management functions, limits on the power of key persons within the organisation, and comprehensive integrity checks.

The main changes

Term Limits: going forward the FIFA President, Council members and members of the compliance and audit committee may only serve a maximum of three terms (with each term being four years).

Separation of political and management functions within FIFA: a new Council will replace the current Executive Committee. The FIFA Council will be responsible for setting the organisation's strategy. It will be up to the General Secretary to implement

the strategy by making the operational and commercial decisions.

Election of Council members: Member Associations will elect Council members. All candidates will be subject to eligibility tests with a greater focus on integrity.

Disclosure of individual compensation: amongst others the FIFA President, Council members and the Secretary General must disclose salaries and any other compensation received on an annual basis. An Independent Compensation Committee will oversee this disclosure.

Control of money flows: the new Council will have no decision-making role over the execution of policies to generate or allocate funds. Rather three main bodies will be responsible for development and expenses (the Development Committee), creating and proposing budgets for approval (the Finance Committees) and overseeing the processes of generating and allocating funds (a fully-independent Audit and Compliance Committee).

Universal good governance principles: the introduction of a new position of Chief Compliance Officer is intended to reflect the move towards better governance (in particular by focusing on a new compliance program). The FIFA Statutes and the

Any comments or queries?

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statutes of its members must contain a number of good governance provisions including: neutrality in politics and religion, prohibition against discrimination and annual independent audits of financial statements.

A new Footballer Stakeholder Committee: to increase the representation in the FIFA Council the reforms aim to ensure that key stakeholder groups (clubs, players etc) are anchored or linked to FIFA committees.

Promotion of Women's football: the reforms mean that there must be at least one female representative from each confederation. The reforms also state that FIFA should recognise that Women's football is the biggest growth and development opportunity. Full participation at all levels of football is the main target.

Human rights will be enshrined in FIFA Statutes

Comment

The reforms were aimed at cleaning up FIFA's image and they do contain recommendations that will look to lead the governance structure to being more transparent and accountable.

Although the governance reforms seem sensible, there is a feeling amongst some of the "Key Stakeholders" that more can be done to protect their interests. For instance the European Clubs Association has taken exception to the proposal to increase the number of nations involved in a FIFA World Cup from 32 to 40 due to concerns over the alleged detrimental effects it might have on club football.

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