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COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND MEDIA

Crisis in leadership, governance and integrity in international football

Statement adopted by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media¹

The Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe expresses deep concern about recent governance and integrity issues surrounding FIFA, which raise renewed questions about transparency, accountability, human rights and good governance.

The FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) proposal, developed outside established governance procedures, illustrates the seriousness of these concerns and has sparked calls for accountability from confederations, associations, players, leagues, clubs and supporters.

The committee joins these calls, as the withdrawal of the FFE proposal does not remove the substantive questions it raised or the wider concerns about FIFA's governance and decision-making processes. It reflects a broader pattern of controversies surrounding FIFA, raising wider questions about political neutrality, integrity and the protection of FIFA's sporting and regulatory decisions from political, personal or commercial influence. The handling of the Folarin Balogun red-card suspension, following a public request by the US President for FIFA to review the decision, further underlines the importance of safeguarding the independence and credibility of FIFA's disciplinary process.

The committee supports calls for an independent external review of its governance framework for major strategic initiatives. Such a review should be genuinely independent, sufficiently broad in scope and lead to concrete recommendations and effective follow-up. It also considers the proposed consultation with confederations, member associations and stakeholders on strengthening FIFA's decision-making, transparency and accountability an important part of this process.

It recalls Assembly Resolutions 2420 (2022)² and 2607 (2025)³, reaffirming that business must not take precedence over sporting values and that international sport requires strong standards of human rights, transparency and accountability.

The committee echoes the Council of Europe Secretary General's warning to FIFA that political interference, gambling, and financial power are growing integrity threats and stresses the need for strong safeguards against such risks. The November Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, in Monaco, provides an important opportunity to address developments.

The committee and the Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport will contribute actively to this process, including by inviting FIFA leadership and relevant experts to a formal hearing.

¹ Statement adopted unanimously by the committee on 30 September 2026.

² [Assembly Resolution 2420 \(2022\)](#), "Football governance: business and values".

³ [Assembly Resolution 2607 \(2025\)](#), "Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities".