

MUSA HASSAN BILITY
CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL
3 ABDEL KHALEK SARWAT STREET, EL HAY EL MOTAMAYEZ
6TH OCTOBER CITY
EGYPT

29 July 2019

THE MEMBERS
FIFA COUNCIL
FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
FIFA-STRASSE 20,
P.O. BOX 8044 ZURICH,
SWITZERLAND

Dear sirs/Madams

RE: OPEN LETTER ON THE STATUS OF THE FIFA ETHICS COMMITTEE & DISPOSAL OF CASES BEFORE IT.

Please accept my compliments and best wishes for the stewardship of this great football organization.

I write to you, seeking your indulgence, with regards to the paradox of the FIFA Ethics Committee in the execution of its sworn mandate.

Many of you may be aware of the expedited ruling and disposal of a matter regarding my tenure as Liberia FA President, wherein the Ethics Committee saw fit to hand me a 10-year ban from all football activity plus a CHF 500,000 fine.

I have already commenced the legal process to contest this decision, however it would be a dereliction of duty on my part to keep silent when the FIFA Code of Ethics and the Ethics committee itself are weaponized against a select few, who are viewed as undesirable to the FIFA top brass.

Obviously, the entire footballing World has taken pause to consider the fact that the ruling on my case was delivered barely 24 hours after I had filed for arbitration at the Court of Arbitration in Sports (CAS), to contest the decision for FIFA-CAF cooperation which would involve FIFA taking over the running of the affairs of CAF from 1st August 2019.

Apparently, the decision by the Ethics committee was taken on 12th February 2019 but only took effect, after the infamous CAF General Assembly of 18th July 2019 in Cairo where I voiced my objections to the "FIFA takeover" of CAF in the presence of FIFA President Infantino.

This raises serious questions as to the independence and impartiality of the FIFA Ethics committee.

You will remember that as early as 2017, the Council of Europe, in a damning report had called into question the suitability of María Claudia Rojas, a Colombian judge, to head the Investigatory Chamber of the FIFA Ethics committee, for lack of expertise and experience in the stated area and so too her lack of any knowledge of English or French (official languages of FIFA).

The Council of Europe is an international organization whose stated aim is to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe.

Coming hot on the heels of the FIFA-gate scandal of 2015, such criticism from an organization of repute should have caused FIFA to pause and consider the implications of its choice and perception of every decision made by this committee thereafter.

Since then, Africa has watched in horror the abuse of the powers of the Ethics committee and the selective application of the FIFA Code of Ethics.

For example, the FIFA Ethics committee moved with great speed to hand lifetime bans on Mohammed Bin Hamman and his personal assistant Najeeb Chirakal over bribery allegations dating back to 2009.

In Africa, former Zambian FA President Kalusha Bwalya was handed a 2-year ban (later commuted on appeal) over the same bribery scandal in August 2018. However, other football leaders from Africa who featured prominently in the "Bin Hamman list of shame" continue to operate both at CAF and at FIFA, seemingly sure that these FIFA Ethics investigations will NEVER see the light of day.

Our own CAF President Ahmad Ahmad, arrested in Paris on 6th June 2019 over financial breaches while simultaneously having FIFA Ethics investigations over claims of financial impropriety and sexual harassment.

How do other FIFA Council members feel about sharing the same committee with someone who has been accused of serious crimes like sexual harassment? Has the council been briefed on the status of the investigation by a competent French body like "L'Office central de lutte contre la corruption et les infractions financières et fiscales" (OCLCIFF) regarding the financial dealings at CAF?

At CAF, a similar aberration was allowed by the CAF Executive Committee (EXCO) when it allowed the election of Patrice-Edouard Ngaissona from Central Africa Republic (CAR) to the EXCO despite serious allegations of crimes against humanity during the civil war in that country.

CAF and FIFA openly ignored the fact that Ngaissona had been barred from running for CAR President in 2015 for his alleged role in the atrocities.

Ngaissona was eventually arrested by French police in December 2018 and extradited to the ICC at The Hague to stand trial.

It would appear that football (especially African football) operates on different set of rules and lower threshold of credibility than the rest of the World.

As things stand now, FIFA Ethics committee appears to respond to the political whims of FIFA officials, denying it independence and non-partisanship in the execution of its mandate.

I call upon the members of the FIFA Council to urgently;

1. Convene to discuss the status of African Football and recommend the immediate stepping aside of CAF President Ahmad Ahmad pending completion of the FIFA Ethics committee and OCLCIFF investigations.
2. To reconstitute the FIFA Ethics committee with people who have a reputation for competence and independence.
3. To formally draw the attention of the Ethics committee to the skewed order of investigations and adjudications. By now, all the cases related to the 2009 bribery scandal by Mohammed Bin Hamman should have been concluded.

Sincerely



MUSA HASSAN BILITY
CAF EXCO MEMBER
LIBERIA