



To FIFA President Mr Gianni Infantino
Cairo, 17.07.2019

Re: Open letter to FIFA President

Dear Mr President,

Welcome to Africa, Welcome to Cairo,

It surely feels like home, for you are on conquered terrain. On behalf of the millions of Africans passionate about the sport and lovers of football, I would like to thank you for the particular attention you continue to pay to Africa.

Deep is your love for this continent where great mismanagement, poor governance, blatant incompetence, lack of professionalism are excelling and are at show on daily basis.

Africa owes you the choices and decisions you have continuously taken to determine the direction this continent should be taking. Decisions and choices that are making this continent today look like a continent of fools and imbeciles. Mr President, whilst I understand that your gate of entry into this continent has been via football where intellect might not be the best food served; let me assure you that this continent is full of brains, ones that are not attracted by promises for more money and forward funds; this continent is full of individuals who truly care about its development and growth, and maybe you should take a minute of your busy schedule to meet with them whenever you have the opportunity for it might make you start looking differently at it.

Mr President, you owe Africa better than you have served it so far. Mr President, while I understand your need to strengthen your voting base on the continent, you can't continue to do that in a way that disrespects the people of this continent. **You can't do that by continuing to turn a blind eye on allegations of misappropriation of football funds, you can't do that by continuing to have a FIFA that is selective in investigating those allegations.**

Mr President, we have all heard your speech at the 69th congress in Paris on the 05th June 2019, and we all appreciated the efforts you made in trying to present a clean FIFA to the world. It must have been a blow to that speech when the next day, CAF president was taken in for interrogation by the French police. Mr President is FIFA truly clean? Maybe? Just maybe? I wish I could say African football and the people leading it are clean too. **How could FIFA as a family be clean when one of his children continues to embarrass FIFA and the continent by ways of misappropriation of funds, sexual harassment allegations, lack of professionalism and blatant incompetence that are making media front pages and breaking news globally?**

Mr President, how could FIFA be clean when some of the football associations in Africa present to your administration invoices for paid goods that they have actually not paid for, and your administration in charge of controlling the distribution and management of FIFA FORWARD funds decide they won't look further into it or take action because it is an internal affair of said football association? FIFA's funds have continuously been used to serve the pockets of those managing football associations but FIFA will not ask too much about it because it could affect the outcome of the votes when time comes. **Mr President if your administration can't look into such matters, and can't take action for such crimes how effective will your 99.99% appointed "General Delegate" for Africa be for CAF and the crucial allegations against it?** Mr President if the mismanagement of FORWARD funds by a football association is seen by your administration as an internal affair of said football association is it fair for us to understand that mismanagement of funds by CAF are also an internal affairs of CAF? If such is the case why did FIFA feel the need to send a "General Delegate" to Africa? Is FIFA genuinely intending to fight

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1



corruption in football as you have on several occasions publicly claimed? How far is FIFA really willing to go?

Mr President, FORWARD criteria that gives access to development funds from FIFA to football federations and confederations are known by all members entitled to receive such funds, and one of the requirements is that the member/confederation should submit to FIFA the financial statement approved by the member's congress/confederation. **Mr President it is not a secret that CAF has not had a meeting of its finance committee in two years, nor is it a secret that no financial statement has been presented to congress for approval in two years, and yet CAF was able to access FIFA's FORWARD funds.** Is this a breach of FORWARD regulations? How exactly did CAF manage to gain access to those funds? Is this the practice of other confederations? Since precedent has been set with the blessings of FIFA can football federations that are failing to meet similar criteria or else come back and claim the funds they are being refused under pretexts of failing to meet criteria? **Is it a fair analysis to consider that by facilitating CAF access to FORWARD funds, FIFA became an accomplice of CAF and encouraged the disrespect of rules and regulations?** If the FIFA secretary general in her role at FIFA couldn't prevent this from happening, how effective will she be in addressing these challenges in her role as "Delegate General"?

Mr President, this morning I woke up looking for inspiration, and I couldn't find anything better than Ilhan Omar's video on patriotism which can be found on her Twitter page @IlhanMN. Allow me to quote her: "it is really important to stay vigilant and understand that patriotism isn't fully believing in a particular administration, true patriotism is about fighting for your country (continent) and its dignity", **"once we believe and protect a particular head of a country (FIFA, CAF, federation) then we lose sight of everything, and that is the biggest sign of trouble to come"**. She continues by saying: "My fear right now, and my biggest worry is when I see people who say, you can't say anything about the president, because in a democracy, in a country (organisation such as FIFA, CAF, Federation) that lives by a constitution that protects the right to free speech, you should be able to criticise your president, you should be able to hold your president accountable, you should be able to expect more without fear, without being looked at as someone who isn't patriotic".

Mr President, I have allowed myself to replace "country" in this speech by "continent, FIFA, CAF, federation" in order to make it contextual to the situation we live in football, FIFA, and CAF. **Mr President, criticising your decisions, and that of CAF leadership doesn't make me your enemy or that of CAF for I love my continent and have always served it, and continue to serve it to the best of my abilities.** Mr President, I believe in your love for this continent and that's why I am ready to help you do the right thing by it, and believe me Mr President it might not make you very popular amongst some of the football associations leaders on the continent, but it will make you the real hero for millions of African football fans and lovers, and you will finally have succeeded in your mission to make world football a clean environment that is corruption free, and FORWARD funds will finally serve the development purpose it is meant to.

Mr President, access to FORWARD funds shouldn't be a bargaining tool use for or against football associations on the continent. **It is not a secret that the majority of Football associations on the continent don't receive the 1.25M USD/year as per the forward programme and that it is not your fault.** You have tried to help them by pushing for the quick distribution of the funds and yet it hasn't been successful for the simple reason that many don't meet the requirements to fully access those funds, and this has made them very vulnerable. **Instead of accessing it as a right they now have to access it as a favour, and that is why those (unfortunately the majority) will always believe that by following orders as they come they will be granted access to the funds regardless of them meeting the criteria or not.** We both know that it won't be happening.



Mr President, your intentions for Africa might be honourable, but the approach you have decided to take is that of a king dealing with his subjects, and this has been made easy by those who have lost their sense of African pride, and decided to dishonour our past leaders who fought hard for this continent, and showed the world that Africa is indeed GREAT. **The people who have chosen to protect at all cost and by all means felt the need for you to attend their executive committee this morning so you could kill any resistance to the idea of your “General Delegate” to Africa.** Now that the pill has been swallowed, it must feel like a true victory, and a relief the general assembly will only be a formality as none of the presidents, with very few exceptions, will be willing to risk access to FORWARD funds by opposing your decision.

Mr President there are people on this continent who adhere to your ideas of a clean FIFA starting from the football associations, and I am one of the them. **Mr President I truly believe in your good intentions to help the continent to develop and grow, we are not all subjects therefore we would like for you to encourage FIFA to do the RIGHT THING and we are encouraging you to live by your words and stop protecting those who are shaming the beautiful game of football and embarrassing you.**

Mr President do the RIGHT THING and:

1. Stop protecting those who are shaming the game of football for it makes you lose credibility
2. Encourage FIFA to fast-track investigations on allegations received by the FIFA ethics committee, it makes you credible.
3. Help football associations to be professionally managed,
4. Provide access to FIFA FORWARD funds to all who meet the criteria and develop programmes to help those who fail to meet the criteria. Funds are for all
5. The right thing is to capitalise on the urge of FIFA to support CAF, by asking FIFA to speed up with the investigations that they themselves confirmed they were conducting

Dear President, thank you for taking the time to read my letter, I am not your enemy, I am a passionate football lover, and I endeavour to continue serving my continent AFRICA to the best of my abilities.

Thank you for trusting Africa with a FIFA Secretary General job, thank you for bringing our sister back home, Africa will be looking up to her, Africa will help her do the right thing, I will help her do the right thing as long as that is the intent. Africa is greater and bigger than the blind loyalty to faulty people.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Zelkifli R Ngoufonja'.

Zelkifli R Ngoufonja