

## **“Facts, not speculation”**

Given the events of the last few years I can understand that the public view FIFA with scepticism. However, from now on the focus should be on our actions and deeds, rather than on premature conclusions and speculation.

At last week's Congress, FIFA took huge strides toward its rehabilitation. We introduced a new programme to support the game: FIFA Forward. It is a tailor-made initiative with increased investment – and enhanced controls – in every member association and confederation. Furthermore, Congress elected new independent members to the critically important Governance, Disciplinary, Ethics and Audit & Compliance Committees. Actions, not words.

Moreover, we made history in Mexico: a woman was appointed to serve as Secretary General for the first time in FIFA's 112-year existence. Fatma Samoura of Senegal worked in numerous developing nations serving the United Nations' humanitarian mission for 21 years. She has the perfect blend of management skills and expertise in promoting governance and compliance. She will play a decisive role in FIFA's reconstruction.

I have used my 80 days in office to listen to all those who care about the game of football, from players and coaches to FIFA's member associations, our commercial partners, fans, legislators, and nongovernmental organisation representatives who monitor our stewardship of the game.

I was encouraged by much of what I heard; that we are following a credible strategy. It includes the implementation of a responsible and firm leadership of the organisation, more investment in football development and supporting diversity in football and its administration.

At the Congress, the member associations approved a measure that will give the new FIFA Council select authority to appoint members of the judicial bodies, the Audit & Compliance Committee and the Governance Committee, as a short-term measure. This step was necessary because in light of the new, advanced eligibility checks ahead of the Congress in Mexico, it was not possible to compile enough qualified candidates. In order to swiftly remove people who have abused their powers and are the subjects of investigation from these bodies, the Congress also gave the FIFA Council the power to do so in exceptional cases, while of course obeying the valid legal principles and guarantees.

For example, without this decree, a legally convicted member could not have been removed from a committee, which would surely not have been in the spirit of the reforms. Without this emergency measure no changes could have taken place until the *next* Congress in May 2017. That is too long for reform to wait. This new authority is temporary and lasts only until the next Congress.

The qualifications of the independent persons elected at the Congress speak for themselves. They include a former Advocate General at the Court of Justice of the European Community and a former judge of India's Federal Supreme Court. They will lead the independent committees that will carry out all integrity checks. These are well-founded nominations of people within FIFA who know exactly what must be done.

We will not allow FIFA's future to be endangered again. I hope it is clear that we are building the new FIFA on the foundations of professionalism, credibility and trust. Neither the FIFA team nor I will rest until this has become a reality.

Under my Presidency, FIFA is continuing to cooperate fully with the authorities. There can be no future in the game for those who have betrayed us and who have stolen from football. They must face justice from the appropriate authorities. Furthermore, we will be conducting a comprehensive financial audit to identify any deficiencies in financial controls and to establish a foundation for a wholesale restructuring of the financial function at FIFA.

Our focus is on moving FIFA forwards. My salary should not be a central issue in this. From the start, I made clear that my salary will be a matter of public record and that it should be lower than the salaries of the previous FIFA president and Secretary General. I will announce it as soon as it has been confirmed. In this instance too, the facts will speak for themselves, not speculation.

FIFA is embracing meaningful reform and is actively leaving its past behind. This process will take time and we must all show that FIFA is moving towards a better future through our actions, not our words. I am more determined than ever to put this into practice.