



Union des associations européennes de football



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## ***UEFA Executive Committee decisions***

### **Format for European qualifying for FIFA World Cup 2010™ decided**

The UEFA Executive Committee, chaired by UEFA President Michel Platini, completed its meeting today midday, at the Abe Lenstra stadium in Heerenveen, ahead of tonight's UEFA European Under-21 Championship Final.

A number of important topics were discussed over the course of the two-day meeting and the main decisions that were taken are as follows:

The format for the European qualifying competition for the FIFA World Cup 2010™ was decided upon and will consist of eight groups of six teams, and one group of five. The nine group winners will qualify directly and the best eight runners-up will play home and away play-off matches for the remaining four places. The nine groups containing the 53 UEFA member associations will be competing for the 13 places made available to Europe in the final tournament.

The Executive Committee reviewed the security situation in Israel and agreed to allow matches to be played not only in the Tel-Aviv area, but also in internationally recognised stadiums outside the region, namely Haifa, Jerusalem and Ashdod.

Also reviewed was the situation regarding the location of the matches to be played between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in the UEFA EURO 2008™ qualifying competition. As no suitable compromise could be found between the two associations it was decided to cancel the two matches, namely Azerbaijan-Armenia scheduled for 8 September and Armenia-Azerbaijan scheduled for 12 September, and to award both associations zero points for the matches.

As part of the anti-doping programme, the Executive Committee decided to introduce blood testing for all 31 matches of the UEFA EURO 2008™ final tournament, as well as out-of-competition testing for the 16 finalists.

The Executive Committee approved the proposed list for the Composition of the UEFA Committees 2007-2009. The full list of the committees and their members will be published on uefa.com as of 1 July 2007.

Several new members were admitted to the UEFA Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications. The new members are Estonia (Pro level), Faroe Islands (A level), Israel (Pro level), Lithuania (A level) and Turkey (A level).

Finally, the first ten member associations proposed for admission to the UEFA Referees Convention, and thereby meeting the required standards in terms of referee organisation and education, were approved. They are Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway, Scotland, Slovenia and Switzerland. The first signing ceremony will be held in Nyon on 28 June.

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