

9 February 2016

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Dear Mr Hainer

Many people have said it before but a new President alone will not bring change to FIFA. If you were ever in any doubt about this, if you thought the current Presidential campaign brought a glimmer of hope, I thought it worthwhile sharing with you the shenanigans around a planned debate between the FIFA Presidential candidates last month.

As you may be aware, several organisations have been trying to get the candidates to a debate including the BBC, SKY Sports and ESPN. All have given up.

On 3 November 2015, the **#NewFIFANow** campaign group, via co-founder British MP Damian Collins, wrote to all candidates inviting them to take part in a debate at the European Parliament in Brussels on 27 January 2016, in conjunction with the Sports Intergroup of the European Parliament.

Two candidates, Jerome Champagne and 'Tokyo' Sexwale, immediately responded in the affirmative. Shaikh Salman responded in the negative. Gianni Infantino provisionally confirmed his attendance subject to settling another commitment. (He later withdrew and provided a video instead). Prince Ali advised on 4 January that he would attend.

On the understanding that there were three confirmed candidates, and one other potential one, arrangements were put in place for ESPN to broadcast the debate live around the world with Fernando Palomo from ESPN and journalist and author, John Carlin, as co-moderators.

At last! We saw this as having some semblance of accountability, perhaps showing that the candidates wanted to be different.

However, 48 hours before the scheduled event, Prince Ali withdrew. In his letter to Mr Collins and the Co-Chairman of the Sports Intergroup of the European Parliament, Marc Tarabella, Prince Ali wrote that the debate "may well constitute a breach of FIFA election rules and I understand that one of the three (sic) candidates not participating has made a complaint to the Ad Hoc Electoral Committee."

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What sort of election rules would prevent a live debate between the candidates?

Once we advised the other candidates and ESPN of Prince Ali's withdrawal, both Mr Sexwale and ESPN also withdrew. Mr Champagne did not withdraw – and we proceeded on this basis.

The perplexing issue is the behaviour of the man charged with overseeing the election process, who is also Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee, Domenico Scala.

On receipt of Prince Ali's letter, Mr Collins sought confirmation of the complaint via email. Mr Scala refused either to confirm or deny he had received a complaint – not just once but repeatedly. He also refused to give a view on whether the debate was a breach of FIFA 'rules' and, if so, which one.

These were simple, straightforward questions that required either a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Instead, Mr Scala took the default FIFA position of obfuscation and opaqueness, reinforcing the perception that FIFA corporately is neither willing nor able to engage at any level – either with a democratically elected member of Parliament or with the global community via a live broadcast debate.

We may find out eventually just who was behind these machinations. It may be Mr Scala acting alone – which is totally inappropriate considering he is elected by no-one and was put there by Mr Blatter – or in concert with one, or more, of the candidates, their advisors or other FIFA officials.

But regardless of who said what to whom and when, it is a further demonstration that FIFA is not capable of fixing itself.

Separate from this, I have also challenged Mr Scala to reveal his assessment of the Presidential candidates in terms of the so-called integrity test he applied to them. I believe that the candidacy of at least one candidate, Shaikh Salman of Bahrain, poses a significant risk to the capacity of FIFA ever to regain the confidence of the global community outside of the cosseted world of the 209 football associations.

The minimal reforms that FIFA proposes to introduce from February will not address the systemic, cultural and attitudinal issues that are deeply ingrained in the organisation. Their 'reform committee' is comprised of insiders who are involved in football either in a pecuniary or elected relationship, and the chairman is a longstanding colleague of now disgraced FIFA officials and another sporting insider.

We remain committed to truly independent external reform led by an eminent person in governance as the only way to give back some trust, credibility and confidence in the administration of the game around the world.

I would be happy to meet with you at any time to discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely



Jaimie Fuller
Chairman
SKINS Group of companies