TO THE MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS OF FIFA

Circular no. 1619

Zurich, 19 February 2018
SG/lvi

Further guidance on the Bid Rules of Conduct for the process to select the host(s) of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™

Dear Sir or Madam,

We refer to the ongoing process in relation to the selection of the host or hosts of the final competition of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ (the “Competition”), and here in particular to FIFA circular no. 1616 with which we sought to make all football officials involved in the bidding and selection process aware of the Bid Rules of Conduct and provide them with further clarity on how to understand and apply in a best possible way the Bid Rules of Conduct.

In light of various questions raised by various football stakeholders in connection with said circular, FIFA approached Mr Michael Llamas QC, the appointee of the investigatory chamber of the independent Ethics Committee, to seek his clarifications in relation to those elements of the Bid Rules of Conduct which have been questioned by members of the football community.

At the request of Mr Llamas QC, we kindly ask for your consideration of the following guidance which explains, in general, what is to be expected from the various football stakeholders in relation to (i) presentations by bidders about their bids, and (ii) public statements made by football officials.

1) General principle

Notwithstanding the clarifications below, in order to ensure a fair and transparent bidding process, all football officials shall always conduct all of their own activities in relation to the bidding process in accordance with basic ethical principles such as integrity, responsibility, trustworthiness and fairness. Therefore, irrespective of the clarifications below, it must be understood that the Ethics Committee, as an independent judicial body, may, on its own initiative and at its full and independent discretion, decide to investigate whether any activities in connection with the bidding process are of an unethical nature by, for instance, creating an undue influence on the bidding process in violation of the FIFA Code of Ethics and further specific rules contained in the Bid Rules of Conduct pursuant to article 5 of the Bidding Regulations.

In any case, full fairness and transparency regarding any such activity is of paramount importance and any envisaged activities shall be notified to FIFA by email (2026bid@fifa.org) in advance.
If you wish to seek further guidance, please do also not hesitate to contact Mr Michael Llamas, member of the investigatory chamber of the Ethics Committee and appointee of the Ethics Committee for the bidding process, by email (secretariat-investigatory-chamber@fifa.org).

2) Specific types of activities

a) Presentations by the bidders:

Presentations by the bidders serve for a better understanding of the bids and may therefore be a helpful measure to ensure that the decision makers take their decision on the merits of each bid. The following limitations and principle shall apply:

- Presentations by the bidders at the Congress or at confederation meetings shall be limited to the meetings of the six confederations in the week ahead of the 68th FIFA Congress.
- Presentations by bidders will be allowed at meetings of regional associations, groupings of member associations and individual member associations.
- Equal possibilities shall be granted to both bidders.

Accordingly, if a confederation, a regional association, a grouping of member associations or any individual member association is approached by a bidder offering a presentation of its bid, it is in principle fine to accept such an offer as long as the principles of fairness and transparency are respected. Therefore, in such an event, please notify FIFA in writing about any such offer from a bidder, but please also accept the offer of a presentation by the competitive bidder, offering both bidders the same format and attendance.

If a confederation, a regional association, a grouping of member associations or an individual member association wishes to proactively request information or a presentation by a bidder, the following principles shall be respected:

- Upon invitation by a confederation, presentations by the bidders at the Congress or at confederation meetings shall be limited to the meetings of the six confederations in the week ahead of the 68th FIFA Congress.
- Upon invitation by a regional association, a grouping of member associations or an individual member association, presentations by the bidders will be allowed at meetings of such regional associations, groupings of member associations and individual member associations.

In any case, the inviting party shall give both bidders the same equal possibilities to present their bids and treat both bidders in a fair and equitable manner in all respects. For the sake of transparency, the inviting party shall notify FIFA in writing about any such request and the format of such presentations.
b) Public statements

All public statements by football officials in support of one bidder are admissible provided that they meet the underlying principles of ethical behaviour. They shall be limited to genuine support for the preferred bidder and contain no statements against the competitive bidder or requests for bloc voting. Officials shall consider whether, from a common sense perspective, the nature and form of a statement can be considered as “fair” and “not unduly influencing the bidding process”.

We trust you find the above clarifications helpful. If you wish to seek further further information or clarifications regarding the Bid Rules of Conduct, please do not hesitate to contact the FIFA Bidding Team by email (2026bid@fifa.org) or Mr Michael Llamas at the following contact details:

Mr Michael Llamas QC  
Member of the investigatory chamber of the Ethics Committee  
c/o Secretariat to the Ethics Committee  
FIFA-Strasse 20  
P.O. Box  
8044 Zurich  
Switzerland

secretariat-investigatory-chamber@fifa.org

Yours faithfully,

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE  
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Fatma Samoura  
Secretary General

cc: - FIFA Council  
     - Confederations  
     - Bidding Associations