To the associations of FIFA

Circular no. 877

Zurich, 21 November 2003
GS/oon-sbu

Eligibility to play for Association teams

Dear Sir or Madam,

No doubt you will already be aware that, during the recent revision of the FIFA Statutes, which were unanimously ratified at the FIFA Congress in Doha, Qatar, on 19 October 2003, significant changes were made to the provisions regulating players’ eligibility to represent associations. Most notably, any player who has already represented one association in an international match in an official competition is now permitted, on one occasion, to change the association he represents. It is however important to emphasise in this connection that this entitlement does not apply to any player who has already represented his original choice of association at “A” international level.

Under the terms of article 15 of the new Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes (hereinafter referred to as the application regulations), this entitlement only applies if the player had either more than one nationality before his first international appearance, or a nationality that makes him eligible to represent more than one association. These application regulations come into force with the revised Statutes on 1 January 2004.

According to art. 15 par. 4 of the application regulations, any player who wishes to exercise the right to change associations shall submit a written and substantiated request to the FIFA general secretariat, which the FIFA Players’ Status Committee shall then scrutinise. It is the responsibility of the association the player subsequently wishes to represent to submit the appropriate request to the relevant bodies. The association must, in particular, ensure that all of the documents listed below are enclosed with the request.

At its meeting in Zurich on 30 October 2003, the Players’ Status Committee discussed the practical repercussions of this amendment. During these discussions, the committee drew up the following list of documents to be submitted with every request to change association:

- A certificate issued by the relevant authorities (e.g. copy of the existing passport or a document of a similar nature), which:
  a) conclusively verifies that the player has the given nationalities, and
  b) confirms the date on which the player obtained those nationalities.

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• An official list issued by the association that the player no longer wishes to represent of all the matches (in all categories) in which he represented that association until the date on which he submitted his request to change association.

• A written request signed by the player explaining the motives for his change of association.

Adhering to this uniform procedure will ensure that all such requests are processed as smoothly and promptly as possible. Similarly, players seeking to change nationality and the associations involved will receive additional guidelines that may prove useful when submitting such a request. Finally, submitting the above list of documents will ensure that administrative requirements are kept to a minimum.

Thank you for adhering to the above provisions. Should you require any further clarification in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Urs Linsi
General Secretary

cc:  
- FIFA Executive Committee
- FIFA Players’ Status Committee
- Confederations