

*Palestinians want Israel  
suspended from global football  
over Gaza war*

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Ramallah, March 18 (RHC)-- The Palestinian Football Association has put forward a proposal that persuades FIFA to ban Israel from all international competitions over the regime's brutal military campaign in the besieged Gaza Strip. The 74th annual FIFA Congress will discuss the proposal by the PFA.

The PFA has brought forth the proposal to address the unprecedented, substantial violations by Israel of human rights and humanitarian law across the occupied territories. Several states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and journalists have joined forces in the endeavor against Israel.

Nima Tavallaey Roodsari, a football journalist, shared a post on X on Monday. He cited the contents of the Palestinian proposal.

The proposal underscored the Israeli football association's complicity in the regime's violations against Palestinian football as well as incorporating at least 5 clubs into Israeli league; clubs that are located on occupied Palestinian land.

"Adopt appropriate sanctions, with immediate effect, against Israeli teams, including national representative teams and club teams, due to the international law violations committed by the Israeli occupation in Palestine, particularly in Gaza," the Gothenburg-based journalist citing excerpts from proposal wrote on X.

The proposal details how Israel had turned a football stadium in the besieged Gaza into a concentration camp. "All the football infrastructure in Gaza has been either destroyed, or seriously damaged, including the historical stadium of al-Yarmuk which was turned by the Israeli occupation into a concentration camp as documented by more than one international organization."

"Israeli bulldozers dug up the pitch just to destroy it. Smaller facilities and dirt pitches have been transformed into makeshift refugee camps, field hospitals, and mass graves."

"Address the repeated failure of the IFA in taking decisive action against discrimination and racism, in the areas under its jurisdiction," the proposal states, referring to the Israeli football association.

"Address without further delay the IFA's violation of the FIFA statutes manifest in its continued inclusion of football teams located on the territory of another association (Palestine) in its national league." FIFA claims to hold philanthropic responsibilities and uses football as a tool to encourage social integration amongst communities around the world.

A suspension is the first step towards an eventual expulsion of Israel from world football. The South African Football Association was suspended by FIFA in September 1965, and expelled in 1976 for its racist apartheid political system.

A number of countries have already called on FIFA to suspend Israel from football-related activities.

The Iranian football federation has asked FIFA to "completely suspend" Israel from all football-related activities. In February, the Iranian football federation called on FIFA to "completely suspend Israel."

Others such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates also asked "world football chiefs to ban Israel over the war on Hamas in Gaza."

Six football associations, namely those of Algeria, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, and Iraq, have sent endorsement letters in that regard.

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