

FairSquare



Aleksander Čeferin
President
UEFA

Copied to:
Theodore Theodoridis, UEFA General Secretary

17 September 2025

SUBJECT: Suspension of the Israel Football Association

Dear Mr Čeferin

The undersigned organisations are writing to you to request that the UEFA Executive Committee suspend the membership of the Israel Football Association with immediate effect on account of its serious violations of the UEFA and FIFA statutes.

The impetus for this request is the violence, death and man-made famine in Gaza, where more than a million displaced Palestinians are facing starvation in a humanitarian emergency that a group of [UN experts](#) recently said had “reached intolerable proportions.” On 16 September, a United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel concluded in a [72-page report](#) that “the Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces have committed and are continuing to commit genocide” against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. As of 10 September, the [official death toll](#) in Gaza had reached 64,656 with 163, 503 reported injuries. 18,430 of these deaths were of children. An estimated 132,000 children aged 6 to 59 months are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition through June 2026, including 41,000 severe cases, according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification global initiative, in its report of 22 August 2025, where the IPC [classified the situation in Gaza as a famine](#). A senior official from the [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) described the famine in Gaza, which is a direct consequence of Israel’s blockade of humanitarian aid, as follows:

“It is a famine within a few hundred metres of food, in a fertile land. It is a famine that hits the most vulnerable first. Each with a name, each with a story. That strips people of dignity before it strips them of life. That forces a parent to choose which child to feed. That forces people to risk their lives to seek food.”

One of the hundreds of Palestinians who have been killed by the Israeli Defence Forces while waiting for humanitarian aid was the famous Palestinian football player, Suleiman al-Obeid, who was one of 18 people killed by Israeli forces on 6 August and whose death UEFA publicly recognised. On 13 August 2025, UEFA displayed a banner on the pitch ahead of the UEFA Super Cup between Paris Saint-Germain FC and Tottenham Hotspur FC in Udine, which read “Stop Killing Children. Stop Killing Civilians”. UEFA invited two Palestinian children - one who had been transferred from Gaza to Italy for medical care, and another who was injured and both of whose parents were killed in an Israeli air-strike - to take part in the post-match medal ceremony, and highlighted their cases in its [press release](#) announcing their participation.

This statement and UEFA's highlighting of the cases of Palestinian children are commendable, but UEFA can and should go much further. The IFA is culpable of two serious and long-standing violations of UEFA and FIFA statutes, both of which merit suspension in isolation, and neither of which can be delinked from the situation unfolding in Gaza.

The IFA continues in 2025 to incorporate numerous illegal settlement clubs located in the territory of the Palestinian Football Association into its national league, including in Ma'aleh Adumim, Kiryat Arba, Givat Zeev, Bikat Hayarden and Ariel. The PFA first complained about this issue to FIFA in 2013, but FIFA has failed to take action despite the fact that Article 64(2) of FIFA's 2024 Statutes states that, “member associations and their clubs may not play on the territory of another member association without the latter's approval.” Article 22 (3)(a) of the FIFA statutes binds UEFA to “to comply with and enforce compliance with the Statutes, regulations and decisions of FIFA.” The fact that FIFA is failing to enforce its statutes in this regard does not void UEFA's obligations.

Article 7 bis (7) of UEFA's statutes requires member associations to “implement an effective policy aimed at eradicating racism and any other forms of discrimination from football and apply a regulatory framework providing that any such behaviour is strictly sanctioned”. The IFA has demonstrably failed to take effective action to tackle systematic anti-Palestinian racism among Israeli supporters' groups.

Beitar Jerusalem supporters are the most [notoriously racist in Israel](#) and sing chants that include lines such as “I don't care how many and how they will get killed, Eliminating Arabs makes me thrilled, Boy, girl or old, Will bury every Arab deep in the ground.” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has closely associated himself with Beitar and their supporters. Further details of the actions of Beitar Jerusalem supporters and their links to senior government figures in Israel can be found in the [report](#) that FairSquare sent to FIFA on 18 July 2024.

As UEFA is aware, there is also [a large body of evidence](#) showing Maccabi Tel Aviv fans engaging in racist behaviour before and after Maccabi Tel Aviv's match against Ajax Amsterdam in Amsterdam on 7 November 2024. These include: tearing down Palestinian flags from the facades of Amsterdam residences; hundreds

of supporters chanting “fuck Palestine” and “death to Arabs” in Amsterdam; and scores of Maccabi Tel Aviv supporters chanting “why is school out in Gaza? There are no children left there”, upon their return to Ben Gurion Airport. Israeli journalist Yoni Ben Menachem posted a video on social media which showed Maccabi Haifa supporters burning a Palestinian flag and a Dutch flag in Teddy stadium in Jerusalem on 9 November, ahead of Maccabi Haifa’s match with Hapoel Jerusalem. Middle East Eye [reposted the clip](#) and noted that some Maccabi Haifa fans were chanting “Gaza is a cemetery” in the background. Such behaviour is not a recent phenomenon. In 2012, the IFA issued a [2-point deduction](#) to Beitar Jerusalem after their supporters racially abused a Nigerian player and they fined Maccabi Tel Aviv 20,000 Israeli shekhels (approximately 5,000 euro) in 2014 in response to their supporters racist chanting. However, the IFA has [never taken any meaningful action](#) to address systematic anti-Palestinian racism, which should be of acute concern to UEFA at this moment in time. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has [underlined the role of racist hate speech](#) in processes leading to mass violations of human rights and genocide. The fact that multiple groups of Israeli supporters continue to engage in incitement to racial violence in Israeli stadiums and on European streets at a time when Israel is killing and starving Palestinians in their thousands demonstrates the IFA’s obvious failures to implement an effective policy to eradicate racism.

The IFA should be suspended for its active role in supporting the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory, which is the root cause of the violence and the starvation in Gaza, and for failing to tackle the incitement to racial violence that plays a key role in perpetuating what most credible voices now recognise as a genocide. In both instances, the IFA is in serious violation of statutory rules that give cause for UEFA to act.

Given the urgency of the matters raised in this letter, we are seeking a response from you by 26 September.

Yours sincerely,

Bohemian Football Club
Irish Sport for Palestine
FairSquare