

The UEC Calls for Transparency Over FIFA Investment Plans

Football has reached a dangerous crossroads. FIFA's plans to sale stakes in its flagship national team and club competitions represent the latest attempt to reshape the future of the game through a process that appears to have involved more conversations with investors than with the stakeholders who create the value that FIFA now seeks to monetise.

The issue here is not investment. It is whether football's most important assets can be restructured without meaningful scrutiny from the players, clubs, leagues, supporters and communities whose efforts have made them valuable in the first place. Decisions capable of affecting football for generations cannot be negotiated by a select few and then presented to the wider game as a *fait accompli*.

The World Cup is not an ordinary commercial asset. It is a global sporting institution built over nearly a century by the collective efforts of the entire football ecosystem. FIFA – and, in particular, its President – are entrusted with protecting that legacy, not treating it as a resource over which they enjoy unlimited discretion. If reports are to be believed, football is now being asked to accept one of the most significant commercial transformations in its history without any convincing evidence that our sport will be better off.

This debate extends beyond a single transaction. It exposes a governance problem that has been growing within football for years. Time and again, decisions with profound consequences for clubs, supporters and domestic competitions have been concentrated in the hands of a small group of institutions and stakeholders, while the overwhelming majority of professional football clubs remain excluded from the real conversations that determine the future of our industry. Consultation cannot be considered genuine if only a select few are invited to the table.

For too long, football's leaders have spoken the language of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. Yet the reality has been the complete opposite: increasing centralisation of power, reduced scrutiny of decision-making and strategic alliances developed behind closed doors. Representation should be earned through democratic legitimacy, openness and accountability – not assumed through historical privilege or institutional proximity.

The Union of European Clubs was created precisely because thousands of football clubs and their communities felt increasingly disconnected from the structures that govern the game. Representing more than 150 professional clubs across Europe, the UEC exists to ensure that football clubs have an independent, democratic and credible voice in football's most important debates.

The questions raised by FIFA's proposal are simple: Who was consulted, and when? What interests were represented? Who stands to benefit? And which parties are expected to simply acquiesce a decision that could reshape football's future?

The silence of many stakeholders on these questions is as revealing as the debate itself.

UEC therefore calls for full transparency regarding any proposals affecting the commercial future of FIFA's competitions, including the rationale behind such proposals, the governance safeguards that would accompany it, and the extent of stakeholder consultation undertaken before discussions progressed. Football deserves transparency before important decisions are taken, not explanations after they have already been made.

Our sport cannot continue to be governed by a system in which a small number of organisations call the shots and everyone else is expected to live with the consequences.

If football's governing authorities are unwilling to subject their decisions to meaningful consultation and scrutiny, stakeholders will be entitled to question whether the current model of leadership continues to reflect the interests of the wider game. The national associations who elect FIFA's President, in particular, must ask themselves whether silence is compatible with their duty to protect the integrity and governance of football.

The future of football cannot be negotiated behind closed doors. Those who generate football's value – players, clubs, leagues, supporters and local communities across the globe – deserve a meaningful voice in shaping our sport's future. And those who exercise power over the game must be prepared to justify their power through transparency, accountability and democratic legitimacy.



Our game deserves better. Football's silent majority deserves a seat at the table. And the time for meaningful governance reform is now.