

Decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

passed on 11 September 2025

DECISION BY:

Leonardo STAGG (Ecuador), Member

ON THE CASE OF:

Bariş Alper Yılmaz

(Decision FDD-25248)

REGARDING:

Article 14 - Misconduct of players and officials (FDC_25)

Article 14.1.e - Serious foul play (FDC_25)

I. FACTS OF THE CASE

1. The following summary of the facts does not purport to include every single contention put forth by the actors at these proceedings. However, the presiding member of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee (**the Committee**) has thoroughly considered any and all evidence and arguments submitted, even if no specific or detailed reference has been made to those arguments in the following outline of its position and in the ensuing discussion on the merits.
2. On 4 September 2025, a match was played between representative teams of the Georgia and Turkey in the scope of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition (**the Match**).
3. In this context, the Referee indicated in his report (**the Referee Report**) that one of the players of the representative team of Turkey, number 9, Mr Barış Alper Yılmaz (**the Player** or **the Respondent**), was sent-off for a *"serious foul play"*. The Referee Report further indicated in the *"Incidents Description"* that *"N9 of Turkey committed serious foul play"*.
4. Based on the above, on 8 September 2025, the Secretariat to the FIFA Disciplinary Committee (**the Secretariat**) opened disciplinary proceedings against the Respondent for potential breach of art. 14.1(e) of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (**FDC**). The Secretariat issued a proposal to the Respondent in accordance with art. 58 FDC as read in conjunction with Annexe 1 FDC (the **Proposal**) and granted the Respondent two (2) days to reject the Proposal and provide his position.
5. On 10 September 2025, the Respondent rejected the Proposal and requested regular disciplinary proceedings to be conducted.
6. On 11 September 2025, the matter was submitted to the Committee for decision, the operative part of which was notified to the Respondent on 18 September 2025.
7. The Respondent subsequently requested the grounds of the decision within the deadline set forth under art. 54 FDC.

II. RESPONDENT'S POSITION

8. The position submitted by the Respondent can be summarised as follows:
 - During the match, the opposing team's player wearing shirt number 5 committed an unpunished act of misconduct by pulling the Respondent by the shirt, disrupting his balance and directly contributing to the contact later deemed as a serious foul play.
 - This critical fact was overlooked during the Match but is clearly visible in the video footage which shows that the shirt pull materially influenced the incident, leading to an unintentional outcome rather than a deliberate act of aggression.

- Several mitigating factors apply to the case at hand: the fact that the misconduct by the opposing player created the incident; the high-stakes nature of the match fostered an emotionally charged atmosphere; the fact that there was no malicious intent or excessive aggression in the Respondent's actions; and the fact that the Respondent has no prior history of violent conduct or disciplinary issues.
- Under Articles 25.1, 25.3 and 25.4 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code, the Committee must consider mitigating circumstances and has the discretion to scale down sanctions or dispense with them.
- While Article 14.1(e) prescribes a minimum two-match suspension for serious foul play, the unique circumstances of this case justify the application of Article 25, allowing for a reduction.
- In light of these mitigating factors, the suspension should be reduced from two matches to one and the monetary fine removed.

III. CONSIDERATIONS OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

9. In view of the circumstances of the present matter, the Committee decided to first address the procedural aspects, namely, its jurisdiction and the applicable law, before entering into the substance of the matter and assessing the possible breaches committed, as well as the potential sanctions, if applicable, resulting therefrom.

A. Jurisdiction of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

10. First of all, the Committee noted that at no point during the present proceedings did the Respondent challenge its jurisdiction or the applicability of the FDC.
11. Notwithstanding the above and for the sake of good order, the Committee found it worthwhile to emphasize that, on the basis of art. 2.1 FDC read together with arts. 55 and 56 FDC, it was competent to decide on the present matter.
12. In addition, the Committee recalled that, in line with art. 58 FDC, where a party rejects the proposed sanction from the Secretariat (as *in casu*), the matter shall be referred to it for a formal decision to be rendered.
13. Moreover, in line with art. 57.1(a) FDC, the Committee found that a member of the Committee can rule on the matter alone as a single judge.
14. In view of the above, the Committee confirmed that it was competent to evaluate the present case and to impose sanctions in case of corresponding violation(s).

B. Applicable law

15. In continuation, the Committee deemed that the substance of the matter should be analysed under the September 2025 edition of the FDC, which was the edition in force at the time of the incident in question, i.e. the foul committed by the Respondent at the Match.
16. The Committee then turned to the specific provision applicable to the present case – art. 14 FDC (*"Misconduct of players and officials"*) – which reads as follows:

"1. Players and officials shall be suspended for misconduct as specified below and may be fined accordingly:

[...]

e) at least two matches for serious foul play".

17. The Committee underlined that art. 14.1 FDC provides for the (minimum) disciplinary sanction(s) to be imposed on players or officials in case of misconduct during a match.
18. Furthermore, the Committee underlined that pursuant to art. 14.6 FDC, the competent FIFA judicial body may decide to impose additional disciplinary measures on the player or official concerned (on top of the minimum (sporting) sanction(s) to be imposed for a specific offence as per art. 14.1 FDC).

C. Standard of proof

19. With the above established, the Committee recalled that the burden of proof lies with FIFA, which is required to prove the infringement under art. 41.1 FDC.
20. Secondly, the Committee pointed out that, according to art. 39.3 FDC, the standard of proof to be applied in FIFA disciplinary proceedings is that of *"comfortable satisfaction"*. In other words, the onus is on the sanctioning authority to establish the disciplinary violation to the comfortable satisfaction of the judging body, taking into account the seriousness of the allegation(s).
21. Finally, the Committee referred to art. 40 FDC, according to which the facts contained in the match officials' reports and in any additional reports or correspondence submitted by them are presumed to be accurate, bearing in mind that proof of their inaccuracy may be provided.
22. Having clarified the foregoing, the Committee proceeded to consider the merits of the case.

D. Merits of the dispute

1. Issue of review

23. The Committee started to analyse the evidence at its disposal, specifically the Referee Report, to determine the potential violation(s) of the FDC.

24. In this context, the Committee observed from the Referee Report that the Respondent had been sent off in the 71th minute of the Match for a *“serious foul play”*.
25. The Respondent has challenged the qualification of the tackle as a serious foul play, explaining that i) the Respondent did not have any *“malicious intent”* or *“excessive aggression”* against the opponent, and ii) the Respondent’s tackle was materially influenced by a shirt pull by number 5 of the opposing team.
26. In this regard, the Committee recalled that a serious foul play is defined in the IFAB Laws of the Game (the **IFAB Rules**), as *“a tackle or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality”* and as *“[a]ny player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent”*.
27. With this in mind, and after careful analysis of the video of the incident submitted by the Respondent, the Committee saw no legitimate reason to depart from the assessment made by the referee of a serious foul play.
28. First, the Committee determined that the Respondent lunged towards his opponent with a high velocity tackle with his cleats up at the ankle, and striking the opposing player with excessive force in his ankle – thus qualifying as a serious foul play under the IFAB Rules. Second, the Committee stressed that the IFAB Rules do not require intentionality for a foul to qualify as a serious foul play. Third, the Committee considered the shirt pull by number 5 as irrelevant for the purposes of assessing the Respondent’s misconduct and, in any case, it did not appear to cause or materially influence the Respondent’s tackle.
29. Notwithstanding the above and for the sake of good order, the Committee wished to recall that, in accordance with art. 9.1 FDC, the decisions taken by the referee on the field of play are final and may not be reviewed by the FIFA Judicial Bodies.
30. Therefore, the Committee considered that, in any event and as a general rule, it was bound by the assessment made by the referee as transposed in his report.
31. Consequently, the Committee was comfortably satisfied to conclude that the incident at stake fell within the scope of art. 14.1(e) FDC, and should be sanctioned accordingly.

2. The determination of the sanction

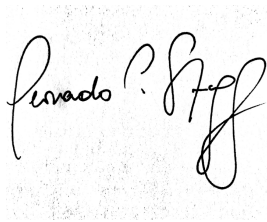
32. In this context, the Committee observed in the first place that the Respondent was a natural person, and as such was subject to the sanctions described under arts. 6.1 and 6.2 FDC.
33. As established above, the Respondent was sent off by the referee for a serious foul play, meaning that his misconduct should be sanctioned in accordance with art. 14.1(e) FDC, which provides for a minimum suspension of two matches for such an offence.

34. The Committee then recalled that it is bound by the minimum sanctions foreseen under this provision, in that it may not impose a sanction under the minimum.
35. On the other hand, the Committee recalled that in line with art. 14.6 FDC, additional disciplinary measures may be imposed on top of said sporting sanction.
36. Against such background, the Committee underlined that it is responsible to determine the type and extent of the disciplinary measures to be imposed in accordance with the objective and subjective elements of the offence, taking into account both aggravating and mitigating circumstances (art. 25.1 FDC).
37. In this respect, the Committee acknowledged that the Respondent presented clean record with respect to the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition, and his statement that he had no intention to harm his opponent.
38. In view of this, and after a careful analysis of the video footage of the incident, the Committee considered the minimum sanction under the applicable provision, namely a suspension of two (2) matches, to be appropriate and proportionate to the offence committed.
39. Finally, and for the sake of completeness, the Committee noted that according to art. 14.6 FDC, in all cases of misconduct by players, additional disciplinary measures may be imposed. On this basis, the Committee decided to impose a fine to the amount of CHF 5,000. The Committee deemed that this fine was proportionate to the offense committed and should have the expected deterrent effect on the Respondent.

Decision

1. **The Respondent is found responsible for misconduct in connection with the match *Georgia v. Turkey* played on 04 September 2025 in the scope of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition.**
2. **The Respondent is suspended for two (2) matches, including the automatic match suspension which was served during the match *Turkey v. Spain* played on 7 September 2025. The remaining suspension will be served during the next official match(es) of the representative team of the Turkish Football Association in the scope of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition (i.e. *Bulgaria v. Turkey* to be played on 11 October 2025).**
3. **The Respondent shall pay a fine to the amount of CHF 5,000.**

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Leonardo STAGG (Ecuador)

Member of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

NOTE RELATING TO LEGAL ACTION:

According to art. 61(1)(c) of the FDC, read together with arts. 47(2) and 50(3) of the FIFA Statutes, this decision is final and binding and may not be appealed to the FIFA Appeal Committee or the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

NOTE RELATING TO THE PAYMENT OF THE FINE:

Payment can be made either in Swiss francs (CHF) to account no. 0230-325519.70J, UBS AG, Bahnhofstrasse 45, 8098 Zurich, SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A, IBAN: CH85 0023 0230 3255 1970 J or in US dollars (USD) to account no. 0230-325519.71U, UBS AG, Bahnhofstrasse 45, 8098 Zurich, SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A, IBAN: CH95 0023 0230 3255 1971 U, with reference to the abovementioned case number.