

Decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

passed on 18 November 2025

DECISION BY:

Jorge PALACIO (Colombia), Deputy Chairperson
Alejandro José PIERA (Paraguay), Member
Paola LÓPEZ BARRAZA (Mexico), Member

ON THE CASE OF:

Qatar Football Association
(Decision FDD-25732)

REGARDING:

Article 14 - Misconduct of players and officials (FDC_25)

Article 14.5 - Team misconduct (FDC_25)

Article 17 - Order and security at matches (FDC_25)

Article 17.1 - Failure to maintain order and security at matches (FDC_25)

Article 17.1.e - Failure to ensure that law and order are maintained in and around the stadiums and that matches are organised properly (FDC_25)

Article 17.2.b - Throwing of objects (FDC_25)

I. FACTS

1. The following summary of the facts does not purport to include every single contention put forth by the parties at these proceedings. However, the members of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee (the **Committee**) have thoroughly considered in its discussion and deliberations 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. The match between the representative teams of Qatar vs. United Arab Emirates was played on 14 October 2025 in the scope of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition (the **Match**).
3. In this context, on 15 October 2025, the Match Commissioner submitted the first report (the **MC Report**) informing *inter alia* that “an incident report” would be submitted subsequently. On 16 October 2025, the Match Commissioner submitted the incident report (the **MC Report**), in which it was *inter alia* reported that:

“1. Delay of Kick-off

The kick-off second delayed for 3 mins 30 sec due to both teams keep despite the reminders from MC and LGC to leave from the dressing room to the pitch. Qatar leave the dressing room 3 mins late and UAE team leave the dressing room 2 mins late.

2. Spectator Behaviour – match stoppage during the match

At 90+13th mins after the Qatar team awarded a corner kick at the left far side, the Qatari fans the start to throwing more than 20 pcs of partially filled water bottle/water cup towards to pitch, match was interrupted for 1 min 50 for clean up (Video and photos for this spectator behaviour's incident at 90+13th mins)

3. Spectator Behaviour - after match

After the final whistle, the fans from Qatar and UAE clashed in the stands despite the segregated area in the middle to separate them. The fans from the UAE forced themselves to the Qatar fans area and clashed with them and throw object to each other. The security personnel entry the segregated area to enlarge the segregated area and try clam the fans. Even the head coach of Qatar Team try to calm the Qatari fans but in vain. As reported by SSO - Mr. AMALANATHAN Kenneth Khanna, a police had been injured in this incident. (Video for this spectator behaviour's incident after the match)

4. Unauthorised person without AD Card accessed to FOP

Around 10 mins after the final whistle of the match, more than 30 person (including lady and kids) without AD Card accessed to FOP and celebrate with the Qatari players, seems most of them are the family member and/or friends of the player/team official, stadium security personnel didn't stop them and those unauthorised person stay on the pitch more than 15 minutes. (photo for the unauthorised person stay on the pitch) (...)

4. On 21 October 2025, in view of the foregoing, the Secretariat to the FIFA Disciplinary Committee (the **Secretariat**) opened disciplinary proceedings against the Qatar Football Association (the **Respondent**) with respect to potential breaches of arts. 14.5 and 17 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (**FDC**). The Respondent was provided with the MC Report and granted a six (6) day deadline within which to provide the Secretariat with its position.
5. The Respondent did not submit any position on the matter.
6. On 06 November 2025, the matter at hand was referred to the Committee meeting on 18 November 2025. The terms of the decision were notified on 25 November 2025, and the Respondent subsequently requested the grounds of the decision in a timely fashion in line with art. 54 FDC.

II. CONSIDERATIONS OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

7. In view of the circumstances of the present case, the Committee decided to first address the procedural aspects of the case, *i.e.* its jurisdiction and the applicable regulatory framework, before proceeding to the merits of the case and determining the possible infringements as well as the possible resulting sanctions. In doing so, the Committee reiterated that it has considered all the facts, allegations, legal arguments and evidence provided by the Respondent, and in the present decision had only referred to those observations and evidence regarded as necessary to explain its reasoning.

A. Jurisdiction of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

8. First of all, the Committee noted its jurisdiction or the applicability of the FDC was not challenged in these proceedings.
9. Notwithstanding the above and for the sake of good order, the Committee found it worthwhile to emphasise that, on the basis of art. 2.1 FDC read together with arts. 56, it was competent to evaluate the present case and to impose sanctions in case of corresponding violations.

B. Applicable law

10. In order to duly assess the matter, the Committee firstly began by recalling the content and the scope of the relevant provisions of the 2025 edition of the FDC, which was, in its view, the edition applicable to the present issue. In particular, considering the date in which the Match was played (*i.e.* 14 October 2025), the Committee considered that the merits and the procedural aspects of the present case should be covered by the 2025 edition of the FDC.
11. With respect to the applicable regulations, the Committee first referred to art. 14.5 FDC which reads as follows:

Art. 14 of the FDC – Misconduct of players and officials

5. *If a national or club team conducts itself improperly (for example, if individual disciplinary sanctions are imposed by the referee on five or more players – three or more in the case of futsal – during a match), disciplinary measures may also be taken against the association or club concerned..*

12. This provision contains a general obligation for national or club teams to behave properly, failing which disciplinary sanctions may be imposed on the association or club concerned. For example, and as specifically provided for under said article, any team that receives more than five individual disciplinary sanctions during a match is considered to be in breach of this provision.
13. It goes without saying that this provision, due to its clear and non-exhaustive wording, empowers the Committee to sanction an association or a club when its team has engaged in misconduct, resulting, for example, in a delay in the (re)start of the match.
14. The Committee next referred to art. 17 FDC which reads as follows:

Art. 17 of the FDC – Order and security at matches

- “1. Host clubs and member associations are responsible for order and security both in and around the stadium before, during and after matches. Without prejudice to their responsibility for the inappropriate behaviour of their own supporters, they are liable for incidents of any kind, including but not limited to those listed in paragraph 2 below, and may be subject to disciplinary measures and directives unless they can prove that they have not been negligent in any way in the organisation of the match. In particular, member associations, clubs and licensed match agents who organise matches shall:*
 - a) assess the degree of risk posed by the match and notify the FIFA bodies of those that are especially high-risk;*
 - b) comply with and implement existing safety rules (FIFA regulations, national laws, international agreements) and take every safety precaution demanded by the circumstances in and around the stadium before, during and after the match and if incidents occur;*
 - c) ensure the safety of the match officials and the players and officials of the visiting team during their stay;*
 - d) keep local authorities informed and collaborate with them actively and effectively;*
 - e) ensure that law and order are maintained in and around the stadiums and that matches are organised properly.*
- 2. All member associations and clubs are liable for inappropriate behaviour on the part of one or more of their supporters as stated below and may be subject to disciplinary measures and directives even if they can prove the absence of any negligence in relation to the organisation of the match:*
 - a) the invasion or attempted invasion of the field of play;*
 - b) the throwing of objects;*
 - c) the lighting of fireworks or any other objects;*
 - d) the use of laser pointers or similar electronic devices;*
 - e) the use of gestures, words, objects or any other means to transmit a message that is not appropriate for a sports event, particularly messages that are of a political, ideological, religious or offensive nature;*
 - f) acts of damage;*
 - g) causing a disturbance during national anthems;*
 - h) any other lack of order or discipline observed in or around the stadium”.*

15. In this respect, the Committee emphasised that it was clear from the wording of art. 17(1) FDC that its main purpose was to ensure that matches are properly organised so that no incident(s) could occur and disrupt any football match. In particular, the home association shall be held responsible for any incidents in and around the stadium but may be released from any disciplinary measures if it can prove that all of the necessary measures had been taken, *i.e.* that it was not negligent in the organisation of the match.
16. By contrast to the first paragraph, the Committee subsequently observed that the second paragraph contained a strict liability rule according to which an association, whether home or visiting, is responsible for the behaviour of its own spectators. In this regard, the Committee recalls the consistent jurisprudence of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) that the notion of "supporter" is intentionally open and must be determined by applying an objective reasonable onlooker test¹. In other words, the question is whether, viewed by a reasonable and objective observer² in the circumstances, the person's conduct and the surrounding context indicate that someone is a supporter of a particular club/association. Applying that test, CAS has repeatedly held that (i) the behaviour of the individuals, (ii) their physical location in or around the stadium (including sectors typically occupied by a club/associations followers), and (iii) visible club/association-related symbols (e.g., shirts, scarves, banners, flags, colours)³ are relevant and often determinative criteria to attribute the conduct to that team's supporters.

C. Standard of proof

17. Firstly, the Committee recalled that, as a generally rule, the burden of proof regarding disciplinary infringements rests on the FIFA Judicial Bodies (cf. art. 41 FDC). In other words, the Committee is required to prove the relevant infringement(s) at stake.
18. Secondly, the Committee pointed out that, according to art. 39.3 FDC, the standard of "*comfortable satisfaction*" is applicable in disciplinary proceedings. According to this standard of proof, 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.
19. Finally, the Committee further referred to art. 40 FDC, according to which the facts contained in the match officials' reports, as well as in the supplementary reports or correspondence submitted by the match officials, are presumed to be accurate – this, whilst bearing in mind that proof of their inaccuracy may be provided. In addition,
20. Having clarified the foregoing, the Committee proceeded to consider the merits of the case.

D. Merits of the case

1. Issues of review

21. The relevant provisions having been recalled, and the above having been established, the Committee proceeded to analyse the evidence at its disposal, in particular the documentation and information provided in the scope of the present disciplinary proceedings, in order to determine the potential violations of the FDC.

¹ See CAS 2019/A/6547

² See CAS 2015/A/3874

³ *Ibidem*; see also CAS 2007/A/1217

22. In this context, the Committee acknowledged the following elements from the MC Report:

a) *“The kick-off second delayed for 3 mins 30 sec due to both teams keep despite the reminders from MC and LGC to leave from the dressing room to the pitch. Qatar leaves the dressing room 3 mins late”* – Videos and photos were provided.

b) *“At 90+13th mins (...) the Qatari fans the start to throwing more than 20 pcs of partially filled water bottle/water cup towards to pitch, match was interrupted for 1 min 50 for clean-up”*. Videos and photos were provided.

c) *“After the final whistle, the fans from Qatar and UAE clashed in the stands despite the segregated area in the middle to separate them. The fans from the UAE forced themselves to the Qatar fans area and clashed with them and throw object to each other. The security personnel entry the segregated area to enlarge the segregated area and try clam the fans. Even the head coach of Qatar Team try to calm the Qatari fans but in vain. As reported by SSO - Mr. AMALANATHAN Kenneth Khanna, a police had been injured in this incident”* – Video was provided.

d) *“Around 10 mins after the final whistle of the match, more than 30 person (including lady and kids) without AD Card accessed to FOP and celebrate with the Qatari players, seems most of them are the family member and/or friends of the player/team official, stadium security personnel didn't stop them and those unauthorised person stay on the pitch more than 15 minutes”* – Photo was provided.

23. The above being recalled, the Committee firstly recalled that the Respondent did not submit any position on the matter.

24. As such, with the foregoing in mind and whilst also recounting that the facts as contained within the match officials' reports and/or records are presumed to be accurate (cf. art. 40 FDC), the Committee was comfortably satisfied that (i) there was a delay in the kick-off caused by the Respondent; (ii) at least 20 objects were thrown onto the field of play, leading to a match interruption lasting 1 minute and 50 seconds; (iii) the supporters from both teams clashed in the stands, followed by objects thrown at each other and the injury of a police officer; and (iv) more than 30 persons entered and remained on the field of play without accreditation after the final whistle, without any measure being taken by the stadium security personnel.

25. The above being determined, the Committee subsequently turned to its analysis of the abovementioned incident(s) in order to assess whether any provisions of the FDC had been breached by the Respondent.

2. Infringements committed by the Respondent

26. As a preliminary remark, the Committee recalled that pursuant to art. 14.5 FDC, *“if a national or club team conducts itself improperly (...), disciplinary measures may also be taken against the association or club concerned”*. In other words, under art. 14.5 FDC, disciplinary measures may be taken against associations should (players, officials or delegates of) their national team engage in misconduct.

27. In particular, the Committee highlighted that the term *“(for example (...))”* is open-ended, and as such is non-exhaustive, i.e. applies against but is not limited to.

28. Against such background, the Committee proceeded to underline that from a national team, which stands as a representation of the applicable nation on a worldwide scale, FIFA expects an unwavering and exemplary professional, decent and respectful attitude towards all members of the Football family, including opposing players and officials, match officials and fans. Such sportsmanlike behaviour is expected at all times without question, whether being on or off the pitch, especially in the context of a FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition.
29. In this sense, the Committee impressed that any contradictory conduct and/or behaviour that is not compatible with the abovementioned principles, may leave the association of the contravening representative team concerned open to potential sanction for said misconduct – as provided for under the (non-exhaustive) scope of art. 14.5 FDC.
30. With the foregoing in mind, the Committee referred to the above explanations, which outlined the scope of art. 14.5 FDC, namely that this provision imposes a general obligation for national or club teams to behave properly, failing which disciplinary sanctions may be imposed on the association. More specifically, the Committee once again highlighted that the key term of this provision “(for example (...))” is open-ended, and as such is not exhaustive (i.e. applies against but is not limited to) and can apply against associations (or clubs) if their team has engaged in (any type of) misconduct.
31. Against such background, the Committee concluded that a delay in the (re)start of the match – that is resulting from the conduct of a representative team of the Respondent – also constitutes a team misconduct in the sense of art. 14.5 FDC and can be sanctioned accordingly, such conclusion being in line with the constant jurisprudence of the Committee⁴. Moreover, the Committee observed that “late kick-off” is listed as an offence in Annex 1 (“List of disciplinary measures”).
32. Consequently, the Committee had no other choice but to consider that the Respondent’s team conducted itself improperly as it left the dressing room 3 minutes late, despite the reminders from the Match Commissioner and other match official and therefore caused a 3 minute and 30 seconds delay in the start of the Match. In this respect, the Committee highlighted that in line with constant jurisprudence, a delay of this length does qualify as a late kick-off⁵. Lastly, The MC Report does not reference any medical emergency or exceptional circumstance that would justify the delay.
33. With the above in mind, the Committee found that the Respondent had to be held liable for the misconducts of its representative team in accordance with art. 14.5 FDC and had to be sanctioned accordingly.
34. Having so found, the Committee then moved on to the issue of the lack of order and security during the Match (art. 17 FDC) and wished to recall that pursuant to art. 17(1) FDC, the Respondent, as the host association, was responsible for order and security both in and around the stadium before, during and after the Match.
35. The Committed considered that the clash involving both spectators is a very serious incident, which put the safety of other spectators in the stadium at risk, in addition to the numerous objects being thrown at each other afterwards. The misconduct of the supporters and the failure of the security personnel to prevent the breach of the segregated area, as well as the injury of a law enforcement officer significantly aggravate the severity of the incident.

⁴ See for instance: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/16cf456ff4872874/original/FIFA-World-Cup-26-Qualifiers-disciplinary-overview-Sept-Nov-2023.pdf> or <https://www.fifa.com/tournaments/mens/worldcup/qatar2022/news/latest-disciplinary-sanctions-published-concerning-fifa-world-cup-tm>

⁵ *Idem*

36. In addition, it was submitted in the MC Report that stadium security personnel did not prevent more than 30 people without proper accreditation from entering and remaining on the pitch more than 15 minutes after the Match was over. Despite the moment of celebration, which cannot be used as a justification for the non-compliance, the stadium's security personnel failed to prevent or promptly remove these unauthorized individuals, thereby exposing both the participants and the intruders, particularly minors, to potential safety risks. These episodes constitute grave violations of art. 17(1)(e) FDC.
37. With this in mind and noting that the Respondent did not provide any justification, the Committee found that the Respondent failed to ensure that law and order was maintained in the stadium and therefore was in breach of art. 17(1)(e) FDC.
38. Furthermore, the Committee noted that it was also clearly reported by the MC Report that the following supporters-related incidents had occurred: at least 20 objects were thrown onto the pitch, which included water bottles and cups. Subsequently, the match was interrupted for 1 min 50 for clean-up.
39. In this context, the Committee considered that art. 17(2)(b) FDC does not require that the throwing of objects be dangerous or cause damage in order to be sanctioned. The act itself, regardless of intent, constitutes a breach of the provision. In addition, the fact that it occurred during a high-profile FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition match and that it caused its interruption further aggravates the breach.
13. In this respect, the Committee wished to recall that in accordance with art. 40 FDC, the facts stated in the reports or records of the match officials are presumed to be correct, although evidence to the contrary may be presented.
40. To conclude, as a result and having determined the foregoing, i.e. that the Respondent was to be held liable for the breaches of articles 14.5, 17(1)(e) and 17(2)(b) FDC, the Committee held that the Respondent had to be sanctioned accordingly.

3. The determination of the sanction

41. The Committee observed in the first place that the Respondent was a legal person, and as such was subject to the sanctions described under art. 6.1 and 6.3 FDC.
42. For the sake of good order, 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).
43. As established above, the Respondent was found liable for the misconduct of the members of its representative team in accordance with art. 14.5 FDC, the failure to ensure that law and order was maintained in the stadium in accordance with art. 17(1)(e) FDC, as well as the misbehaviour of its supporters in accordance with art. 17(2)(e) FDC.
44. With those elements in mind, the Committee subsequently acknowledged that, in the context of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition, the Respondent had already been sanctioned for the misconduct of the members of its representative team (late kick-off)⁶ and for throwing of objects⁷.

⁶ Disciplinary proceedings under reference FDD-24309.

⁷ Disciplinary proceedings under reference FDD-19699.

45. With respect to the aforementioned misconduct(s), the Committee remarked that Annexe 1 FDC provides for a list of specific disciplinary measures which may be taken into consideration in case of:
- a. *"Late kick-off"* pursuant to art. 14.5 FDC – CHF 10,000 for a second offence.
 - b. *"Failure to ensure that law and order are maintained in and around the stadiums"* pursuant to art. 17(1)(e) FDC – a minimum of CHF 10,000 for a first offence.
 - c. *"Throwing of objects"* pursuant to art. 17(2)(b) FDC – No. of objects x CHF 750 for a second offense.
46. On that basis, the Committee therefore held that in the present circumstances a fine was the appropriate measures with which to sanction the Respondent for the abovementioned infringements.
47. Given the above and with respect to the fine to be imposed, the Committee recalled that, in accordance with art. 6.4 FDC, in general, it may not be lower than CHF 100, nor greater than CHF 1,000,000.
48. Therefore, taking into account the entirety of the case file – and, in particular, that this is the second offence of art. 14.5 FDC for late kick-off, a second offence of art. 17(2)(b) FDC, a first offense of art. 17(1)(e) FDC, as well as the specific sanctions foreseen under Annexe 1 FDC for such breaches –, the Committee determined that a fine amounting to CHF 45,750 was to be considered appropriate and proportionate. This fine was calculated as follows:
- a. *"Late kick-off"* pursuant to art. 14.5 FDC – CHF 10,000.
 - b. *"Failure to ensure that law and order are maintained in and around the stadiums"* pursuant to art. 17(1)(e) FDC – CHF 20,000.
 - c. *"Throwing of objects"* pursuant to art. 17(2)(b) FDC – 20 objects x CHF 750 = CHF 15,750.
49. With regard to the incidents related to the failure to ensure the law and order in the stadium, the Committee noted that at least three incidents occurred: (i) unauthorised people entering onto the field of play, (ii) the lack of proper action by the stadium security personnel and (iii) the clashes between the supporters. Each of these episodes, taken in isolation, already constitutes a serious violation of art. 17(1)(e) FDC. In addition, the importance of the Match within the competition context and the injury to a police officer caused by the ensuing disorder further aggravate the matter. Accordingly, the Committee considered it proportionate and reasonable to impose a fine above the minimum threshold prescribed under Annex 1 of the FDC.
50. On a final note, the Committee stressed that all above measures were considered justified, specifically taking into account the nature of the incidents which occurred during the Match at stake, but also – with respect to the fact that the throwing of objects and the late kick-off continue to occur despite the sanctions imposed previously by FIFA on the Respondent. In fact, it was expected by the Committee that such sanctions would (finally) serve to have the necessary deterrent effect in order to avoid similar incidents in the future.

Decision

1. The Qatar Football Association is ordered to pay a **fine to the amount of CHF 45,750** for the misconduct of the members of its representative team (**late kick-off**), for incidents related to order and security (**failure to ensure that law and order are maintained in and around the stadium**), as well as for the inappropriate behaviour of its supporters (**throwing of objects**) in connection with the match **Qatar vs. United Arab Emirates played on 14 October 2025 in the scope of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ preliminary competition**.
2. The Respondent is granted a final deadline of **thirty (30) days** as from notification of the present decision in which to pay the fine. Upon expiry of the aforementioned final deadline and in the event of persistent default or failure to comply in full with the decision within the period stipulated, additional measures may be imposed by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee.

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Jorge PALACIO (Colombia)

Deputy Chairperson of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

LEGAL ACTION:

This decision can be contested before the FIFA Appeal Committee (art. 60 FDC). Any party intending to appeal must announce its intention to do so in writing, *via* the FIFA Legal Portal, within three (3) days of notification of the grounds of the decision. Reasons for the appeal must then be given in writing, *via* the FIFA Legal Portal, within a further time limit of five (5) days, commencing upon expiry of the first-time limit of three (3) days (art. 60 par. 4 FDC). The appeal fee of CHF 1,000 shall be transferred to the aforementioned bank account upon submission of the appeal brief (art. 60 par. 6 FDC).

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.