



# MEDIA RELEASE



## ECA STATEMENT ON 2016 FIFA REFORM COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

The European Club Association (ECA) has read with attention the recommendations elaborated by the 2016 FIFA Reform Committee under the chairmanship of François Carrard, which were endorsed by the FIFA Executive Committee at its meeting on 2-3 December 2015 in Zurich.

A number of recommendations are important and necessary steps which should lead to FIFA's institutional structure becoming more transparent and accountable moving forward. Nevertheless, the Committee's proposals relating specifically to the governance reform are missing the involvement and greater recognition of all stakeholders. Clubs, in particular, have the legitimate right to play a decisive role in football governance and occupy a position reflective of their significant contribution to the game. It must be recognised that clubs invest heavily in the development of players that are eventually made available to national associations (more than 75% of the 2014 FIFA World Cup players were released by European clubs). The creation of a football stakeholders' committee does not address the lack of proper and meaningful stakeholder participation in FIFA's decision-making process.

In addition, the recommendation by the Committee to enhance the number of participating teams in the FIFA World Cup from 32 to 40 without prior consultation with the clubs (in full knowledge of the impact this will have on the professional club game), is proof that the proposed reforms are not at the required standard allowing for a new and modern FIFA. ECA believes that rather than reduce the risk of tension within the football family, the proposed recommendations will only lead to increased frustration among stakeholders.

ECA had misgivings towards the manner in which FIFA managed this reform process, but agreed to give FIFA the benefit of the doubt believing that it was serious in its attempt to modernise the governance of world football. However, given the recommendations that have now been presented, ECA was right to believe that a reform process led from within is unable to deliver a sustainable governance model, which is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

ECA will now take the required time to assess how it wishes to position itself in relation to this latest development leaving all options open. Clubs are not prepared to be further ignored.