



D. Luis Manuel Rubiales Béjar
RSFF President

Brussels, 18th November 2018

Dear Mr. Rubiales,

Through this letter, the group of undersigned Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) would like to show our concern for the agreement reached on November 11, 2019 between the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RSFF) and the Saudi Arabian Football Federation by which the Spanish Super Cup will be held in Saudi Arabia during the next three years.

We were surprised to learn that the RSFF, which you preside, has decided to conclude this agreement with one of the most repressive and discriminatory regimes in the world. Human rights violations by the Saudi regime have continuously been denounced by the European Parliament, putting special emphasis on the situation of human rights defenders, women's systematic discrimination and Saudi Arabia's responsibility in the commission of war crimes in Yemen.

The agreement envisages unrestricted access to women to the games, and the launch of a women's soccer competition in Saudi Arabia, but these cannot be regarded as measures that will normalise women's sports or promote equality between women and men, since important restrictions still remain in place.

Even though several reforms have been announced by the Saudi regime in relation to women's rights, there is a glaring disconnect with the reality on the ground, where women suffer systematic discrimination and where the authorities make public statements classifying feminism as an "extremist idea" that can be punished with imprisonment and flogging. Saudi women live under a repressive male guardianship, by which authorisation from a male guardian is still expected for simple actions such as travelling abroad or filing complaints in the justice system. Until very recently, women were not even allowed to drive, and what should have been a positive announcement by the Saudi authorities was instead shadowed by the detention of the women's rights activists that had long campaigned for that goal to be achieved. Many of those women are still imprisoned and reportedly subject to torture.

The undersigned MEPs reiterate our deep concern regarding the situation of human rights, and especially of women's rights, in Saudi Arabia and regard the decision to organize the Spanish Super Cup in this country as unacceptable since it reinforces the false reformist image of the kingdom of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. That is why we urge you to reconsider and terminate an agreement that only serves to whitewash Saudi Arabia's gross human rights abuses and clean up its international image.

Looking forward to your prompt action on this matter.

Best regards,

Ernest URTASUN, Spain
Yannick JADOT, France
Monika VANA, Austria
Grace O'SULLIVAN, Ireland
Diana RIBA I GINER Diana, Spain
Mounir SATOURI, France
Michael BLOSS, Germany
Alice KUHNKE, Sweden
Margrete AUKEN, Denmark
Katrin LANGENSIEPEN, Germany
Ellie CHOWNS, UK
Francisco GUERREIRO, Portugal
Gina DOWDING, UK
Heidi HAUTALA, Finland
Viola VON CRAMON-TAUBADEL, Germany
Alexandra Louise PHILLIPS, UK
Scott AINSLIE, UK
Molly SCOTT-CATO, UK
Terry REINTKE, Germany
Petra DE SUTTER, Belgium