
**Opening Remarks by FIFA Secretary General Jérôme Valcke
European Conference on Integrity in Sport,
Rome , 17-18 January 2013**

Dear Ronald K. Noble, INTERPOL Secretary General

Dear Antonio Manganelli, Italian Chief of Police

Dear Giancarlo Abete , President of the Italian Football Federation

Dear Gianni Infantino, UEFA General Secretary

Dear Delegates of the various football associations,

Dear Representatives of the various law enforcement agencies

Dear Distinguished guests and above all, dear friends of football

It is a real pleasure to be here today and open the FIFA-INTERPOL International Conference for representatives from European Football Associations and law enforcement authorities.

It is with great appreciation to see that this conference has attracted such a large and diverse group of speakers and participants. And I thank INTERPOL for bringing us together.

The umbrella theme during the 2 days conference is 'The Ugly side of the Beautiful Game' – match-fixing being a topical one. The growing sophistication of organized crime in the football world has become a major concern in the recent years. Criminal organizations operate on a large international scale and have connections across the globe which has proved to be a massive threat to the integrity in football.

We all have been able to read about the raft of scandals relating to corruption and manipulation in sport, particularly in football, and unfortunately this is undoubtedly one of the greatest threats to the integrity of sport. Not only does match-fixing affect and jeopardise the integrity of our sport, it also destroys its image, harms the social, educational and cultural values of the game and attacks its economic and social role.

Today, almost 300 million people play football in the world. This extraordinary popularity gives FIFA responsibilities. One of FIFA's statutory objectives is precisely to protect the integrity of the game. Therefore the fight against match-manipulation is a top priority for FIFA.

As part of our continuous efforts to protect the game, we have taken a series of measures as early as 2005 in the areas of monitoring, prevention and education. FIFA's subsidiary Early Warning System was founded with the aim to monitor the FIFA competitions, identify any irregular activity on the sports betting market and expose potential manipulation attempts.

In order to preserve the integrity of our sport and to ensure that all those involved in football - and potentially exposed to potential match-fixing attempts (officials, players, referees and coaches) - are properly equipped and trained, it is essential to invest in long lasting results rather than quick and short term solutions. The problem of corruption and match-fixing has to be tackled in a proactive way. Implementation of training and education programs are very important, as well as having a clear and robust regulatory framework and the right codices available for law enforcement and football associations. We have to secure that we have appropriate rules in place, that everything we do is transparent, that our decisions benefit our sport and that those who do not play by the rules are sanctioned.



For the Game. For the World.

As far as we are concerned, we started back in 2011 – at the request of the FIFA President – an extensive governance reform process with the revision of our Statutes as well as improvements in the areas of ethics, compliance and transparency. The first series of reforms were already approved at the last FIFA Congress in Budapest – with a new and fully revised Code of Ethics now in place since already July last year - while the rest of the process continues until the 2013 FIFA Congress.

A further unmistakable signal to the outside world on FIFA's zero tolerance in the fight against corruption, is the creation of the new security division, on 1 June 2012. With the experience of more than 30 years working with the police both in Germany and internationally, our Security Director, Ralf Mutschke, surely brings enormous experience to his role as the new Security Director of FIFA.

We want to continue along this path, we want to intensify our efforts and expand them. Football is part of our national culture, and our daily lives, it is our duty as the governing body, to have a zero tolerance policy and to protect the football community. We are determined to fulfill, and exceed, this most important of responsibilities.

But with the best will in the world, FIFA cannot fight and win the battle against corruption in football alone: involving all the parties that need to work together is the key to the battle against corruption in football. There is a need for effective international collaboration. We have to overcome loopholes in national legislation, improving police and judicial cooperation, and intensifying the exchange of information and best practices. FIFA seeks the advice, support and cooperation from the football community and from law enforcement. The path to success is one of common grounds.

We need and must target our action at a global level. The knowledge of corruption in sport, specifically in match-fixing must be improved. This is the reason why, FIFA and INTERPOL have decided to invest in a 10 years cooperation implementing an integrity initiative to fight against match-fixing and corruption. The overall objective of the FIFA-INTERPOL initiative is to tackle sports corruption to a maximum through the provision of various trainings programmes to improve key individuals' awareness and understanding of corruption in football regarding the strategies used by organised crime and methods to detect and counteract them. INTERPOL moreover ensures and promotes the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities. The battle is not only about protecting the integrity of football, but to fight against organised crime with all possible means.

Mutual aid is essential to ensure success. Our meeting here in Rome is a recognition to that reality. Only by joining together we can send out the powerful signal of immutable commitment, progress and success against organised crime. Together we need to coordinate and manage the different processes, and conferences like today, are essential in order to maximise our effectiveness.

That is why I am so happy to be here today and see such a valuable solidarity. We have to build up a powerful momentum. Now it is vital to keep going. I wish you a very successful debate and I look forward to hearing about the stimulating considerations that certainly will take place over the next days.

Thank you.