

Embattled Infantino target of letter from three confederations

UEFA, CONCACAF and AFC say leadership must serve football collectively

- Joint letter declares football belongs to all
- Accuse president of broken trust

AFP | Paris

FIFA president Gianni Infantino came under renewed fire yesterday as a joint letter from three confederations -- UEFA, CONCACAF and AFC -- declared football "belongs to no individual".

Infantino has been the butt of scathing criticism ever since launching, and then withdrawing within days, a plan to bring private investment into FIFA competitions, including World Cups.

FIFA had hit back on Saturday at "a concerted and ongoing effort by some to undermine" football's governing body and Infantino.

However, yesterday's letter from the governing bodies of European football (UEFA), North and Central America (CONCACAF) and Asia (AFC), showed his critics are unbowed.



Gianni Infantino waves upon arrival at president-elect Abelardo de la Espriella's swearing-in ceremony in Cali, Colombia

"Leadership in football is not a possession. It is not about holding -- or demanding -- power to be held," they wrote.

"When trust is broken through deception, when an individual places himself above the collective that entrusted him with authority, that duty

has been abandoned," the confederations added.

The three confederations had been vociferous in their condemnation of Infantino's plan and had not let up after it was shelved.

CONCACAF president Victor Montagliani is viewed as a po-

tential challenger to Infantino, who will seek a fourth and final term at the FIFA presidential election in Rabat next March.

Candidates have to be declared by November 18.

UEFA's threat to boycott World Cups if the private investment plan went ahead -- in theory depriving the competition of teams including reigning men's champions Spain and 2026 semi-finalists France and England -- proved pivotal in Infantino withdrawing his plan.

Prior to this debacle Infantino had looked likely to be unopposed, after overseeing a successful World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

The 56-year-old Swiss, who has been in situ for 10 years, has received the backing of the Confederation of African Football (CAF) while South American governing body CONMEBOL are largely supportive.

The confederations do not vote as blocs and there have been some supportive voices for Infantino from CONCACAF, Mexico, and two AFC members -- Kuwait and 2022 World Cup hosts Qatar, where he has a house.

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The confederations said a recent emergency meeting held abroad, rather than at FIFA headquarters in Zurich, reinforced concerns about Infantino's leadership style

Although the proposal has been dead in the water for over a week now -- UEFA had termed it "a shabby, opaque, backroom deal" -- the confederations harangued him for a lack of judgment.

"FIFA's recent letter to its Vice-Presidents and 211 Member Associations acknowledges that mistakes were made in the process," they said.

"It treats this as a failure of communication, when what football witnessed was a failure of judgment."

'Accountability'

Although Infantino had received the "full support" of senior FIFA directors last week in an emergency meeting he called in Morocco, the confederations said it was meaningless.

"This recent meeting, where a select number of members of the FIFA Management Committee -- not the full Committee -- were summoned abroad, rather than leadership going to Zurich to address the heart of FIFA, its staff, only reinforces these concerns and represents a continuation of the very pattern of conduct that brought us to this moment," they said.

"It is not the conduct of a custodian of the game, but of one who believes the game is answerable to him."

Infantino had been basking in the afterglow of a hugely successful World Cup -- the largest ever involving 48 teams.

However, the confederations made clear in the letter that it was not just Infantino who had made this possible.

"The growth over the past decade has been real," they said.

"But that progress was never the work of one individual."

Arteta backs Guimaraes to 'ignite something different' at Arsenal

AFP | London

Mikel Arteta has backed Bruno Guimaraes to "ignite something different" in Premier League champions Arsenal.

Brazil international Guimaraes was introduced to Gunners fans ahead of Sunday's 3-2 friendly defeat by Borussia Dortmund, after completing a move from top-flight rivals Newcastle reported to be worth £75 million (\$101 million).

The 28-year-old has strengthened an already impressive midfield featuring Declan Rice, Martin Odegaard, Mikel Merino, Martin Zubimendi and Eberechi Eze.

"You can see the immediate reaction," Arteta told Arsenal's website after Guimaraes was given an enthusiastic reception.

"I think he describes himself as a warrior," the Spaniard added.

"I think he's a warrior with a tremendous quality as well and intuition and leadership and charisma that is going to help us, that is going to really ignite something different in the team."



Bruno Guimaraes

"I think he's going to push everybody inside the team as well and that's the type of player that we need."

Arsenal, after finishing runners-up for three successive seasons, finally ended their 22-year wait for a Premier League title last term, as well as reaching the Champions League and League Cup finals.

Guimaraes watched on against Dortmund as an Ethan Nwaneri strike and Viktor Gyokeres's penalty were not enough to prevent defeat.

Samuele Inacio, Konstantinos Kareltsas and Joane Gadou scored for the Bundesliga side at Emirates Stadium.

BRAVE CF Salutes Jose 'Shorty' Torres as he embarks on a new chapter



Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation™ (BRAVE CF), the world's fastest-growing and most global mixed martial arts organization, expresses its heartfelt thoughts and best wishes to former BRAVE CF Bantamweight World Champion Jose "Shorty" Torres as he embarks on a new chapter in his professional career.

Jose Torres, Former BRAVE CF Bantamweight World Champion, stated:

"I want to express my deepest gratitude to His Highness

Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, BRAVE CF President Mohammed Shahid, and the entire BRAVE CF team for everything they have given me throughout my career. BRAVE CF gave me so much, from great fights to support for every opportunity, every experience, and all the growth this journey brought into my life. I will always be grateful to have been part of this family."

An esteemed member of the roster since 2018, Torres competed eight times under the BRAVE CF banner and estab-



lished himself as one of its most recognizable personalities. He etched his name into the record books at BRAVE CF 73 in August 2023, becoming the first former IMMAF World Champion to capture a BRAVE CF World Title. He defeated Nkosi "King" Ndebele in a grueling battle for the vacant bantamweight crown, adding another landmark achievement to his decorated résumé.

The bout also sparked an intense rivalry between the two athletes. Their compelling series eventually reached three encounters, making it the only

trilogy in BRAVE CF history.

His impact, however, extended well beyond the confines of the BRAVE CF cage. As one of the promotion's foundational figures and valued ambassadors, Torres helped elevate its profile through his performances, work as a broadcast analyst, and involvement in community-driven initiatives.

As he takes the next step, BRAVE CF celebrates the legacy he leaves behind and wishes Torres continued success in all future endeavors. His contributions will remain an enduring part of the organization's story.