

*Presentation by Harold Mayne-Nicholls at the New FIFA Now summit on 21 January 2015.*

First of all I would like to thank the organizers of this Summit, especially European Parliament Members Emma MacClarkin and Damian Collins. It is a real honour to take part in this seminar.

I come from the South of the South as the great poet Pablo Neruda told the world. I belong to a football family. My grandfather on my mother's side, although born in Croatia, was a member of the Organizing Committee for the World Cup in Chile in 1962. My great grandfather on my father's side father arrived from the green and rainy Cornwall in the South-West of England carrying one of the first footballs to be seen in the dry and brown Iquique region in the north of Chile.

They communicated in their new country with the ball. And I have always followed their language.

I have been playing football as long as I remember. My first games were on cement or sand or clay – I was 17 before I first played on grass. I played for my university for four years and I still play every weekend in a league for over-50s. I never stopped even during the four years I was President of the Chilean Football Federation.

I have not learnt lessons by the book. I have lived them, at all level : as a player, a referee, a youth coach, a fan, a journalist, a photographer, a professor and an administrator.

That is the reason why I accepted your kind invitation today : to try to contribute to a better sport, because football and my family are the reasons of my life.

As many of you know, I was the Chairman of the bidding inspection group for the World Cups of 2018 and 2022.

So let me first give my opinion about that bid process. Incidentally, the inspection has been available to read on the web since November 2010.

To understand the whole situation we must go back to July 2000, when Germany was nominated to organize World Cup 2006. On that occasion, an African country failed for third time in a bid to be awarded the World Cup.

So the FIFA President convinced the Executive Committee to organize a rotation system between continents for the following World Cups. It was decided that Africa would host in 2010 and South America in 2014.

Five countries took part in the World Cup 2010 bid, and I was the coordinator of the Bid Inspection Group. I convinced the FIFA General Secretary to publish the report on the web -- the first time ever it went to the general public.

South America 2014 presented a different story. A couple of weeks after the decision taken by the FIFA Executive Committee to rotate the continents, an extraordinary

meeting took place at CONMEBOL, the South American Confederation. Brazil said they wanted to organize the World Cup in 2014 and as nobody else demonstrated an interest, the World Cup “virtually” went to Brazil without contest.

With that, the rotation ended and FIFA reverted to the old system - but with a huge innovation: two World Cups, 2018 and 2022, were to be awarded at the same time. The reason for this change was the greater commercial opportunities it offered. And then everything began. Just weeks before the decision, the FIFA Executive again changed the rules: 2018 for Europe and 2022 for the other continents.

The result was that nobody assumed real leadership with regard to such an important subject for world football. There were all kinds of rumours, mainly about vote-swapping, but nothing was done to stop them. FIFA’s image suffered badly. People concluded that the world football body lacked proper governance.

The media ignored the fact that FIFA helps to develop and organize the game through courses, seminars, infrastructure projects and so many other activities. There were just stories about the bad way certain members behave.

I have worked with FIFA for 19 years, including four World Cups and three Olympic Tournaments as well as many other competitions, courses and seminars in more than 40 countries. For me, as for many other people like me, it was really sad to read and hear such stories.

The dates for the World Cup 2022 are still in doubt, and the negative stories never seem to end. This is not good news for FIFA’s image and leadership.

Let me give my opinion about the dates for the 2022 tournament.

There is a strong argument in favour of organizing it in November and December 2022. At that time the weather in Qatar will be perfect for football. But playing in those months would mean that more than 50 professional leagues would have to interrupt their competition for at least 50 days.

Another idea is January and February 2022. The weather is better but there would be major problems with the International Olympic Committee and the clash of dates with the Winter Olympics as well as with the American Super Bowl. Neither would it be easy to convince the British associations to abandon their traditional match calendars on Boxing Day and New Year.

The last option seems to be May 2022. (It is not possible to play in April because of Ramadan.)

There would be no big problems with the leagues, with enough time to finish the season and still play in Qatar in May (as in Chile in 1962).

But the weather will not help. It would be acceptable in early May but by the end of the month it would be more than 35°C. If it is decided to play in May, it would be crucial to study the weather conditions in the next four years in order to establish the kick-off times, bearing in mind the health of the players rather than the interests of TV.

I expect that before taking a decision the FIFA Executive Committee will analyse all the factors.

We must always remember that there are nearly 300 million players registered around the world, and billions of fans. We need to hear and understand what they are telling us -- and to act accordingly.

I am sure that with this in mind, the four major challenges facing FIFA this year may be solved quite easily.

Those challenges are :

- the election of the President;
- recovering the trust of sponsors after the departure of two major backers of the world game;
- the justifiable rebellion of the women's game regarding the artificial pitches planned for the Women's World Cup in Canada. Women cannot understand why men always play on natural grass and they must play on artificial surfaces;
- establishing a definitive date for the World Cup in Qatar, as already explained.

And beside these four major points, there is an even bigger challenge: how to recover the confidence of the billions of fans all over the world.

Football is much more than a game lasting 90 minutes. It is the best way to add values and principles to our society.

I know that because I have drawn on my football background since 2011 to run a foundation, with hundreds of examples of how sport, mainly football, can be a wonderful tool to help people to live in a better community. Honesty, democracy, solidarity, transparency, equity and playing fair are values that we must always have present in football and on our daily activities.

In order to restore good communication between fans and FIFA, I would like to see some structural and administrative changes at FIFA.

On the emotional side, FIFA must never forget that it is the game's administrator, with the duty to create better standards for the game.

FIFA does not own football. The game has no owner. Neither does FIFA. Both belong to the world heritage.

With that in mind, here are some changes that would be part of my program if I were to stand for the FIFA Presidency.

The first change is a crucial one: the period for the FIFA Presidency must be limited, with not more than one re-election. This would mean that the President would be working for the future of the game, not for collecting votes for the upcoming election. That will always bring fresh air into the house, the fans and the game.

Transparency is essential. Everyone involved with FIFA must declare all their assets and belongings as soon as they assume a decision-maker position. FIFA must annually publish all payments such as salaries, daily allowances, consultancies and so on.

Documents concerning entities and third-party contracts with FIFA must also be made public, and FIFA must make clear who owns these companies or entities.

On the field of play, we must work hard to avoid injustices. I agree that the development of new technologies must continue, but we must be very careful not to attack one of the biggest assets of football: the same rules apply all over the world. That is the only way we can continue developing and growing football in a democratic way.

We must find a system that helps referees in real time. But first we should introduce two tools for referees: a) The referee must ask the player if he (or she) was or was not simulating being fouled, and if the ref later discovers (via images) that the player had not told the truth, the player must be sanctioned with at least one game suspension. b) Secondly, a third referee's card could be introduced (in the Sunday league where I play we have a blue card) which will be used to sit a player on the bench for a couple of minutes and give him time to calm down.

Finally, let's abolish the age limit for referees. A 42 year-old is still young enough to do a good job on the field. It would be better to evaluate referees on their performances, not on their age next birthday.

And then there's the World Cup. FIFA must understand that the tournament belongs to the world, and football must always be properly respected. The game must come first, second and third.

Every four years we have more and more pressure from the six confederations to have an extra team in the finals. I think that without affecting the prestige and quality of the tournament and yet still playing a similar number of days that the current format requires, it would be possible to organize a World Cup with 36 teams (four more than today), adding only 12 more games for a total of 76.

Together with my colleagues from Match Vision company, I have been developing a completely new format for the competition. We can use a special 7-a-side tournament (half pitch) for kids U-14 to test this system. If it works, then it can be presented as a new concept.

On the field of play as well as in the stands, we must continue the fight against any kind of discrimination. This effort must never stop. We must work hard to eradicate violence and hooliganism forever, with clear FIFA guidelines in the form of rules and regulations binding on all 209 national associations.

Protection for the clubs –especially amateur clubs- that invest in the development of young players is a must. We must support them with sources but also with ideas and courses to prepare them for the future.

On the financial side, it is difficult to understand that FIFA is a billionaire organization and yet some national associations are really poor. And it is unethical that whenever an election or a big decision is due, there are enticing promises made about more funds being made available to the member associations.

We must involve FIFA sponsors in the development of football in countries which fail to qualify for any international tournament for ten years. They should be helped by developing and working together on a long-term strategy, with FIFA checking on their progress.

150 years ago, football was a game mainly for boys. But now football is a game without gender barriers, so women must have exactly the same opportunities as men. This means that we must organize a Confederations Cup; a Club World Championship; Futsal and also Beach Soccer for girls.

Relations between FIFA and the Confederations must improve. We cannot have FIFA organizing similar programmes to those of the Confederations. The role of the Confederations needs to be restructured. But they must remain part of FIFA, as they have demonstrated how important they are.

Finally, FIFA authorities need to have a much closer relationship with the fans. It is also important to find a way that everyone involved in the game (players, referees, coaches, administrators) participate in the election of the FIFA President and other positions involved at FIFA.

This is something that FIFA has been asking the Member Associations to implement – but in that case, FIFA must practise what it preaches and apply the same principle to its own organization.

Finally, as a principle I do not believe that destroying or attacking what others have worked hard to build over many years is a realistic way of helping our game. That only creates more problems and divides people. We need to bring everybody together to work to create a more friendly and efficient FIFA, one in which football must always be the first option.

There is no room for bureaucrats in football; we need people who love the game, who look forward to playing and watching games and goals being scored, who eagerly anticipate the next World Cup.

We need people who feel that marketing is important, but that the game itself is much more important because it brings hopes and emotions to their daily lives, to their families and their communities.

We need a strong FIFA to protect the game -- to protect our game.

And we must never lose sight of this vital formula that needs to guide FIFA in the future: Transparency + dialogue + participation + democracy = Football XXI Century.

Con el Fútbol Ganamos Todos.

Thank You!