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UPHOLDING FIFA'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY: SAUDI ARABIA'S WORLD CUP BID UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



On 22 May 2024, three human rights experts—**Professor Mark Pieth** (*Founder of the Basel Institute on Governance, Basel*), **Stefan Wehrenberg** (*Attorney at Law, Zurich*), and **Rodney Dixon KC** (*Temple Garden Chambers, London*) submitted a report to FIFA concerning the bid of Saudi Arabia to host the 2034 World Cup. The report called on FIFA to ensure the implementation of basic human rights standards in Saudi Arabia in accordance with FIFA's own policy. These include that Saudi Arabia must immediately cease violating fundamental rights by releasing all political prisoners and those arbitrarily detained, ensuring prisoners are treated according to international standards, establishing an independent judiciary, and genuinely advancing women's rights.

To date, no response to these calls has been received from FIFA. It is now considering Saudi Arabia's bid which was officially submitted in July 2024, and a final decision on the host nation for 2034 is expected during FIFA's Congress in December 2024. The coming months are thus critical for FIFA to transparently and rigorously assess Saudi Arabia's record and guarantee the necessary changes.

Join the authors of the report, along with experts and human rights defenders from Saudi Arabia, in Zurich, at FIFA's headquarters to address how to uphold and implement FIFA's human rights policy in practice.

PANELLISTS

- **Lina Alhathloul**, *Head of Monitoring and Advocacy, ALQST*
- **Joey Shea**, *Researcher focusing on the UAE and Saudi Arabia, Human Rights Watch*
- **Abdullah Alaoudh**, *Director for Countering Authoritarianism, Middle East Democratic Center*
- **Professor Mark Pieth**, *Founder of the Basel Institute on Governance, Basel*
- **Stefan Wehrenberg**, *Attorney at Law, Zurich*
- **Rodney Dixon KC**, *Barrister at Temple Garden Chambers, London*



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