

*Note: This is an unofficial translation from the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre. The original response was in German.*

Monday, 22 January 2018

From: Public Affairs + CSR – FC Bayern Munich

To: Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

Subject: Statements Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, CEO FC Bayern München

Statement January 2018

"We're seeing a positive development as far as the (current) situation in Doha is concerned. The United Nations Labour Organisation confirmed this in November and officially terminated their investigation into the working and living conditions of guest workers in Qatar. The criticised 'kafala' labour system now needs to be phased out gradually. The (German) Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel recently told me that the situation of workers in Qatar has improved through football, although of course there is room for further improvement. As a representative of the whole football family, FC Bayern plays its part towards ensuring this can be achieved. We are engaged in a global competition with the best European clubs. But our partners in Doha are also aware of our beliefs. We talk about these matters confidentially, and trust continues to grow with every conversation. That is the most important prerequisite for change."

Statement, December 2015

"Thanks to its successes in the Champions League since 2010, FC Bayern has gained many supporters around the world. We care about these fans and travel around the world, which entails having to learn how to approach other cultures as well. As sportspeople, our message is always one of integration and freedom in shaping one's own life. Our partners in Qatar know this. They are aware of our beliefs, for example, where the question of workers' rights is concerned. But they will only listen to us if there is mutual respect and trust. That's why we talk to them and not about them. One of the strengths of sport is its ability to build bridges and develop partnerships, but it always has to be done through its own means. If there's a way of initiating change through sport, then that way is through partnership."

Statement, December 2017

"We formed a partnership with Doha Airport nearly a year ago, and one part of this partnership is that we represent German society. We are definitely not the foreign minister and not an NGO, but our partners in Doha are aware of our beliefs regarding issues such as workers' rights and gender equality. We talk about these matters confidentially, and trust continues to grow with every conversation. That is the most important thing in a relationship. We are in the process of learning that you have to be very careful in the Arab world; everything is very complex. Our partners are learning that the message our players, whose success they admire greatly, bring with them is always one of freedom in shaping one's own life and of coexistence between different people and cultures. We are currently considering whether our women should also train for the second half of the season in Doha."

(For your personal attention: The FC Bayer München women's team, Bundesliga-Champion back to back 2015/16, will also prepare at the Aspire Academy in Doha from January 27 to February 3. We hope to support a strong campaign of our women's team in the second leg of the season, and we hope to support women's sport in Qatar.)