

PRESS STATEMENT

The series of unfortunate events at CAF over last few months have brought with them unprecedented negative publicity on the organization and its leadership.

But nothing could have prepared CAF for the arrest of its President Ahmad Ahmad on June 6th 2019 in Paris by the Central Office for the Fight against Corruption and Financial and Fiscal Crimes (OCLCIFI) over money laundering and outright theft of CAF funds.

In an attempt to salvage CAF from imminent implosion and irreversible reputational damage, FIFA proposed a poorly conceptualized and worse executed COOPERATION AGREEMENT with CAF to second its (FIFA) Secretary-General Fatma Samoura as the General Delegate to CAF, with a 6-month renewable mandate to take over the reins of the organization.

This “hostile takeover” by FIFA met opposition from inside the powerful FIFA Bureau (comprised of the heads of all Confederations) when no less than the President of UEFA called into question the process and rationale of this cooperation.

Logically, and in a sane World, the acquiescence by the CAF leadership that they have been unable to manage their own affairs ought to have been followed by quick resignation of its top leaders.

It is clear to me and many others that the COOPERATION AGREEMENT as currently structured has the sole purpose of shielding and cleansing CAF President Ahmad Ahmad from the crimes he has committed – financial impropriety, sexual harassment, and nepotism – since his ascension to the Presidency.

For instance, how can the new structure meant to manage the reforms at CAF be reporting to the self-same people who caused the destruction in the first place?

My own considered opinion and proposal to my colleagues in the CAF ExCo was that the FIFA Mission ought to be completely Independent of CAF and must (at the end of the 6-month period) submit a comprehensive report to the FIFA Council and the CAF Executive Committee.

The report presented would have to include a forensic financial and systems audit carried out by a firm of global repute, with a detailed proposal for the statutory and administrative reforms which would then be considered by the CAF ExCo before being presented to the General Assembly for approval and subsequent implementation.



Secondly, I have also been consistent in my opinion that it's impossible to appoint the CEO/SG of FIFA to effectively become the head of the Confederation and expect it to be anything else other than a "takeover", regardless the intent. If FIFA, in utmost good faith, did not wish for perception of a takeover, then the person selected to head this mission should NEVER have been the FIFA SG/CEO.

Thirdly, there have been consistent rumors within the football body politick, that the problems at CAF have allowed FIFA President Gianni Infantino to find a way to permanently off-load his CEO/SG Fatma Samoura.

Apparently, Infantino has thus seized this opportunity to offer Fatma a "golden parachute" into a confederation job to pave the way for her eventual replacement at the helm of FIFA.

The continued use of the term "renewable" with reference to Fatma Samoura's tenure at CAF points to a permanence in her role at the Confederation. Obviously questions abound as to whether her position will be superior to that of the CAF GS and whether she will be the *de facto* President of CAF?

The CAF President continues to play semantics, by continuously stating that "we are in a crisis" as though the crisis generated itself spontaneously. For the avoidance of doubt, the crisis at CAF has been fomented by the active and direct actions of the CAF President through acts of omission and commission.

CAF President has brazenly violated CAF statutes consistently with the silent acquiescence of FIFA and its so-called Ethics committee. Who was very "quick and swift" on suspending the former Vice of CAF, Mr. Kwesi Nyantakyi based on a videos recording of an "Incident" and yet fails to act in case of the day light arrest of Ahmad in Paris in connection with a "corruption Investigation" relating to funds directly linked to CAF. What a Travesty Justice !!!!!!!

Case in point:

In 2018, I raised the alarm when I learnt that funds meant for the Liberia FA had been moved from CAF accounts and diverted to some mysterious bank accounts in the name of an art gallery in Poland.

I wrote a series of emails to the CAF President informing him of these unusual occurrences, and the possibility that this may not have been an isolated incidence.

Surprisingly, instead of making moves towards getting to the bottom of this state of affairs at CAF, President Ahmad shocked me by telling my ExCo colleagues

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that I had conspired with members of the CAF Secretariat to divert these funds to the Polish shell companies.

Left with little or no option, I made a formal complaint to FIFA who uncharacteristically went silent for a prolonged period, and never reverted to me on the issue.

When I had exerted sufficient internal pressure within CAF, an internal review was undertaken which discovered that indeed, large sums of money had been diverted from CAF accounts and the culprits identified.

To date, no further action on these individuals has been taken by CAF and status quo remains.

Secondly, approximately 3 (three) months ago the CAF ExCo ordered a forensic audit into the CAF accounts and the management system. The CAF President has simply refused to implement this decision, yet he is quite happy to accept FIFA "assistance" in the exact same vein.

Even more sinister was the assertion by the CAF President that he implements ALL CAF ExCo decisions, regardless how wrong or misguided they may be. A good example was the ExCo decision to replay the CAF Champions League final, which he insisted must be replayed as per ExCo decision.

So I wonder, why not the ExCo decision for a forensic and management audit.

In the light of the foregoing and my personal convictions that CAF risks a complete financial meltdown and irreparable reputational damage due to the actions of a few members of its top echelons, and that FIFA has continued to abet these actions, in order to pander to the whims of African voters, I have decided to take the following legal steps;

I will immediately file a case at the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) at Lausanne, seeking to have this apex court find **THE** "COOPERATION AGREEMENT" between CAF and FIFA null and void with immediate effect.

- i) To compel CAF to implement the decision of the CAF ExCo on a forensic and management audit whose report shall be part of the deliberations at the General Assembly.

It is my considered opinion that we cannot reform CAF by starting off with a trampling-on of the statutes. It will simply imply that they are not important and give the green light for their continued disrespect.

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I hope that the CAS will give interim orders stopping the hostile takeover of CAF by FIFA and especially the decision to bring Fatma Samoura to head the CAF Secretariat.



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