

# Decision of the FIFA Appeal Committee

passed on 6 May 2026

## DECISION BY:

**Neil EGGLESTON (USA), Chairperson**  
**Andrés PATON URICH (Argentina), Member**  
**Cristina GONZALEZ (Guatemala), Member**

## ON THE CASE OF:

**Mexican Football Association**  
**(Decision FDD-27355)**

## AGAINST:

**Decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee passed on 11 March 2026 (Ref. FDD-26254  
and FDD-25708)**

## I. FACTS OF THE CASE

- The following summary of the facts does not purport to include every single contention put forth by the actors at these proceedings. However, the FIFA Appeal Committee (**the Appeal Committee**) has thoroughly considered in its discussion and deliberations any and all evidence and arguments submitted, even if no specific or detailed reference has been made to those arguments in the following outline of its position and in the ensuing discussion on the merits.

### A. Facts of the case

- The present appeal lodged by the Mexican Football Association (the **FMF** or the **Appellant**) relates to the international friendly matches between *Mexico v. Ecuador* played on 14 October 2025 (**Match 1**) and *Mexico vs. Paraguay* played on 18 November 2025 (**Match 2**).
- Following the Matches, FIFA's Anti-Discrimination Monitoring System provided the Secretariat to the Disciplinary Committee (**the Secretariat**) with the following reports, mentioning *inter alia* (**the ADMOS Report**):

#### ADMOS Report for Match 1:

<b>1.1. Where did the incident take place?</b> <i>Please give details on blocks, row numbers, section or specific area of the stadium etc.</i>	<i>The incident occurred in T1 zone 25 to 34 and T2 zone 32 to 43</i>
<b>1.2. Was the incident caused by fans of Team A or Team B?</b>	<i>The incident was caused by Mexico (Team A) home fans.</i>
<b>1.3. Exact time when the incident took place, including minutes of the match.</b>	<i>The incident occurred around 22:07; Minute 87 of the match.</i>
<b>1.4. Describe exactly what happened and how many people were involved.</b>	<i>Approximately 4000 Mexico home fans chanted "eeeh, puto," when Ecuador's goalkeeper was about to take a kick. The chant lasted for about 10-15 seconds.</i>
<b>1.5. Please describe the meaning of actions or signs/ flags/ banners/ clothing or other items of a possible discriminatory nature and specify if the incident related to race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason.</b>	<i>The word "puto" (In English: "faggot," literally refers to a male sex worker) is a discriminatory word that is homophobic.</i>
<b>1.6. How did the players and/ or match officials (including referees) and/ or other fans react to the incident/s?</b>	<i>When the Mexico fans started chanting eeeh, the organisers started to play music. Despite this the word puto is still audible in the stadium. There was no further reaction after the incident.</i>
<b>1.7. Other details of the incident you would like to mention.</b>	
<b>1.8. If it was a repeated incident provide information about the</b>	<i>The incident was not repeated.</i>

<p><b>frequency and duration.</b> Please note the time, duration, location and number of people involved for each repeated incident.</p>	
<p><b>1.9. Links to submitted evidence.</b> Evidence is uploaded in FIFA Cargo folder.</p>	<p>MEX v ECU IAD_Evidence_Mexico homophobic chant.mp4</p>

**ADMOS Report for Match 2:**

<p><b>1.1. Where did the incident take place?</b> Please give details on blocks, row numbers, section or specific area of the stadium etc.</p>	<p>The incident occurred in sectors 102, 103, 143 and 144.</p>
<p><b>1.2. Was the incident caused by fans of Team A or Team B?</b></p>	<p>The incident was caused by Mexico (Team A) home fans.</p>
<p><b>1.3. Exact time when the incident took place, including minutes of the match.</b></p>	<p>The incident first occurred around 21:17 in the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute of the game.</p>
<p><b>1.4. Describe exactly what happened and how many people were involved.</b></p>	<p>A group of approximately 2000 Mexico (team A) home fans chanted "eeeh puto". The chant lasted for about 10 seconds.</p>
<p><b>1.5. Please describe the meaning of actions or signs/ flags/ banners/ clothing or other items of a possible discriminatory nature and specify if the incident related to race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason.</b></p>	<p>The word "puto" (In English: "faggot," literally refers to a male sex worker) is a discriminatory word that is homophobic.</p>
<p><b>1.6. How did the players and/ or match officials (including referees) and/ or other fans react to the incident/s?</b></p>	<p>After one of the incidents (in the 84<sup>th</sup> minute) the match was stopped for one and a half minutes, during which time the stadium's public address system, with support from the video boards, announced that what had occurred was not acceptable and should be avoided so that the match would not be terminated. After another incident another announcement was made. The video screens around the stadium also showed #no place for homophobia. There was also music played on a couple of occasions when the Paraguay goal keeper was taking a goal-kick or free kick to try to drown out the puto chant, but it was still audible.</p>
<p><b>1.7. Other details of the incident you would like to mention.</b></p>	<p>The observer did not manage to record the incident in the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute. The incident was repeated (see 1.8) and was recorded in 2 other instances.</p>
<p><b>1.8. If it was a repeated incident provide information about the frequency and duration.</b> Please note the time, duration, location and number of people involved for each repeated incident.</p>	<p>The incident was repeated on another three occasions. In the 84<sup>th</sup> minute a group of approximately 2000 Mexico home fans located in sectors 102, 103, 143 and 144 chanted "eeeh puto". The chant lasted for about 10 seconds. The observer did not manage to record this chant. In the 90<sup>th</sup> minute a group of approximately 2000 Mexico home fans located in sectors 102, 103, 143 and 144 chanted "eeeh puto". The chant lasted for about 10 seconds.</p>

	<p><i>The observer managed to record this incident. In the 90+3 minute a group of approximately 2000 Mexico home fans located in sectors 102, 103, 143 and 144 chanted "eeeh puto". The chant lasted for about 10 seconds. The observer managed to record this incident.</i></p>
<p><b>1.9. Links to submitted evidence.</b> <i>Evidence is uploaded in FIFA Cargo folder.</i></p>	<p>MEX v PAR IAD_Evidence_Mexico homophobic_90minute.mp4  MEX v PAR IAD_Evidence_Mexico homophobic chant_90+3 minute.mp4  Other videos  MEX v PAR_IAD _Pregame_Announcement.mp4  MEX v PAR_IAD _match_paused.mp4</p>

## B. Proceedings before the FIFA Disciplinary Committee

4. On 27 October 2025, disciplinary proceedings with ref. FDD-25708 were opened in relation to Match 1 against the FMF with respect to the potential breach of art. 15 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (**FDC**).
5. On 8 December 2025, disciplinary proceedings with ref. FDD-26254 were opened against the FMF in relation to Match 2 for potential breach of the same provision.
6. On 10 February 2026, the Secretariat informed the Respondent that, in accordance with art. 53.6 FDC, the aforementioned proceedings had been merged.
7. On 9 March 2026, the FIFA Disciplinary Committee rendered its decision against the Appellant in the merged cases (**the Appealed Decision**), deciding as follows:

“1. *The Respondent, the Mexican Football Association, is found responsible for the discriminatory behaviour of its supporters (homophobic chanting) in connection with the FIFA international friendly matches Mexico vs Ecuador played on 14 October 2025 and Mexico vs Paraguay played on 18 November 2025.*

2. *The Respondent is ordered:*

- a. *to pay a fine to the amount of CHF 120,000. The Respondent is granted a final deadline of thirty (30) days as from notification of the present decision in which to pay the fine. Upon expiry of the aforementioned final deadline and in the event of persistent default or failure to comply in full with the decision within the period stipulated, additional measures may be imposed by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee.*
- b. *to play its next (A level) Tier 1 International Match (international friendly match) as home team with limited number of spectators. During the match subject to the above sanction, the Respondent is ordered to close at least 15% (fifteen percent) of the available seats, such close being required to be implemented primarily within the stands behind goals. In addition, the Respondent shall submit to FIFA a proposed seating plan at the latest 10 (ten) days prior to said match”.*

8. It should be noted that the fine was calculated as follows: CHF 30,000 for the incident in Match 1 (FDD-25708) and CHF 90,000 for the three incidents in Match 2 (FDD-26254) (i.e., CHF 30,000 for each incident).<sup>1</sup>
9. On 19 March 2026, the Appellant, on the basis of art. 51 FDC, requested that the Disciplinary Committee provisionally stay the enforcement of the Appealed Decision due to operational limitations to implement the sanction in the then upcoming international friendly match *Mexico v. Portugal* of 28 March 2026 given the advanced state of the ticket sales for that encounter. The Appellant requested that the stay of enforcement last until the grounds of the Appealed Decision be issued.
10. On 20 March 2026, the Appellant made a second request to stay the enforcement of the Appealed Decision until FMF's international friendly match against Belgium on 31 March 2026. In other words, it requested to apply the partial stadium closure in the match against Belgium instead of the match against Portugal.
11. Later that same day of 20 March 2026, the Deputy Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee rejected the request to stay the enforcement of the Appealed Decision until the international friendly match against Belgium on 21 March 2026. However, it exceptionally granted, on the basis of art. 51 FDC, the Respondent's request to stay the enforcement of the Appealed Decision until the issuance of the grounds of the same were issued.
12. On 7 April 2026, the grounds of the Appealed Decision were notified to the Appellant and, accordingly, the stay of the execution of said decision was lifted.

### **C. Proceedings before the FIFA Appeal Committee**

13. On 9 April 2026, the Appellant notified FIFA about its intention to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Committee.
14. On 15 April 2026, the Appellant submitted its appeal brief and proof of payment of the appeal fee (which had been posted to FIFA's bank account on 13 April 2026).
15. In the appeal brief, the Appellant made the following petitions for relief:

*"1. Please consider this appeal to have been filed in a timely and proper manner.*

*2. Revoke the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee consisting of a fine of CHF 120,000 and a 15% reduction in stadium capacity.*

*3. Instead, issue a warning to the FMF, and continue working with FIFA to carry out campaigns, projects, and strategies to continue the fight against discrimination.*

*4. Grant the Provisional Measures submitted in a timely and proper manner, as mentioned in this appeal.*

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<sup>1</sup> See para. 49 of the Appealed Decision.

5. Please consider the proof of payment of the CHF 1,000 appeal fee, which is attached hereto as Annex II, to have been submitted".

16. The Appellant did not request a hearing to be held.
17. On 22 April 2026, the Chairperson of the Appeal Committee rejected the request for provisional measures filed by the Appellant (the Provisional Measures Decision).
18. On 24 April 2026, the Appellant requested the grounds of the Provisional Measures Decision.
19. The Appellant's request for the grounds of the Provisional Measures Decision has become moot, as the present grounds on the merits of the case have been issued.

## II. APPELLANT'S POSITION

20. The position of the Appellant can be summarized as follows:

### On strict liability and its limits:

- a. Strict liability cannot be applied mechanically or absolutely. In particular, the CAS has noted that "*strict liability is not intended to sanction the federation itself*" (CAS 2023/A/9972) and automatic sanctions may lack a genuine deterrent effect, especially when fans use chants to deliberately punish their own federation. In CAS 2024/A/10932 and CAS 2024/A/10933 the CAS went further by stating that "*it has not identified any omissions, negligence, or reasonable measures that the FMF could have taken but did not*", concluding that "*it is not apparent what additional actions the FMF could have implemented*". In the present case, the FMF has not only demonstrated the absence of negligence but has also demonstrated concrete, innovative and effective measures. Therefore, the mechanical application of strict liability to impose an aggravated sanction for recidivism is disproportionate and contrary to established CAS jurisprudence.

### On the severity of the incident:

- b. Not all conduct should be judged in the same manner. CAS jurisprudence, namely CAS 2024/A/10932 and 2024/A/10933, confirms that sanctions cannot extend to punishing a member association where it has taken all reasonable action to prevent the misconduct from occurring.
- c. In Match 1, the chant occurred only once, lasted between 10 and 15 seconds, did not recur, and was effectively addressed through the identification and removal of the offending spectators, demonstrating that control and deterrence mechanisms were successfully activated. Furthermore, the referee did not escalate the three-step protocol beyond the use of the PA system, indicating that the incident was considered minor. The Disciplinary Committee maintained that the efforts of the FMF in Match 1 were "*inadequate and unsuccessful*" because the chant remained audible. However, the Disciplinary Committee failed to note that the FMF not only attempted to drown out the discriminatory chant with music but also identified and removed the offending fans, ensuring that the behavior did not recur. This is an exemplary measure that even the Disciplinary Committee itself praised in the Appealed Decision.

- d. In Match 2, only two incidents were recorded (90th and 90+3rd minutes). The alleged incident at minute 84 was accepted without audiovisual evidence and based solely on the observer's report and video footage of the stoppage. Furthermore, Match 2 was played in the United States. As such, the FMF did not have operational control over security, stadium management, or enforcement of protocols. This limitation has been recognized as a major mitigating factor in prior decisions of the FIFA Appeals Committee. If the FMF had full control of the stadium, as in Match 1, it would have acted in the same manner by identifying and removing the offending spectators. Even without said control, the FMF implemented preventive measures before, during, and after the Matches, including a mass mailing campaign to over 163,000 individuals, social media campaigns, stadium protocols, awareness activities, and direct sanctioning of offending spectators.
- e. The FMF asks itself: what else is expected of it beyond identifying, removing and sanctioning offending spectators in real time? The CAS has answered this question in CAS 2024/A/10932 and 2024/A/10933 by stating that *"it has not identified any omissions, negligence, or reasonable measures that the FMF could have taken but did not"* and concluding that *"it is not apparent what additional actions the FMF could have implemented to prevent the occurrence of the discriminatory chant"*. FIFA should apply the same standard in the present case.

On the measures implement by the FMF before, during and after the Matches:

- f. The FMF implemented the following measures:
- Mass mailing campaign: For both Matches, the FMF sent targeted emails to over 163,000 registered individuals in relevant cities to discourage homophobic chants, showing proactive and measurable prevention efforts.
  - Social media posts: For both Matches, the FMF shared messages across official platforms before and during matches to raise awareness and discourage discriminatory chanting.
- Security operation and sanctions: At Match 1, the FMF identified and brought before a civil court two fans who allegedly incited the homophobic chant and removed eight others from the stadium who participated in the chant.
- "We Are One" activity: For Match 1, interactive fan activities were held near the stadium promoting core football values like respect, discipline, and solidarity, supported by informational materials.
  - Fan awareness video: For Match 2, the FMF produced and shared a video featuring fans encouraging respectful support and rejecting offensive behavior, aiming to foster cultural change.
  - Public address (PA) system protocol: For Match 2, the FMF activated immediate in-stadium response by playing music over the PA system when chants began to deter and drown out the discriminatory chants with music
- g. In addition, for more than 10 years, the FMF has invested significantly into combatting discrimination, including with campaigns, protocols, cooperation with CONCACAF, agreements

with CONAPRED, and the implementation of FIFA's Code of Good Practice on Diversity. CAS jurisprudence, namely CAS 2024/A/10932 and 2024/A/10933, has acknowledged the effectiveness of these measures, including a progressive reduction in discriminatory chanting, which was not properly taken into account by the Disciplinary Committee.

- h. The Disciplinary Committee erred in citing the applicable provisions of art. 15 FDC, referring to incorrect subparagraphs, thereby demonstrating a lack of precision in the application of the regulatory framework.

On the proportionality of the sanction:

- i. Article 15.7 FDC authorizes the competent judicial body to deviate from the minimum sanctions if the member association commits to working with FIFA on a comprehensive anti-discrimination plan. The FMF has fully complied with this requirement, implementing campaigns, protocols and partnerships for over 10 years, and is currently planning working sessions with FIFA to develop a joint action plan ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ (**FWC**) to develop a joint action plan ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026™. The Disciplinary Committee should have considered this circumstance to deviate from the minimum sanctions, as permitted by art. 15.7 FDC. However, not only did it fail to do so, but it also imposed disproportionate sanctions.
- j. The sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee are disproportionate because they failed to adequately consider the following mitigating circumstances:
  - o In relation to Match 1, the FMF's identification, detainment, and removal of a number of the spectators involved in the chant, as well as the non-recurrence of the incident. In addition, the fact that two fans were identified and reprimanded by a civic judge.
  - o The FMF's lack of operational control of the stadium in Match 2. Lack of operational control has been recognized by the FIFA Appeal Committee as a mitigating circumstance in the case with ref. FDD-9144 and the same approach should be taken in the present case.
  - o In Match 2, only two incidents were recorded (minutes 90 and 90+3). The incident in minute 84 was not recorded and, therefore, has not been proven to have occurred to the standard of comfortable satisfaction as required under art. 39.3 FDC. Therefore, the fine of CHF 30,000 imposed against the FMF for an incident must be annulled.
  - o The FMF's implementation of innovative preventive measures in both Matches.
  - o The relevance of CAS awards in CAS 2024/A/10932 and CAS 2024/A/10932 which found that the minimum sanction provided in the CONMEBOL Disciplinary Code<sup>2</sup> (USD 100,000) is not absolute, that the relevant article "*should not be interpreted restrictively*", and that the phrase "*impose a lesser sanction*" must be understood in a broad sense, allowing for the setting of a fine lower than the prescribed minimum.
- k. The sanction imposed by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee is also disproportionate considering that:

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<sup>2</sup> The Appeal Committee notes that the FMF agreed to submit to CONMEBOL's disciplinary regime in the context of the 2024 Copa América despite belonging to the CONCACAF.

- (i) FIFA had imposed a fine from CHF 60,000 in FDD-18582 for incidents in three matches and now imposes a fine of CHF 120,000 for incidents in the two matches.
- (ii) the stadium reduction of 15% for the next international friendly match would punish the respectful fans (who represent more than 90% of the attendees) instead of focusing on the individual offenders, reduce ticket sales revenues that the FMF uses to fund anti-discrimination campaigns, and not deter the misconduct. The FMF would lose CHF 335,000 if the stadium reduction is applied to the *Mexico v. Ghana* match of 22 May 2026.
- (iii) it would be inconsistent with CAS awards in the arbitrations CAS 2024/A/10932 and CAS 2024/A/10932, where the original sanction imposed by CONMEBOL of USD 100,000 was reduced to USD 20,000 on the basis of disproportionality.

- I. The Disciplinary Committee erred in finding recidivism. While a repeat offence has been established, recidivism cannot be applied in a purely automatic manner; rather, it must be assessed in light of the specific circumstances, including the fact that prior sanctions did not incorporate measures aimed at identifying and individually sanctioning the offending supporters.

On the ineffectiveness of sanctions:

- m. The imposition of sanctions does not have a deterrent effect. Similar sanctions have been imposed in the past and proven to be ineffective. It is a misguided assumption that such sanctions will eliminate fan misconduct, as this behavior is difficult to address due to broader social and cultural context. The solution is not to increase fines, but to implement awareness-raising and cultural change strategies, as the FMF has been doing.
- n. Moreover, FIFA's zero-tolerance policy against discrimination does not mean that it should impose inappropriate sanctions. The CAS has held that strict liability "*does not mean sanctioning the federation or club per se, which may even be and feel not at fault for the inappropriate conduct of their supporters, but rather attributing to the federations or clubs the responsibility for the violation of the rules*" (CAS 2023/A/9972).
- o. For this reason, the FMF requests that it be allowed to continue working on awareness-raising and cultural change strategies, which are what can truly eradicate the problem. Preventive measures and the individual identification of offenders have proven effective, while excessive financial penalties only divert resources that the FMF needs to implement these actions.

### III. CONSIDERATIONS OF THE APPEAL COMMITTEE

- 21. In view of the circumstances of the present matter, the Appeal Committee first decided to address some key procedural aspect, including its competence to hear the present appeal and the admissibility of the said appeal, before entering into the substance of the case at stake.

## A. Competence of the FIFA Appeal Committee

22. First, the Appeal Committee recalled that the procedural aspects of the matter at stake were governed by the September 2025 FDC, in particular considering that (i) the September 2025 FDC entered into force on 5 September 2025 and (ii) the present appeal was lodged by the Appellant on 9 April 2026.
23. In this context, the Appeal Committee pointed out that the first instance found the Appellant liable for the discriminatory behavior of its supporters (art. 15 FDC). As a result, the Appellant was ordered to pay a fine to the amount of CHF 120,000 and to play its next international friendly match as home team with a limited number of spectators.
24. In light of the above, the Appeal Committee considered that, in accordance with art. 60 in conjunction with art. 61 of the 2025 FDC, it was competent to hear the appeal lodged by the Appellant against the decision rendered by the Disciplinary Committee.
25. This having been established, the Appeal Committee acknowledged that:
- the grounds of the Appealed Decision were notified on 7 April 2026;
  - the Appellant communicated its intention to appeal on 9 April 2026;
  - FIFA received the appeal fee on 13 April 2026; and
  - the Appellant submitted its appeal brief on 15 April 2026.
26. In view of this, the Appeal Committee held that the requirements of art. 60 pars. 3, 4 and 6 of the September 2025 FDC were met, and therefore declared the present appeal admissible.

## B. Applicable law

27. The above being determined, the Appeal Committee next considered that the merits of the present appeal should be analyzed in light of the provisions of the September 2025 edition of the FDC, the former being the edition which was in force at the time of the pertinent events – *i.e.* when the Matches played. As a matter of fact, the September 2025 FDC entered into force on 5 September 2025, *i.e.* before the incidents subject to the present appeal took place.
28. In this respect, the Appeal Committee gave particular attention to art. 15 of the September 2025 FDC, this without prejudice that other rules may also be at stake.
29. Indeed, said article constitutes the relevant provision to assess the present issue as it deals with the liability of associations (or clubs) for possible discriminatory behavior of their own supporters, while defining such behavior. This provision reads as follows:

*"1. Any person who offends the dignity or integrity of a country, a person or group of people through contemptuous, discriminatory or derogatory words or actions on account of race, skin colour, ethnicity, nationality, social origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status or any other reason shall be sanctioned with a suspension lasting at least ten matches or a specific period, or any other appropriate disciplinary measure.*

(...)

6. *If one or more supporters of a representative team or club engage in the behaviour described in paragraph 1 above, the member association or club responsible will be subject to the following disciplinary measures, even if the member association or club concerned can prove the absence of any fault or negligence:*

a) *For a first offence, playing a match with a limited number of spectators and a fine of at least CHF 20,000 shall be imposed on the association or club concerned, unless this would lead to an unreasonable financial impact on the affected member association or club, in which case the fine may be reduced, on an exceptional basis, to no less than CHF 1,000. As an exception to article 6.4 of this Code, the maximum fine to be imposed in cases of racist abuse against a player, match official, coach, other team official or any other person exercising an official role during a match shall be CHF 5,000,000;*

b) *For recidivists or repeat incidents, or if the circumstances of the case require it, disciplinary measures such as the implementation of a prevention plan, a fine, a points deduction, playing one or more matches without spectators, a ban on playing in a particular stadium, the forfeiting of a match, expulsion from a competition or relegation to a lower division may be imposed on the association or club concerned.*

7. *The competent judicial body may deviate from the above minimum sanctions if the association and/or club concerned commits to developing, in conjunction with FIFA, a comprehensive plan to ensure action against discrimination and to prevent repeated incidents. The plan shall be approved by FIFA and shall include, at least, the following three focus areas:*

a) *Educational activities (including a communication campaign aimed at supporters and the general public). The effectiveness of the campaign will be reviewed regularly.*

b) *Stadium security and dialogue measures (including a policy on how offenders will be identified and dealt with through football sanctions, a policy on escalation to state (criminal) legal authorities, and a dialogue with supporters and influencers on how to create change).*

c) *Partnerships (including working with supporters, NGOs, experts and stakeholders to advise on and support the action plan and ensure effective and ongoing implementation).*

(...)"

30. Against such background, the Appeal Committee wished to point out that said provision contains a strict liability rule according to which the association (or club) is responsible for the misconduct of its supporters even if the association (or club) concerned is not at fault (para. 6e of said article). Consequently, the FIFA Judicial Bodies are entitled to sanction the association (or club) to which the supporter(s) belong(s), in order to prevent misconduct by supporters from occurring and going unpunished.

31. With this legal framework in mind, the Appeal Committee subsequently turned its attention to the merits of the present case.

### C. Merits of the case

32. On reading the Appealed Decision as well as the Appellant's appeal brief, the Appeal Committee observed that the present case relates to the discriminatory behavior of Mexican supporters during two international friendly matches played in Mexico on 14 October 2025 and in the United States on 18 November 2025.

33. In this context, the Appeal Committee took note that the Disciplinary Committee was comfortably satisfied that discriminatory chants occurred during the Matches and were committed by supporters of the Mexican team.

34. With regard to the meaning of the chant, the first instance "*endorsed the observations from the ADMOS Report, in so far as the word "puto" (which can be translated in English as "faggot", referring to a male sex worker), is a homophobic slur which discriminates on the grounds of sexual orientation*".

35. In view of the above, the Disciplinary Committee considered that "*the Mexican supporters had performed discriminatory chants in Matches 1 and 2 in violation of art. 15 (1) FDC, thus incurring the liability of the Respondent under the aforementioned principle of strict liability contained in art. 15 (2) FDC*". In this regard, the Appeal Committee notes that the Appealed Decision contains a typo as the principle of strict liability is now established in art. 15.6 FDC.

36. When determining the sanction(s) to be imposed, the first instance cited the mitigating<sup>3</sup> and aggravating<sup>4</sup> circumstances before considering that it was, in principle, entitled to apply the measures foreseen under art. 15.6(b) FDC<sup>5</sup>.

37. In consideration of said circumstances, the first instance then found that "*the most appropriate and proportionate measure to be imposed upon the Respondent in response to the discriminatory behaviours of its spectators was the following: i. a fine of CHF 120,000, calculated as such: CHF 30,000 for the incident in Match 1 (FDD-25708) and CHF 90,000 for the three incidents in Match 2 (FDD-26254) (i.e., CHF 30,000 for each incident); and ii. one match to be played with a limited number of spectators (specifically, closure of at least 15% of the available seats in its next international friendly match as home team)*".<sup>6</sup>

38. Having acknowledged the main elements contained in the Appealed Decision, the Appeal Committee subsequently acknowledged that the Appellant does not dispute (i) the occurrence of the reported incident at Match 1 or the incidents at minutes 90 and 90+3 of Match 2, (ii) their discriminatory nature, nor (iii) the fact that they were perpetrated by Mexican supporters. Instead, the Appellant argued that:

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<sup>3</sup> Namely "*The efforts of the Respondent by way of the various preventive measures and initiatives it has undertaken towards fighting [discrimination] for the matches in question and also over the past years.*" (see para. 44 of the Appealed Decision).

<sup>4</sup> In particular, that (i) the "*conduct of the Mexican supporters during the incident at minute 90+3 of Match 2 demonstrated a blatant and deliberate disregard for the measures implemented to prevent such behaviour, as the discriminatory chant was performed immediately after a clear warning had been issued via the stadium's PA system and visual messaging on the big screens*" and (ii) the Appellant qualified as a recidivist (see paras. 45 to 47 of the Appealed Decision).

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>6</sup> See para. 49 of the Appealed Decision.

- The incident at minute 84 of Match 2 has not been proven to have occurred, as there is no recording of the chant; only a recording of the match stoppage following the chant. Therefore, the fine of CHF 30,000 imposed for this alleged incident must be annulled by the Appeal Committee.
- Strict liability should not be applied mechanically and absolutely and should not lead to sanctions where the sanctions would lack a genuine deterrent effect. In the present case, the Respondent should not be sanctioned based on strict liability considering that (i) in Match 1, the Respondent attempted to drown out the discriminatory chant with music, successfully identified two of the fans who allegedly incited the chant and brought them before a civic judge to be reprimanded, removed from the stadium eight other spectators involved in the chant, and kept the incident from recurring, and (ii) in Match 2, the Respondent did not have operational control of the stadium.
- The sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee is disproportionate. In particular, the Disciplinary Committee did not take into account all mitigating circumstances and erred in considering recidivism as an aggravating circumstance. Moreover, the Disciplinary Committee should have considered the possibility of reducing the amount of the sanction in accordance with art. 15.7 FDC.

39. In view of the above, the Appeal Committee considered that the following questions were key in deciding the present appeal:

- a) Have the incidents occurring in Matches 1 and 2 been proven to the standard of a comfortable satisfaction?*
- b) Is the Appellant strictly liable for the incidents at stake?*
- c) Are the sanctions imposed by the first instance proportionate?*

40. The Appeal Committee thus turned to addressing each of these questions separately.

***a. Have the incidents occurring in Matches 1 and 2 been proven to the standard of a comfortable satisfaction?***

41. The Appellant does not contest the occurrence of the reported incident at Match 1 or the incidents at minutes 90 and 90+3 of Match 2. As a result, and after carefully reviewing the ADMOS Reports and the supporting video footage, the Appeal Committee was comfortably satisfied that said incidents occurred.

42. On the other hand, the Appellant does contest the occurrence of the incident at minute 84 of Match 2. In this regard, the Appeal Committee notes that there is indeed no recording of the incident. There is only the ADMOS Report and video footage of the match stoppage following the alleged incident.

43. The Appeal Committee found that the ADMOS Report – which expressly records the occurrence of this discriminatory chant at minute 84 – is corroborated by the recording of the match stoppage. In particular, the Appeal Committee noted that the chant was reported to have occurred in minute 84 by the observer, and the video footage of the stoppage shows minute 84:20 of the match. This combined with the absence of any alternative explanation by the Appellant for such interruption, as well as the fact that in the recording one can hear fans mocking the message in the PA system by saying “*he said puto, it was him, it’s his fault, he started it*” (translated from the Spanish original), leads the Appeal Committee to be comfortably satisfied that this incident occurred.

44. To conclude, the Appeal Committee found that one incident occurred in Match 1 and three in Match 2.

**b. Is the Appellant strictly liable for the incidents at stake?**

45. As a preliminary remark, the Appeal Committee recalled that the principle behind art. 15 par. 6 is that of strict liability, which is a fundamental element of the current football regulatory framework<sup>7</sup>, but also one of the few legal tools available to deter fans from engaging in improper conduct and to ensure that such conduct does not go unpunished<sup>8</sup>.

46. In this context, the Appeal Committee wished to emphasize that the wording of said article is clear and leaves no room for interpretation: “[i]f one or more supporters of a representative team or club engage in the behaviour described in paragraph 1 above, the member association or club responsible will be subject to the following disciplinary measures, even if the member association or club concerned can prove the absence of any fault or negligence” (emphasis added)<sup>9</sup>.

47. Furthermore, the liability contemplated under said provision “is direct (since it is incurred by the association as a legal person regardless of whether it, or its bodies, directly performed the acts in question), and strict (since the liability applies despite any care or diligence shown by the person in question)”<sup>10</sup>.

48. As emphasized by CAS, “this system of liability has been uniformly praised in the case law, since it is based on this principle that FIFA is able to deal with cases of improper behaviour by spectators and impose indirect sanctions on them through their association (ex multis: CAS/2009/A/1944, par. 78). The intention behind this provision is not simply to sanction the association as such, but above all to ensure that the association assumes liability for the offences committed by its fans. Accordingly, the provision is of a highly preventative and dissuasive nature. It has been asserted that the punitive aspect of the sanction is therefore of secondary importance to the preventative and dissuasive role that sanctions must perform in the interest of internal order in football (see, for example, CAS/2002/A/423, expressly cited and followed in CAS 2013/A/3094)”<sup>11</sup>.

49. Art. 15 FDC therefore foresees two cumulative conditions for an association to be “subject to (...) disciplinary measures”:

- on the one hand, a discriminatory behavior under the terms of art. 15.1 FDC, namely a behavior that is offending “the dignity or integrity of a country, a person or group of people through contemptuous, discriminatory or derogatory words or actions on account of race, skin colour, ethnicity, nationality, social origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status or any other reason shall be sanctioned with a suspension lasting at least ten matches or a specific period, or any other appropriate disciplinary measure”; and

<sup>7</sup> CAS 2009/A/1944 Football Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FFBH) v. FIFA; CAS 2002/A/423 PSV Eindhoven v. UEFA.

<sup>8</sup> CAS 2015/A/3874 Football Association of Albania v. FIFA & Football Association of Serbia.

<sup>9</sup> In CAS 2022/A/8751 FENAFUTH v. FIFA, the Panel made it clear that the rule contained in art. 13 par. 2 of the 2019 FDC (the predecessor of art. 15 par. 6 of the September 2025 FDC) “is conclusive and leaves no room for doubt: both associations and clubs are directly and strictly liable for the improper behaviour of their fans” (free translation from Spanish).

<sup>10</sup> CAS 2022/A/8751 op. cit. – free translation from Spanish

<sup>11</sup> CAS 2022/A/8751 op. cit. – free translation from Spanish.

- on the other hand, a link between the perpetrators of such behavior and the association concerned.

50. In the case at stake, it is clear and uncontested (both before the first instance and during the present appeal proceedings) that:

- the chants performed during the Matches are discriminatory; and
- they were performed by Mexican supporters, *i.e.* supporters of the representative team of the Appellant.

51. In other words, both cumulative requirements under which the Appellant is to be subject to disciplinary measures under art. 15 par. 6 FDC were met. As such, the Appeal Committee found that the first instance rightly applied the principle of strict liability towards the Appellant.

52. With respect to the arguments put forward by the Appellant (namely, that strict liability should not be applied since (i) in Match 1, it attempted to drown out the discriminatory chant with music, successfully identified two of the fans who allegedly incited the chant and brought them before a civic judge to be reprimanded, removed from the stadium eight other spectators involved in the chant, and kept the incident from recurring, and (ii) in Match 2 it did not have operational control of the stadium), the Appeal Committee considered them irrelevant in view of the principle of strict liability contained in the aforementioned provision.

53. As a matter of fact, the principle of strict liability is independent from the Appellant's own behavior. In other words, the Appeal Committee found that:

- the Appellant is, regardless of its own action(s), to be held liable for the behavior of its supporters from the moment they engage in a discriminatory incident as it was the case during the Matches. In this respect, the Appeal Committee noted that CAS had already clarified that:
  - i. *"whilst the Appellant may not have intended to commit any offence and that it acted admirably and responsibly in providing guidelines to its travelling supporters, these matters are not relevant to nor are they exculpatory of liability"*<sup>12</sup>;
  - ii. *"[a]ny awareness campaign, with respect to any objective, is measured in results, not in actions, and clearly the Appellant's strategies are not achieving the desired end. In this sense, the Appellant cannot argue unfairness or disproportionality of the sanction, **let alone exonerate itself from its responsibility** by saying that it "has taken measures and actions" as the punishable act is not the implementation of strategies, but the regrettable acts of discrimination that have failed to cease"* (emphasis added)<sup>13</sup>;

54. In sum, the Appeal Committee was of the opinion that, at best, those elements could constitute potential mitigating circumstances to be analyzed when determining the disciplinary measures to be imposed on the Appellant. However, they could by no means constitute factors that would exonerate the Appellant from any responsibility towards the discriminatory behavior of its supporters.

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<sup>12</sup> CAS 2017/A/5306 Guangzhou Evergrande Taobao FC v. AFC.

<sup>13</sup> CAS 2022/A/9049 FENAFUTH v. FIFA (free translation from Spanish).

**c. Is the sanction imposed by the first instance proportionate?**

55. As a preliminary remark, the Appeal Committee observed that the Appellant believed the sanction imposed was disproportionate and should be reduced based on the following:

- the incident in Match 1 was minor considering that the referee did not escalate the three-step protocol beyond the use of the PA system.
- In Match 1, two of the fans who allegedly incited the chant and brought them before a civic judge to be reprimanded.
- In Match 1, the FMF identified and removed a number of the offending spectators, thereby ensuring the non-recurrence of the incident.
- the FMF lacked operational control of the stadium in Match 2.
- only two – not three – incidents occurred in Match 2 (at minutes 90 and 90+3).
- the FMF implemented innovative preventive measures in both matches.
- CAS jurisprudence confirms that minimum sanctions set out in a disciplinary code are not absolute.
- the Disciplinary Committee erred in taking recidivism into account.
- FIFA previously imposed a fine of CHF 60,000 in FDD-18582 for incidents in three matches. Therefore, it cannot impose a fine of CHF 120,000 for incidents in two matches.
- the stadium capacity reduction of 15% for the next international friendly match penalizes compliant spectators, reduces ticketing revenue used to fund anti-discrimination measures, and lacks deterrent effect.
- the FMF would incur losses of approximately CHF 335,000 if the stadium reduction were applied to the *Mexico v. Ghana* match on 22 May 2026.

56. As such, the Appeal Committee went on to analyze whether the above elements require a reduction in the sanction imposed by the first instance.

57. To that end, the Appeal Committee first recalled that according to CAS, a decision-making body fixing the level of pecuniary sanctions should, amongst others, take into consideration the following elements: (a) the nature of the offence; (b) the seriousness of the loss or damage caused; (c) the level of culpability; (d) the offender's previous and subsequent conduct in terms of rectifying and/or preventing similar situations; (f) the applicable case law and (g) other relevant circumstances.

58. As such, reference shall be made to "*CAS jurisprudence (CAS 2014/A/3665, 3666 & 3667) [which] has already explicitly acknowledged that the mere exercise of discretion by a body entrusted with similar powers does not, in and of itself, run afoul predictability. What matters is whether the decision-making body has properly used (and, in this case, the principle of predictability has been observed), or abused (and, in this case, the principle of predictability has been violated) its discretion*"<sup>14</sup>.

59. In addition, disciplinary measures serve different purposes: "*On the one hand, a sanction shall help to undo harm that has been inflicted by the offender. On the other hand and more importantly, a*

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<sup>14</sup> CAS 2019/A/6345 Raja Casablanca v. FIFA.

*disciplinary sanction shall prevent re-offending by the offender. Consequently, harsher sanctions are warranted in case of serious infringements, structural non-compliance with the various obligations and in case of recidivism*<sup>15</sup>.

60. Therefore, as far as the proportionality of the sanction is concerned, it is the responsibility of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee – and then that of the Appeal Committee – to determine the type and extent of the disciplinary measures to be imposed (i) in accordance with the objective and subjective elements of the offence, taking into account both aggravating and mitigating circumstances and (ii) taking into account the circumstances and the degree of the offender's guilt and any other relevant circumstances.
61. In this context, while focusing first on the measures implemented by the Appellant, the Appeal Committee wished to recall that CAS already pointed out that *"[a]ny awareness campaign, with respect to any objective, is measured in results, not in actions, and clearly the Appellant's strategies are not achieving the desired end. In this sense, the Appellant cannot argue unfairness or disproportionality of the sanction, let alone exonerate itself from its responsibility by saying that it "has taken measures and actions" as the punishable act is not the implementation of strategies, but the regrettable acts of discrimination that have failed to cease*<sup>16</sup>.
62. The Appeal Committee stressed that the various measures implemented by the Appellant over the past 10 years and in relation to the Matches were properly taken into account by the first instance<sup>17</sup>. In addition, the Appeal Committee properly took into account that in Match 1 two supporters appear to have been identified as instigators of the chant and eight supporters were apparently removed from the stadium due to their participation in the chant<sup>18</sup>.
63. The Appeal Committee next rejected the following arguments of the Appellant:
- a. that the first instance improperly applied art. 15 FDC by not reducing the sanction on the basis of para. 7 of said provision. According to art. 15.7 FDC, FIFA "may" deviate from the minimum sanctions if, in conjunction with FIFA, the member association commits to developing an anti-discrimination plan. The term "may" signifies that the Disciplinary Committee is not under an obligation to deviate from the minimum sanctions, but rather that it has discretion to do so or not. Moreover, the Appeal Committee noted that the first instance had the right, which it elected to use, pursuant to art. 15.6 FDC, to increase the minimum sanction in the event that the member association is a recidivist, as *in casu*. The Appeal Committee considered that the first instance correctly decided that a higher sanction was necessary in this case considering that the previous sanctions failed to have the expected deterrent effect.

<sup>15</sup> CAS 2017/A/5299 Olympique Lyonnais v. UEFA.

<sup>16</sup> CAS 2022/A/9049 op. cit

<sup>17</sup> See for instance para. 44(i) of the Appealed Decision: "(...) the Committee took note of the following mitigating circumstances: (i) The efforts of the Respondent by way of the various preventive measures and initiatives it has undertaken towards fighting for the matches in question and also over the past years." In this regard, the Committee endorses the finding of the Disciplinary Committee that "[n]otwithstanding [said efforts], the Committee rejected the Respondent's implication that it has engaged in "joint initiatives" with FIFA. The Respondent's characterization is misguided. The FMF has submitted preventive measures and initiatives to FIFA solely in the context of prevention plans ordered by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee. While such plans may be reviewed and approved by the Committee, this procedural approval does not transform them into "joint initiatives," nor does it entail any sharing or transfer of responsibility to FIFA. Approval of a prevention plan merely confirms its formal adequacy; it neither absolves the FMF of responsibility for future incidents nor mitigates liability arising from subsequent breaches".

<sup>18</sup> See para. 44(iii) of the Appealed Decision.

- b. that the incident in Match 1 was allegedly “minor”. The Appeal Committee determined that the chants could not be classified as such. Said incident was clearly audible and had considerable participation (approximately 4,000 Mexican supporters). The Appeal Committee considered that the fact that the referee did not stop the match and that no further incident occurred following the use of the PA system does not diminish the seriousness of the incident; rather, it merely indicates that no additional misconduct took place after the initial occurrence.
- c. that the sanction should be reduced by CHF 30,000 because only two incidents – and not three – were proven to have occurred in Match 2. In this regard, as mentioned *supra* at para. 43, the Appeal Committee is comfortably satisfied that a third incident occurred at minute 84 of the Match.
- d. that the first instance erred in considering the FMF as a recidivist because, in the present case, there are additional mitigating elements that were not present in prior cases – namely, the identification, removal, and sanctioning of a number of supporters responsible for or involved in the chants. In this regard, the Appeal Committee observed that the concept of recidivism under art. 26 FDC is not contingent upon the presence or absence of such mitigating conduct, but rather upon the objective criteria that *“another offence of a similar nature and gravity is committed after notification of the previous decision within... three years of the previous offence.”* In the present matter, these criteria are clearly fulfilled. The discriminatory chants at issue are of the same nature and comparable gravity to those previously sanctioned, and they occurred within the relevant temporal window. The Appeal Committee therefore finds that the FMF qualifies as a recidivist within the meaning of art. 26 FDC. While the Appellant’s enhanced efforts to identify and sanction individual offenders are acknowledged and may be considered as mitigating factors, they do not alter the classification of the offence for the purposes of recidivism. Consequently, the first instance did not err in treating recidivism as an aggravating circumstance.
- e. that the sanction should be reduced in light of the decision in case ref. FDD-18582, in which a fine of CHF 60,000 was imposed for incidents occurring in three international friendly matches. The Appeal Committee did not find this comparison persuasive. In that case, the fine of CHF 60,000 corresponded to three separate offences, each sanctioned at the minimum level of CHF 20,000. As confirmed on appeal (in case ref. FDD-19490), the Disciplinary Committee applied the minimum sanction per incident and imposed only one match with limited spectators. In application of art. 15.6(b) FDC, the Disciplinary Committee then increased the fine in the merged cases at stake FDD-26254 and FDD-25708. The fine was increased from CHF 20,000 per incident in FDD-18582 to CHF 30,000 per incident in FDD-26254 and FDD-25708. Furthermore, like in FDD-18582, the partial stadium closure was imposed for only one match. Accordingly, the Appeal Committee finds no inconsistency or disproportionality when comparing the present sanction to prior decisions.
- f. that the sanction is disproportionate because the partial stadium closure of 15% penalizes compliant spectators, creates a financial loss (including reduced ticketing revenue used to fund anti-discrimination initiatives), and allegedly lacks deterrent effect. The Appeal Committee did not accept this argument because the impact on spectators and financial consequences are inherent consequences of a partial stadium closure and form part of the deterrent mechanism intended to encourage compliance and proactive prevention. Moreover, the continuation of discriminatory chants despite prior sanctions imposed on the FMF does

not render the present sanction disproportionate. On the contrary, it highlights the need to maintain – and, where appropriate (as *in casu*), increase – disciplinary measures in order to ensure the effective enforcement of art. 15 FDC and to reaffirm FIFA's zero-tolerance policy against discriminatory conduct.

64. In view of the foregoing, the Appeal Committee considered that the sanction imposed on the latter – *i.e. a fine to the amount of CHF 120,000 and a partial stadium closure of 15%* – are, as a matter of principle, not excessive (and, in fact, was rather lenient) to the offence committed for the following reasons:

- a. the first instance duly acknowledged and took into account the Appellant's efforts to combat discrimination over the past 10 years and in relation to the Matches, the attempts to drown out the chants with music in Match 1, the identification of two supporters as instigators of the chant in Match 1 and their reprimanding by a civic judge, and the removal of eight other supporters from the stadium due to their participation in the chant in Match 1. With respect to the latter, however, the Appeal Committee considered that such measure could only carry limited mitigating weight in the present case. Indeed, the relevant chant was reported to have involved approximately 4,000 supporters. In these circumstances, the identification and removal of only 8 individuals cannot be regarded as an effective response capable of justifying a reduction below the minimum sanction foreseen under art. 15 FDC.
- b. the severity of the incidents was properly assessed by the first instance;
- c. the chants involved a considerable number of spectators (4,000 supporters in Match 1 and 2,000 supporters in three separate instances in Match 2);
- d. FIFA has a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination, under which any discriminatory behavior shall be strongly condemned and sanctioned;
- e. In Match 2, the discriminatory chant came immediately following and in deliberate defiance of warning from the PA system to not engage in such chants; and
- f. the Appellant is, as previously demonstrated, a recidivist with respect to discriminatory offences, as a result of which the sanctions listed under art. 15.6(b) FDC may be applied.

65. For the sake of completeness, the Appeal Committee also wished to remark that:

- a. the FMF has not demonstrated a lack of operational control in Match 2. In any event, even assuming that a lack of operational control existed and was accordingly considered a mitigating circumstance, the Appeal Committee finds that, in light of all relevant circumstances of the case, the sanction imposed at first instance was appropriate and proportionate. In this respect, the Appeal Committee underlined that it considered that the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee in the first instance was lenient.
- b. the CAS awards cited by the Appellant in support of claim for reduction of the sanction, namely CAS 2024/A/10932 and CAS 2024/A/10932, are not applicable to the present case. These decisions concern the interpretation and application of provisions under the CONMEBOL Disciplinary Code, which differs in structure, wording, and underlying regulatory framework from the FIFA Disciplinary Code. Under the FDC, art. 15.7 FDC explicitly grants FIFA judicial bodies the discretion to deviate from minimum sanctions; however, such deviation is not

mandatory. In the present case, the Appeal Committee has duly considered the mitigating and aggravating circumstances and determined that no such deviation is warranted. In particular, the Appellant's status as a recidivist justifies the application of art. 15.6(b) FDC and the maintenance of the sanction imposed by the first instance.

- c. with regard to the FMF's allegation that it is currently planning working sessions with FIFA to develop a joint action plan ahead of the FWC and that this should be considered a mitigating circumstance, the Appeal Committee notes that the infringements at issue occurred during international friendly matches. Consequently, the Appeal Committee finds no basis to consider these assertions as mitigating factors or to justify any deviation from the applicable sanctions.

66. In light of the foregoing, the Appeal Committee saw no reason to deviate from the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

67. As a final remark, the Appeal Committee observed that, notwithstanding the measures implemented by the FMF over recent years, the discriminatory chants at issue have not been eradicated. On the contrary, their recurrence demonstrates that the standard preventive measures relied upon by the Appellant, including announcements, PA warnings, music intended to drown out the chants, and the removal of a limited number of spectators, have not proven sufficiently effective in practice. The Appeal Committee therefore strongly encourages the FMF to reassess and reinforce its strategy, including by adopting additional, innovative and more targeted measures, making full use of all organizational, operational, educational and technological resources reasonably available to it, with a view to identifying offenders, preventing recurrence and ensuring that discriminatory conduct is effectively deterred.

68. Moreover, the Appeal Committee took note of the award rendered in CAS 2023/A/9972, in which the panel observed that:

*"... the FMF is asking itself what more it can do in its efforts to combat discriminatory acts – and, in this case, homophobic ones. Its concern is understandable, because, despite its efforts, the despicable behavior of its fans has not ceased. The hateful shouts of "maricón" and "ehhh, puto" which continue to be heard during every match of the Mexican national team, bring great discredit to the good name of its federation, but it must be remembered that they also undermine the reputation of FIFA, as the competition organiser, and, ultimately, the general reputation of the sport of football, an activity that inspires the following, interest and passion among billions of people around the world. Such chants have no place in football and must be eradicated. The recent amendment to Article 15 of the FDR allows disciplinary bodies to defer sanctions, as seen in the case at hand, but this Panel considers that such cases can also be addressed with greater severity, energy and vigor in accordance with the disciplinary regulations, which provide, among other measures, for the exclusion of offending national teams from competitions organized by FIFA".<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>19</sup> Translated from the Spanish original: "Sin perjuicio de lo anterior, la Formación constata que la FMF se pregunta qué más puede hacer en sus actuaciones contra los actos discriminatorios y, en este caso, homofóbicos. Debe compartirse su preocupación, porque, a pesar de sus esfuerzos, la execrable conducta de sus seguidores no ha desaparecido. Los odiosos gritos de "maricón" y "ehhh puto", que siguen presentes durante todos los partidos de la selección mexicana, producen gran descrédito al buen nombre de su Federación, pero es obligado recordar que también menoscaban la reputación de FIFA, como organizadora de la competición y, en definitiva, la reputación general del deporte del fútbol, la actividad seguimiento, interés y pasión despierta entre miles de millones de personas en el planeta. Dichos gritos no tienen cabida en el fútbol y deben erradicarse. La reciente modificación del artículo 15 FDR permite a los órganos disciplinarios diferir de las sanciones, como se ha visto en el caso que nos ocupa, pero esta

69. In light of the foregoing jurisprudence and the circumstances of the present case, the Appeal Committee considered that the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee was not only proportionate, but lenient and that the Disciplinary Committee could have imposed a far more severe sanction under art. 15 FDC.

#### **D. Conclusion**

70. Summarizing the above developments, the Appellant is found responsible for the discriminatory behavior of its supporters during the Matches and the sanction imposed by the Appealed Decision is upheld in its entirety.

#### **E. Costs**

71. The Appeal Committee decided, based on art. 49 par. 1 FDC, that the costs and expenses of the present proceedings amounting to CHF 1,000 shall be borne by the Appellant.

72. In this sense, since the Appellant had already paid the appeal fee of CHF 1,000, the Appeal Committee determined that the costs and expenses of the present appeal proceedings were to be set-off against such amount.

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*Formación considera que también pueden tratarse con mayor dureza, energía y vigor a tenor de las normas disciplinarias, que prevén, entre otras, llegar incluso a la exclusión de las selecciones culpables de las competiciones organizadas por FIFA".*

## IV. Decision

- 1. The appeal lodged by the Appellant, Mexican Football Association, against the Decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee passed on 11 March 2026 is dismissed. Consequently, said decision is confirmed in its entirety.**
- 2. The costs and expenses of these proceedings in the amount of CHF 1,000 are to be borne by the Appellant. The amount is set off against the appeal fee of CHF 1,000 already paid.**

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE  
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



**Neil Eggleston (USA)**  
Chairperson of the FIFA Appeal Committee

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**LEGAL ACTION:**

According to art. 50 (1) of the FIFA Statutes reads together with art. 52 FDC, this decision may be appealed against before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). The statement of appeal must be sent to the CAS directly within 21 days of receipt of notification of this decision. Within another 10 days following the expiry of the time limit for filing the statement of appeal, the appellant shall file a brief stating the facts and legal arguments giving rise to the appeal with the CAS.

**NOTE RELATING TO THE PAYMENT OF THE FINE:**

Payment can be made either in Swiss francs (CHF) to account no. 0230-325519.70J, UBS AG, Bahnhofstrasse 45, 8098 Zurich, SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A, IBAN: CH85 0023 0230 3255 1970 J or in US dollars (USD) to account no. 0230-325519.71U, UBS AG, Bahnhofstrasse 45, 8098 Zurich, SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A, IBAN: CH95 0023 0230 3255 1971 U, with reference to the abovementioned case number.