

## Kirk, Coats Urge FIFA to Suspend Russia's World Cup Participation

Written by Administrator  
Friday, 07 March 2014 11:32 -

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Senators Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) and Dan Coats (R-Ind.) today sent a letter to Joseph Blatter, the President of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), urging him to suspend Russia's FIFA membership.

In their letter, the senators write, "In light of Russia's military occupation of a sovereign Ukraine, we respectfully ask that you urgently convene an emergency session of FIFA to consider suspending Russia's membership in FIFA, stripping Russia of the right to host the 2018 World Cup, and denying the Russian National Team the right to participate in the upcoming 2014 World Cup in Brazil."

Below is the full text of the letter:

March 7, 2014

Joseph S. Blatter

President, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)

FIFA-Strasse 20

P.O. Box

CH-8044 Zurich

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Switzerland

Dear Mr. Blatter:

In light of Russia's military occupation of a sovereign Ukraine, we respectfully ask that you urgently convene an emergency session of FIFA to consider suspending Russia's membership in FIFA, stripping Russia of the right to host the 2018 World Cup, and denying the Russian National Team the right to participate in the upcoming 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

According to Article 3 of the FIFA Statutes: "[d]iscrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion."

As you know, there is ample precedent for suspending or expelling a FIFA member, such as when FIFA denied the then-Yugoslavia the right to participate in both the 1992 European Championship and the 1994 World Cup.

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Since Russia has similarly displayed a brazen disrespect for fundamental principles of FIFA and international law, I hope you will agree that it does not deserve the honor of either hosting the World Cup or participating in one. We ask that a more deserving World Cup 2018 bid should be re-considered instead.

We look forward to your timely action on this matter.

Sincerely,

Senator Mark Kirk

Senator Dan Coats