



# Preventing the damage of hosting an international sports event

Committee: HRC

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**Forum:** Human Rights Committee (HRC)

**Issue:** Preventing the damage of the hosting of international sports events

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## Introduction

The announcement that Qatar will host the 2022 FIFA World Cup sparked celebrations in Doha, marking the first time the championship would be staged in the Arab region. Nonetheless, the decision, which was made in 2010, also drew immediate criticism, including questions about the viability of holding a sporting event in a nation where summer temperatures routinely reach 38°C, claims of bribery and corruption against FIFA officials who supported Qatar, and worries about ongoing human rights violations.

In order to build the infrastructure and provide the services required to organize the most-watched athletic event in the world, hundreds of thousands of migrant workers have been subjected to systemic abuse and exploitation. The attention and criticism surrounding the tournament planning further exposed the circumstances faced by employees toiling across the nation.

The competition to host big sporting events is intense and doesn't seem to be going away. For the chance to host competitions like the FIFA World Cup, the Summer and Winter Olympic Games, or a Formula 1 Grand Prix, several cities compete. Major sporting events help the host community, and many scholars emphasize the beneficial economic consequences of events. There is currently a growing amount of study on social implications and destination image, but events frequently influence the economy of their host city.

The possible effects of organizing large events have been studied since the 1980s, and more recently, efforts have been made to better understand the travel intentions of visitors. This change is important for city marketers since it will make it easier to capitalize on any possible effect by having a complete grasp of tourist intentions. Studies have attempted to comprehend the connection between the perception of a place and travel intention. There isn't any conclusive proof, though, connecting the perceived negative effects of an event to a tourist's desire to travel to the host city.

Since the 1980s, studies on the possible effects of staging significant events have been conducted, and more recently, efforts have been made to better understand the travel intentions of visitors.

<b>Hosting the Olympics</b>	
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>
<b>Investment</b> – Incentive to invest in long-term infrastructure such as better transport links.	<b>Inefficient investment</b> – Olympics may require investment that is unused after the Games end.
<b>Tourism</b> – Olympics attracts many international visitors and businesses.	<b>Locals face congestion.</b> Locals face inconvenience and congestion during games.
<b>Marketing</b> – Cities which have hosted successful Olympics put on global map, e.g Barcelona.	<b>Cost to taxpayers.</b> Hosting Olympics costs local taxpayers.
<b>Sporting facilities</b> – development of world class sporting facilities for post-games.	<b>Olympic stadium left unused.</b> Hard to make full use of Olympic stadiums after games.
<b>Once in lifetime experience</b> – hosting Olympics can give a unique experience to locals.	<b>Public not always supportive.</b> Many locals in Rio de Janeiro felt money misused on games.
<b>Successful games.</b> London, Barcelona, Beijing considered successful.	<b>Unsuccessful games.</b> Some cities faced with large losses – Athens, Montreal e.t.c.
	<i>www.economicshelp.org</i>

Figure 1, The Benefits and Costs of Hosting the Olympics (www.economicshelp.org)

### Definition of Key Terms

#### The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC)

The Qatari organization is responsible for all infrastructures for the World Cup of 2022. They are supposed to create a memorable experience for all participants of the World Cup 2022 and carry on the Arabic and Middle Eastern legacy. One of their many tasks is to overview the construction of all stadiums.

#### The Semi-Annual Workers Welfare Compliance rapport

A series of reports were issued every 6 months that stated the welfare of workers for the 2022 World Cup. There are four main requirements for the tenderers. Summarized, they state that the



names, peak amounts, locations of accommodations and travel time of all workers should be available to the SC and that the SC is allowed to investigate to provide a Semi-Annual Workers' Welfare Compliance rapport. The visits will be held randomly and frequently and will also investigate the houses of construction workers.

### **Contract Life Cycle for Applicable Contracts**

The tenderers receive a Workers' Welfare (WW) contract from the SC. If the Commitment Statement is signed and returned by the tenderer who wants to receive payments, the SC will review the tenderers thoroughly. The SC bases the review on compliance with the WW requirements and the accommodation audit. The tenderers who applied are sorted into categories, Red (unqualified), Amber (temporarily qualified) and Green (qualified). Then there are commercial bids and selections of the contractors. If the tenderers comply with the WW requirements and their contractor's requirements they receive payments, if they do not comply with the requirements, the contractor disagrees with the WW requirements, or if the audit fails they do not receive payments.

## **General Overview**

Industrial communities that are experiencing economic stagnation frequently lack a robust culture and arts industry. Because many industrial cities, at least as major cities, have a relatively recent past, they may also lack a historically significant and appealing city center. The perception of industrial communities as somewhere to work but not live is a significant issue for many of these towns.

Workers outside stadium-related projects are prone to increased abuses when they lack proper protections. Stadium-related projects are held to higher worldwide scrutiny and standards than other types of projects. Furthermore, Qatar's subpar human rights record raises additional significant issues, such as severe limits on free speech and peaceful assembly, institutionalized discrimination against women and support for violence against them, and a hostile atmosphere for LGBT citizens and tourists.

The long-standing prominence of popular cultural manifestations is another element. Images are created and distributed in large part by the media. Without a doubt, the main explanation for the



connection between sports events and location marketing is the heavy media coverage of big sporting events. Even though the Internet may challenge television broadcasting's dominance, it is likely that it still has the greatest influence.

The Qatari authorities dismissed complaints of abuse from human rights groups and others for years, attempting to characterize these charges as singular instances of exploitation. The government didn't engage into an agreement with the International Labor Organization (ILO) to modify the nation's labor laws and bring them into compliance with international norms until 2017, as a result of a complaint made against Qatar at the International Labor Office. The deal includes government pledges to restructure the sponsorship system, enhance worker compensation and health and safety standards, expand access to justice, and support employees' voice .

Furthermore, an empirical study has shown that locals usually place a larger value on a significant event's effects on their city's reputation and level of public awareness than it does on its economic effects. We find that public entities in the UK also give these consequences more weight, which is consistent with these findings. Despite these findings, the topic of empirically measuring promotional benefits has not garnered as much attention in academic literature as, for instance, the assessment of economic impact.

Studies look at Qatar's accomplishments over the past 12 years, the results of its reforms, and what more steps are required to properly guarantee the rights of all migrant workers in the nation. This emphasizes that, despite the Qatari labor system's positive evolution, which has improved the living and working conditions for hundreds of thousands of migrant workers in Qatar and has the potential to significantly improve the lives of many more, there is still a significant amount of work to be done to effectively implement and enforce these. In the end, serious violations of human rights continue to occur today.

Individuals were often found to be working between 14 and 18 hours each day without a weekly day off, making them particularly vulnerable to forced labor. This also covers other groups, such as security guards and domestic employees.

The primary benefit of hosting international events is that they draw attention to the host nation, enhancing its reputation and enhancing its standing. Second, even if organizing major events costs too much money, the host nations may still make money by granting sports fans tourist visas, which will bring in money for the government through tourism. The infrastructure would benefit the

country's development if it were upgraded to accommodate athletes. Major athletic events must gradually incorporate greater security standards. This might limit the freedom of movement of locals during games and is also expensive.

A city may gain favorable attractiveness if things go well, but the reverse may occur if things go wrong. For instance, the Winter Olympics have garnered negative press due to fraud and budget overruns. If players moan about the heat, the football World Cup in Qatar might go wrong. Due to the poor condition of its facilities during the Commonwealth Games, Delhi received bad press. A large athletic event like the Olympics may cost a lot of money to host, and the taxpayer is responsible for covering those costs. Olympic expenses frequently exceed expectations and increase over time. Due to significant financial outlays on sporting events, several countries must deal with financial bankruptcy.

The prestige that a successful large international athletic event bestows on a city or nation is one of its principal effects. The Olympics in Barcelona (1992), Sydney (2000), and London (2012) were all seen as enormous successes that raised the stature of their host nations abroad. Barcelona particularly profited from hosting the Games, changing its reputation from that of an industrial port city to that of a popular travel destination worldwide.

Another thing to think about is that receiving a major event may demonstrate how far a nation has come in creating an inclusive and prosperous society. Major sporting events held in China, South Africa, and Brazil have all served as indicators of how far forward these nations' economies, political systems, and infrastructure have progressed in the eyes of the rest of the world. The sports event might be viewed as the worldwide community's "stamp of approval."



Figure 2, Protesters boycotting Qatar (2022, image.org)



In 2022, accusations of corruption and bribery have long plagued the choice of Qatar to host the World Cup. Following a series of votes by FIFA officials, the choice was made public in 2010. Over proposals from the United States, South Korea, Japan, and Australia, Qatar prevailed.

Numerous representatives of FIFA and other organizations have been charged with taking or seeking bribes to steer the World Cup to Qatar over the years. James Montague, a journalist who has written about Qatar and the World Cup, stated that "There have been just so many allegations of corruption against the Qatari bid of political machinations going on, in terms of government deals, gas deals between countries that would have a vote on who would host the World Cup finals"

The number of worker fatalities attributable to the stadium building worker's working conditions is disputed by FIFA and Qatar. Qatar acknowledges the deaths of 37 workers that were "non-work-related" but claims that just three individuals have died as a direct result of working on World Cup construction sites.

In order to escape the misery and unemployment in nations like Nepal, Bangladesh, and India, many migrants seek jobs in Qatar. But they must pay significant fees in order to obtain employment. The employees we spoke to paid dishonest recruiting agents in their native nation sums ranging from US\$500 to US\$4,300. Many are afraid to quit their employment after they arrive in Qatar because of their debt.



Figure 3, workers at Qatar (2020, image.org)

In a room full of officials and sponsors at a human rights conference in Frankfurt, held by the German Football Association, a member of the association, Dario Minden, addressed the ambassador of Qatar to Germany, Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Saud al-Thani, in a forceful manner on the topic of the tolerance of non-heterosexuals and non-cisgender individuals, Minden being gay himself.

“Football is for everyone,” Minden claimed. “It doesn’t matter if you’re lesbian, if you’re gay, it’s for everyone. For the boys, for the girls and for everyone in between ... The rule that football is for everyone is so important. We cannot allow you to break it no matter how rich you are. You are more than welcome to join the international football community and, also, of course, to host a big tournament. But in sports, it is how it is. You have to accept the rules.”

The two main issues of hosting a world cup are the application and respect of human rights in the hosting country as well as the conditions of the preparation and infrastructures necessary for these events.

## Timeline of Key Events

Date	Event
2 December 2010	Qatar wins bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup
February 2014	New workers welfare standards are effective
September 2014	Release of the semi-annual workers welfare compliance rapport
11 April 2017	Construction of Lusail Stadium begins in Qatar
25 November 2017	Qatar reveals blueprints and plans for the stadiums
12 July 2018	Qatar launches its 2022 FIFA World Cup Legacy Program
16 May 2019	Al Wakrah, now known as the Al Janoub stadium, is now open to the public
11 August 2021	The first phase of the World Cup 2022 infrastructure project is completed
20 November 2022	The World Cup 2022 Opening Ceremony is held in Doha, Qatar The first match of the world cup 2022 is held in the Al Bayt stadium,

Seeing as Qatar deleted most documents off their website, most information is only available via dateless PDF links, and the exact dates for multiple events are not available such as the release date of their plans for sustainable stadiums and their goals for 2022.

The dates stadiums were built and the exact dates for their infrastructure plans, goals and progresses remain unsure. The PDF documents regarding this topic will be in the bibliography for more information.

## Major Parties Involved

### Pay Up FIFA!

FIFA and Qatar were pressured to take action and implement a thorough program using a participatory approach with employees and trade unions to offer migrant workers and their families with a remedy, including financial compensation. Although financial assistance to suffering families in

the event of migrant worker deaths may lessen long-term effects, neither Qatar nor FIFA could ever make up for the loss of a loved one.

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the government of Qatar would have to provide redress for serious abuses that migrant workers have endured since the 2022 World Cup was awarded in 2010, according to Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, FairSquare, and a global coalition of migrant rights organizations, labor unions, international football fans, abuse survivors, and business and rights groups.

They made this statement on May 19 2022. Numerous inexplicable fatalities and injuries, salary fraud, and expensive recruitment costs are a few of them. To support this coalition's request, Human Rights Watch has launched a global campaign called #PayUpFIFA.

## Pakistan



In order to ensure security at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, which was expected to welcome some 1.2 million spectators from November 20 to December 18, Pakistan has dispatched hundreds of soldiers.

To maintain the contests secure, Qatar is receiving assistance from police agencies and security firms from 13 nations, including France, Jordan, Turkey, Britain, and the US. With over 4,500 combat troops deployed in Qatar in October, Pakistan is the only nation to send troops to Doha.



The first football World Cup to ever be hosted in the Middle East is presently taking place in Qatar, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday denounced "a bombardment of misinformation" against the Arab nation, stressing that his own nation stands in solidarity with Qatar.

Pakistan dispatched a military detachment to help the authorities in Doha set up security for the competition in addition to offering spiritual support to Qatar. Along with a large number of footballs used in World Cup games, the South Asian nation also provided tens of thousands of flags from other soccer-playing nations.

### Amnesty International

In a research titled "Predictable and Preventable," Amnesty International outlines how FIFA and Qatar might address 12 years of injustices.

Despite being required to by Qatari law, some companies choose not to provide or renew residency permits. These identification cards serve as proof that employees are able to live and work in Qatar. Without them, employees risk jail time or hefty fines. Some of the men building Khalifa Stadium are afraid to leave the job site or their workers' camp because of this.

### Possible Solutions

Seeing as the events that occurred in Qatar in 2022 should not be repeated, the hosting of international sporting events needs more structure. The way workers in Qatar were treated should never happen again. This is crucial following the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In article 23 and 24 it states that everyone has the right to work in a good environment and rest if they cannot work and this was not the case for the construction workers in Qatar.

Major modifications to the intrinsically exploitative *kafala* sponsorship system have made it possible for the great majority of migrant workers to lawfully leave the country and change employment without the consent of their current employer. Despite the fact that many employees seem to have benefited from these modifications in practice, important aspects of the system are still in place and continue to trap many migrant workers in precarious situations where they are at the whim of violent employers. Qatar must eliminate all of these practical and legal obstacles that are still



in place, including the "absconding" accusation, and punish employers that deploy such tactics as a form of management.

To ensure that every country follows the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there are multiple possible solutions. A background check on the country regarding the GDP, the amount of legal construction workers and their treatment and the government's plans to host the next big international sporting event. If this information is public, bigger parties could calculate if the host has the capacity to create their plans with the workers and resources that are currently available.

Even if the Employees' Welfare Standards and other programs mark development and may be viewed as "green patches of decent work," there are still significant flaws, especially when contrasted to the national labor rights afforded to all other workers in Qatar.

Another way to ensure the safety of the citizens in countries that are about to host an international sporting event is setting strict rules and regulations. These should be looked over by an unbiased party and funded by international funds. The funds should cover the basic needs of the country's ability to host and pay the needed workers a fixed hourly wage. This should also be controlled and or checked by an unbiased party.

All Supreme Committee contractors and subcontractors engaged in the building of or rendering services to World Cup-related stadiums and training facilities were required to adhere to the Standards. They include specifications for employment agreements, wages, and working and living arrangements. Additionally, they contain clauses intended to stop migrant employees from being paid recruiting fees, being misled about the nature and terms of their jobs, having their passports retained by employers, and contract replacement. There are now systems in place to effectively monitor and enforce compliance.

In Qatar, migrant workers are still unable to organize and become members of unions, and the 2% of employees who are represented by Joint Committees are all employers. These nonetheless suffer from major faults, lack procedures for collective bargaining, and fail to offer employees essential legal safeguards, even while they give workers some representation. To uphold its international commitments, the government must let migrant workers organize and join autonomous labour unions.

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