

Russia Could Deny Entry to FIFA Official

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 03, 2013



Garcia has alleged human rights violations links to the criminal case against Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout. **Foto-net**

A senior FIFA official who was declared persona non grata in Russia is expected to be denied a Russian visa as he embarks on a tour to examine reports of corruption and match fixing in soccer, a news report said Thursday.

Michael Garcia, chairman of FIFA's Ethics Committee, will next week start his tour of the nine countries that submitted bids to host the World Cups in 2018 and 2022, Kommersant reported.

In December 2010, Russia was awarded the right to stage the 2018 tournament, but Garcia may have to forgo his plans to visit the host-country.

He was blacklisted by the Russian government in April over alleged human rights violations linked to his involvement in the criminal case against Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout when Garcia worked as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York in 2008.

Bout was sentenced to 25 years in a U.S. prison in April having been found guilty of collusion to sell weapons to Colombian terrorist group FARC.

The blacklist includes the names of 18 U.S. nationals and was Russia's response to the Magnitsky Act — passed by the U.S. Senate in December — which imposed travel and economic sanctions on Russian officials implicated by the U.S. of being involved in the 2009 death of Hermitage Capital lawyer Sergei Magnitsky.

In addition to Garcia's blacklisting, the law banning the promotion of homosexuality to minors, which took effect in July, is casting gloom over Russia's victory to host the World Cup. In mid-September, FIFA's senior officials said they would discuss the application of the law with Russian officials to make sure there would be no discrimination at the 2018 tournament.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/10/03/russia-could-deny-entry-to-fifa-official-a28255>