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Ukraine Wants FIFA, UEFA to Sanction Russian Football Over Crimea Clubs

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Arena stadium in Sevastopol.

KIEV — Ukraine's football federation has called on soccer's world and European governing bodies FIFA and UEFA to sanction the Russian Football Union, or RFU, for bringing Crimean clubs into its league structure.

Three Crimean teams — TSK Simferopol, SKChF Sevastopol and Zhemchuzhina Yalta — have been accepted by the RFU to play in the Russian championship next season.

The trio played matches in the Russian Cup on Tuesday.

An official letter of complaint signed by Anatoly Konkov, the president of the Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU), was posted Tuesday on the domestic governing body's official website.

"With all respect we are addressing you [FIFA and UEFA] over the events troubling not only the Ukrainian football society but also the whole football community," it said.

"We have witnessed the executive committee of the Russian Football Union illegally and arbitrarily embracing the Ukrainian clubs from the Crimea peninsula."

"As far as we know, the Russian Football Union officially informed neither UEFA nor FIFA about this decision. I consider it necessary to inform you that three Ukrainian clubs have played in the Russian Cup.

"We understand this activity is in conflict with the regulations of FIFA, UEFA, FFU and RFU.

"As the president of the Ukrainian national association, I am asking you to take all necessary actions to deal with the situation, including applying sanctions to the part that broke the regulations [the RFU] and ignores the basic principles of the higher football institutions.

"We are adhering to the same solid ground regarding the clubs and collective members located in Crimea. This is a matter for the whole of Ukrainian football."

"Crimea is a part of Ukraine, that is why all football members fall into the jurisdiction of the Football Federation of Ukraine.

"We are asking for your answer to clear up the 'Crimean issue' as soon as possible. The future of Ukrainian and world football depends on you," added the letter.

Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea peninsula in March, shortly after Ukrainian protesters toppled pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovych in February.

The RFU's executive committee decided to include the three Crimean clubs into the southern zone of the Russian second division, the country's third tier.

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