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Ukraine Fights to Keep UEFA From Recognizing Crimean Clubs as Russian

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SKChF Sevastopol supporters in Sochi.

UEFA will make a decision on whether to recognize matches played by Crimean clubs under the auspices of the Russian Football Union, or RFS, on Dec. 4, UEFA President Michel Platini has said.

Three Crimean teams — TSK Simferopol, SKChF Sevastopol and Zhemchuzhina Yalta — have been accepted to play in the Russian championship following political problems in the region.

Ukraine's football federation, or FFU, appealed to FIFA and UEFA to impose sanctions on its Russian counterpart for what it describes as gross violation of football regulations.

UEFA hosted a meeting with the RFS and FFU at its headquarters in Nyon in September and the parties agreed to form a working group to find a solution.

A statement on the official website of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said Platini had visited Kiev on Thursday evening and quoted him as saying the issue would be resolved early

next month.

"UEFA set up a working group to look into this question and the final decision will be taken at a meeting between members of UEFA in Lausanne on Dec. 4," Platini was quoted as saying on the site.

"There is constant dialogue between myself and the honorable president of the Federation of Football of Ukraine, Grigoriy Surkis."

Russia seized and annexed Ukraine's Crimea region in March, since when it has supported separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine where the conflict has killed more than 4,000 people.

The international community does not recognize the peninsula as part of Russia, and Kiev still claims it.

Poroshenko said the issue had a deep significance to football in his country.

"For Ukraine, it is important to keep control of our development of football in Crimea," he said on the site.

"For UEFA, it is important for them to not get wrapped up in matters that do not concern football when talking about the peninsula."

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