

Interview with Mr. Aleksander Ceferin

UEFA-President

Interviewee: Att. J. Mischa Menšík,

SEC-Boardmember

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1. Mr. President, you have been in charge of UEFA since September 14, 2016. What are your impressions of Switzerland and of your job?

Being UEFA President is a great honour and responsibility. UEFA is a fantastic organization which works tirelessly to protect, promote and develop football across every one of our 55 national associations. We are committed to organizing the best national team and club competitions in the world while looking after the grassroots game. Regarding Switzerland, it offers a great quality of life and I feel very comfortable here.

2. Our NGOs have something in common with UEFA. You look after 55 regions while the Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland and Central Europe looks after 17 regions. Does UEFA support projects in infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe and if yes, mostly in what countries?

Through our HatTrick solidarity and development programme, we contribute significantly to the development of football infrastructure in all our member countries. Since its creation in 2014, HatTrick has invested €1.8bn in European football and we have recently just announced that in the next four-year cycle, we will make a record amount of €775m available for education, development and infrastructure projects across Europe.

3. Professional football is a multi-million Euro business. Numerous professional male and female players from Switzerland and Eastern Europe are engaged in various leagues throughout Europe, many of them successfully... To what extent does UEFA influence contract and working conditions of players engaged in European leagues, namely players from Central and Eastern Europe?

Contracts between players and clubs are negotiated, managed and overseen by those respective parties. When disputes arise, they are addressed with national players unions and FIFPro (the world players union), who can then escalate their cases to FIFA if necessary. In 2012, minimum requirements for standard players' contracts were adopted between UEFA, ECA, EPFL and FIFPro Europe through the EU social dialogue process. These minimum requirements define basic contractual obligations for club and player. UEFA, as chair party of the EU social dialogue for the

professional football sectoral committee, plays a leading role in their implementation at national level. Although some practical obstacles lie ahead of us in certain countries, we have made significant progress over the last few months and we are committed to ensure these minimum requirements a reality throughout the UEFA territory. I can also tell you that through our club licensing system, we do not allow any clubs who have overdue payables towards players to participate in our competitions.

4. Does UEFA have a mediation center, where disputes between players or between players and their club are mediated.

No, however, the minimum requirements for standard players contracts which we have adopted outline that disputes between a club and a player regarding a labour contract shall be submitted to independent and impartial arbitration composed of equal representatives of each party (employer and employee) under the national association's statutes and regulations, or to CAS, where no national arbitration process applies.

5. Lack of respect and racism unfortunately is not limited to football stadiums. The guiding principle of respect by UEFA should therefore not only be present in sports, but also the corporate world, schools and politics. Top athletes are to compete based on their performance, not based on skin colour, religion or origin. Would it make sense for you to have top athletes engage themselves in the corporate world and in politics?

Respect is a fundamental value for UEFA and that is why we have been promoting it in our competitions for several years. Recently we have initiated a campaign under the umbrella of Respect and it is called Equal Game. This campaign promotes diversity, inclusion and accessibility in football and it has been great to see players, clubs and national associations promoting it with us all across Europe. It is clear that athletes have a great platform to set an example to millions of fans around the world and I think many of them understand this responsibility. At UEFA, I have brought in former players such as Luis Figo, Dejan Stankovic and Nadine Kessler to work with us and bring their valuable insight and expertise to our organisation and I believe that, overall, athletes can have an extremely positive impact in the corporate world and in politics if they choose to focus on those matters.

6. Do you have a message to our SEC members and our readers at the end of the interview?

It has been a pleasure answering your questions. I wish you all the best and I hope that you continue to enjoy football and continue to follow the work UEFA does on and off the pitch to develop and promote the game in Europe.