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TO THE MEMBERS OF FIFA

Circular no. 1147

Zurich, 18 June 2008
SG/mav/nif

Eligibility to play for representative teams Articles 15-18 of the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes

Dear Sir or Madam,

As you are aware, at the 58th FIFA Congress in Sydney, Australia, held on 30 May 2008, you approved certain amendments and adaptations to the rules governing the eligibility of players to play for representative teams. They are reflected in articles 15-18 of the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes (hereinafter: *the Regulations*). Please find enclosed a copy of the pertinent wording of the approved articles 15-18 of the said Regulations.

The vast majority of the changes were purely linguistic or formal adaptations. In order to strengthen the protection of nationality in national teams, but also to safeguard young players from being exploited, we would like to draw again your attention to art. 17 (d) of the Regulations.

According to the said provision, any player who refers to art. 15 par. 1 of the Regulations to assume a new nationality and who has not played international football in accordance with art. 15 par. 2 of the Regulations shall be eligible to play for the new representative team, *inter alia*, only if he has lived continuously for at least five years after reaching the age of 18 on the territory of the relevant Association (previous wording: "...for at least two years on the territory...").



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In this respect, we would like to stress that the amendment to art. 17 (d) of the Regulations shall not have any retroactive effect on players who, after complying with the former preconditions, already participated in a match in an official competition of any category for the Association in question prior to the coming into force of the revised text.

As approved by the 58th FIFA Congress in Sydney, all the aforementioned adaptations to the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes shall come **into force with immediate effect**.

We thank you for taking note of the above.

Yours faithfully,

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Jérôme Valcke
Secretary General

Enc. as mentioned above

cc: FIFA Executive Committee
Confederations
Players' Status Committee



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Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes

VII. Eligibility to play for representative teams

Article 15 Principle

- ¹ Any person holding a permanent nationality that is not dependent on residence in a certain country is eligible to play for the representative teams of the Association of that country.
- ² With the exception of the conditions specified in art. 18 below, any Player who has already participated in a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition of any category or any type of football for one Association may not play an international match for a representative team of another Association.

Article 16 Nationality entitling players to represent more than one Association

- ¹ A player who, under the terms of art. 15, is eligible to represent more than one Association on account of his nationality, may play in an international match for one of these Associations only if, in addition to having the relevant nationality, he fulfils at least one of the following conditions:
 - (a) He was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
 - (b) His biological mother or biological father was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
 - (c) His grandmother or grandfather was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
 - (d) He has lived continuously on the territory of the relevant Association for at least two years.
- ² Regardless of par. 1 above, Associations sharing a common nationality may make an agreement under which item (d) of par. 1 of this article is deleted completely or amended to specify a longer time limit. Such agreements shall be lodged with and approved by the Executive Committee.

Article 17 Acquisition of a new nationality

Any player who refers to art. 15 par. 1 to assume a new nationality and who has not played international football in accordance with art. 15 par. 2 shall be eligible to play for the new representative team only if he fulfils one of the following conditions:

- (a) He was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
- (b) His biological mother or biological father was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
- (c) His grandmother or grandfather was born on the territory of the relevant Association;
- (d) He has lived continuously for at least five years after reaching the age of 18 on the territory of the relevant Association.**



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Article 18 Change of Association

- ¹ If a Player has more than one nationality, or if a Player acquires a new nationality, or if a Player is eligible to play for several representative teams due to nationality, he may, up to his 21st birthday, and only once, request to change the Association for which he is eligible to play international matches to the Association of another country of which he holds nationality, subject to the following conditions:

 - (a) He has not played a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition at "A" international level for his current Association, and at the time of his first full or partial appearance in an international match in an official competition for his current Association, he already had the nationality of the representative team for which he wishes to play.
 - (b) He is not permitted to play for his new Association in any competition in which he has already played for his previous Association.
- ² If a Player who has been fielded by his Association in an international match in accordance with art. 15 par. 2 permanently loses the nationality of that country without his consent or against his will due to a decision by a government authority, he may request permission to play for another Association whose nationality he already has or has acquired.
- ³ Any Player who has the right to change Associations in accordance with par. 1 and 2 above shall submit a written, substantiated request to the FIFA general secretariat. The Players' Status Committee shall decide on the request. The procedure will be in accordance with the Rules Governing the Procedures of the Players' Status Committee and the Dispute Resolution Chamber. Once the player has filed his request, he is not eligible to play for any representative team until his request has been processed.