

LOMONOSOV
MOSCOW STATE
UNIVERSITY



МОСКОВСКИЙ
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ
УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
ИМЕНИ
М.В.ЛОМОНОСОВА

Gianni Infantino
President of FIFA
FIFA-Strasse 20,
P.O. Box 8044 Zurich,
Switzerland

16 July 2017

Dear Mr. Infantino!

We appeal to you in hope that you may influence a disastrous situation with a fan-zone being organized at the steps of the main building of Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU).

The FIFA World Cup will be held in Moscow and several other Russian cities in June and July 2018. This landmark event inspires and unifies millions of fans and other people across the country. However, the upcoming championship raises concern among the students of the Russia's best university, Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU).

2018 FIFA World Cup Russia Local Organising Committee and the Moscow City government have decided to place the main — and only — fan zone, which is expected to hold 40,000 spectators, on Universitetskaya Square in front of the main building of MSU on the Vorobyovy Hills.

The opinion of MSU students and employees, as well as local residents, has not been taken into account. Therefore, this decision contravenes the regulations of the FIFA Fan Fest and the principles of **Responsibility** and **Respect** of the Sustainability Policy of the FIFA World Cup 2018. The project has been actively criticized on social media (more than 6 thousands signature against the project on change.org in few days: <http://change.org/p/savemsu>) thus making it obvious that the university community and the local residents are against the appointed location of the fan zone. Also, this place is not a central or popular place. It also lacks infrastructure and parking places as well as accessibility by public transport.

The main building of MSU is not only a place for studies. It is also a dormitory for 6,500 students, members of faculty, and their families, including families with young children. Over 20,000 students and researchers attend classes and work in laboratories every day. It is also a place where many students live while they need to receive a special health care, so-called, rehabilitation centers. The championship falls on the time of examination sessions for most of the students and defenses for the graduating ones.

Thus, the decision of the Russian Local Organizing Committee for the FIFA World Football Cup 2018 and the Moscow government to organize the FIFA Fan Fest at the steps of the main building of MSU dramatically reduces the standard of living of the residents of the main university building. It also makes it almost impossible for MSU students to properly prepare for exams or thesis defences.



To prepare the territory for the FIFA Fan Festival, the Moscow government plans to reconstruct the Universitetskaya Square in front of the MSU main building. This area has been officially recognized as a listed heritage asset under the state protection known as "The Lomonosov Moscow State University Park on the Vorobyovy Hills". It is also listed as part of the cultural heritage site called "Complex of buildings of the Lomonosov Moscow State University 1949-1953" in the summary list of particularly valuable cultural heritage of the Russian Federation. Establishing of the fan zone on the premises of Moscow State University threatens to destroy a unique garden and could have disastrous consequences for the historic campus of MSU. It will also lead to the loss of a cultural heritage site.

The MSU community and the local residents oppose the decision of the Russian authorities to organize the FIFA Fan Fest area in front of the main building of Moscow State University. We have repeatedly approached local authorities. Numerous complaints to various local authorities have not yielded any positive results. Ignoring the opinion of MSU community may lead to mass protests of students and even confrontations between students and football fans.

We, the students and staff of Lomonosov Moscow State University, as well as the residents of its dormitories, ask you and your organization to put leverage on the decision made by Moscow government. We ask you to support our demand to the World Cup Committee and the Moscow government to move the venue for the FIFA Fan Fest and the fan zone to the backup location, the "VDNKh" recreational park.

VASILIIY DIKAREV

Chairperson of MSU Committee of Inter-Regional Trade Union of the Higher-Education Teaching Personnel «University Solidarity»
msu.unisolidarity@gmail.com · www.unisolidarity.ru

