

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN

SUBJECT: PRINCE ALI WILL ADDRESS HOW FIFA CAN CREATE A GOVERNING BODY WORTHY OF THE "WORLD'S GAME" OF SOCCER IN THE WAKE OF THE ORGANIZATION'S RECENT CORRUPTION SCANDAL.

MODERATOR: JOHN HUGHES, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

LOCATION: THE HOLEMAN LOUNGE

TIME: 12:30 P.M. EDT

DATE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015

(C) COPYRIGHT 2008, NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, 529 14TH STREET, WASHINGTON, DC - 20045, USA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ANY REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION IS EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.

UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION CONSTITUTES A MISAPPROPRIATION UNDER APPLICABLE UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW, AND THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PURSUE ALL REMEDIES AVAILABLE TO IT IN RESPECT TO SUCH MISAPPROPRIATION.

FOR INFORMATION ON BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, PLEASE CALL 202-662-7505.

JOHN HUGHES: (Sounds gavel.) Welcome to the National Press Club. My name is John Hughes. I'm an editor at Bloomberg First Word, that's Bloomberg News's breaking news desk here in Washington. And I am President of the National Press Club. Our speaker today is His Royal Highness Prince bin Al—Prince Ali bin Al Hussein. He is a candidate for President of FIFA, and we welcome him here today.

But first, I want to introduce our distinguished head table. The table includes both Club members and guests of the speaker. From the audience's right, Captain Kevin Wensing, U.S. Navy Retired, and an Advisory Board member of the American Sportscasters Association. Stephanie Dahle, an assistant editor at the *Washington Post* and also a member of the Project for Middle East Political Science at George Washington University. Mary Harvey, starting goalie for the winning U.S. National Team in 1991 and a member of the Gold Medal-winning 1996 U.S. Olympic Team. Michelle Salcedo, desk editor for the Associated Press. Ambassador Alia Bouran, Ambassador of Jordan to the United States. Donna Leinwand-Lege, breaking news editor at USA Today, a former President of the National Press Club, and Vice-Chair of the National Press Club Speakers Committee.

Skipping over our speaker for a moment, Lori Russo, President of Stanton Communications and the National Press Club Speakers Committee member who organized today's event. Thank you, Lori. Lori Lindsay, a retired member of the U.S. National Team. Molly McClusky, independent foreign correspondent and a National

Press Club Board member. Yasmine El Sabawi, Co-Chair of the National Press Club's Membership Committee and a Washington correspondent for the Kuwait News Agency. Maryam El Sayed, news anchor and political mediator at Al Hurra TV. Martin Bilecky [?] USA Bureau Chief for the DPA German Press Agency.

[applause]

I also want to welcome the audience here today in our very full National Press Club Ballroom. And I want to welcome our audiences watching on CSPAN and listening on public radio stations. You can follow the action today on Twitter, use the hashtag NPCLive. And we'll retweet you if you tweet about this lunch as well. Use that hashtag NPCLive.

Well, professional sports are no stranger to scandal. After dealing with deflategate earlier this year, the National Football League is now in the midst of a controversy over officiating. Major League Baseball, of course, endured a widespread doping problem. And who can forget Lance Armstrong in the effect his scandal had on professional cycling?

But few controversies are as dramatic or as far-reaching as FIFA's. Earlier this year, several officials of the International Soccer Federation were arrested in Zurich, and charged with bribery, money laundering, and racketeering. A 47 count indictment charged 14 soccer and marketing officials with corruption, dating back nearly a quarter of a century.

Since then, three of FIFA's leading officials, including its President, have received provisional bans from the organization. Soccer, or as everyone outside the United States calls it, football, is just beginning to recover from this blow to its reputation.

Well today's speaker wants to have a hand in renewing the world's faith in FIFA. President Ali bin Al Hussein's bid began in May when he challenged sitting FIFA President Sepp Blatter in an astonishing election. He then withdrew before a second round of voting took place. Despite his victory, Blatter announced he would resign from his FIFA post amid this scandal. So our guest is again running for the Presidential seat in a special election that is scheduled for this coming February, 2016.

He vows to enact significant changes if he is the victor. Among them, he wants to open FIFA's books and reveal any previously undisclosed financial documents, including payments made to top FIFA officials. The organization, he says, is at rock bottom, but it's not broken.

The son of the late King Hussein and Queen Alia of Jordan, Prince Ali was educated in Jordan, the United Kingdom, and in the U.S. He also served in the Jordanian Special Forces and in the Royal Guard. He currently directs Jordan's National Crisis Management Center and he chairs the Royal Film Commission. Please join me in giving

a warm National Press Club welcome to His Royal Highness Prince Ali bin Hussein of Jordan.

[applause]

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Good afternoon. It's always a pleasure to be back in the United States, and it is a real honor to be with you at the National Press Club. I would just like to start by offering my deepest condolences to the friends and families of the victims in San Bernardino. The entire civilized world shares a sense of loss over this horrific act of senseless violence.

This country, its people, and its values, have had a big influence on me. My experiences as a student here during my formative years helped shape my character and my values. This setting also has special significance for me. Speaking from this prestigious platform has become something of a family tradition. My late father, His Majesty King Hussein, was a repeat visitor. My brother, His Majesty King Abdullah, and my step-mother, Queen Noor, have also been guests of the National Press Club.

I have another indirect family connection to the Press Club. As a former journalist and a foreign correspondent for CNN, my wife Rym would have loved to be here today. I am pleased that one her CNN colleagues, Barbara Starr, could be with us. And Barbara, I can assure you that Rym has not lost the feisty spirit that got her expelled from Iraq in 2003 at the beginning of the war and convinced her to go back during the most challenging times in the country. In fact, she's passed that spirit onto our two children. I remind her of that every time they act up. [laughter]

I'm not here today to talk about weighty issues of war and peace. I'm here to talk about football. By that, of course, I mean the round ball, otherwise known as soccer, but let's just call it football. It is often said, especially by people who don't know much or care for it, that football is just a game. That is technically accurate, but it is a very special game. No other sport generates so much passion among so many people around the world. That passion can be a powerful force for good on multiple levels.

We have several people here today with us who exemplify the positive aspects of sport, including a friend at the head table, Mary Harvey, the starting goalie for the U.S. National Team that won the very first FIFA Women's World Cup in 1991, as well as the Gold Medal at the 1996 Olympics. [applause]

Mary is an inspiring role model and true trailblazer in football. Her legacy lives on in the remarkable performance by the victorious U.S. team in the 2015 Women's World Cup. The positive power of football does not derive from FIFA's headquarters in Zurich. FIFA does not own the game. Football belongs to the players, the coaches, the officials, and hundreds of millions of fans around the world. It belongs to the kids who kick a homemade ball on a rock-strewn patch of dirt. It belongs to the young girls who learn through football that they can break free of stereotypes that limited their mothers' options in life. It belongs to the young boys around the world who discover that

teamwork, self-discipline and hard work are far more rewarding than drugs, idleness and life on the streets.

I am running for the FIFA Presidency because I believe that football deserves a governing body that is worthy of the game. I'm running because I want to see the day when the questions for a FIFA Presidential candidate at a National Press Club luncheon are about football and not about controversies at FIFA. The latest announcement by the U.S. Justice Department should remove any doubt about the need for reform at FIFA. The clock on corruption has run out. And it is time for a change.

I reject the notion that FIFA cannot be reformed from within, the crisis at FIFA is a crisis of leadership. External events are forcing changes on FIFA, but change will not be meaningful or sustainable without credible leadership that embraces transparency, accountability, and the principles of good governance.

Sustainable change can only come from within and must be built on consensus. Building consensus requires a leader who will work with FIFA's 209 members, associations, to ensure that they take ownership of changes in the organization's structures and culture.

Let me assure you, there are good and hardworking people within FIFA who want to be affiliated with an organization that they can be proud of. There is a real genuine desire for change. Most of FIFA's member associations have never sent a team to a World Cup but harbor the dreams and aspirations to do so. Their pursuit of those dreams lifts the quality of the game for entire nations and creates opportunities for young boys and girls to pursue their own goals.

Developing football at the grassroots, with the right spirit and the right values, leads to improvement of the elite level while delivering benefits to players at all levels. Good development programs transform football from a game to a lifestyle. Together, we can learn from each other on how to do that. The United States stands out from the rest of the world with a tremendous support for sports that is built into the educational system, especially at the high school and university levels.

The scholarship system and Title IX have given countless talented young men and women opportunities to pursue athletic careers as part of their education. The U.S. system is a key factor for the success of the U.S. Women's National Team which provided one of football's highlights in 2015. I was fortunate to be in the stands for the Women's World Cup Final in Canada when Carli Lloyd scored that amazing goal from midfield.

In contrast to the strong support for football in the United States, other countries in the regions struggle to provide the basics. As you probably know, the U.S. is a member of the CONCACAF Confederation, which extends from Canada to Central America to the Caribbean. There are huge disparities within the Confederation.

For example, I met with football association leaders in the Caribbean who do not have the essentials to play the sport, footballs, kits, equipment or adequate pitches to play on. Island nations in many parts of the world also struggle with the ability to compete because away games almost always involve travel by sea or air. They need, and they deserve FIFA's help.

FIFA has an obligation to support development worldwide, without playing politics or showing favoritism in how development money is distributed. Far too long, development funding has been used as a favor to be bestowed and returned for loyalty to FIFA's leadership, and occasionally as punishment. Depoliticizing development by instituting clear processes and criteria for providing development funds is essential to changing the culture at FIFA.

I know FIFA needs to do better on many levels. In 2011 I was elected to represent my region, Asia, on the FIFA Executive Committee with a mandate to push for change and support the development of football. It turned out to be a very frustrating experience that led me to two conclusions. Firstly, I could not remain on the Executive Committee unless FIFA changed the way it conducted its business. Secondly, I recognized that the only way to change FIFA was a change of leadership.

Because I love the sport, I chose not to take the option of quitting. Quitting is simply not in the values I was raised upon. I chose for the option of fighting. That's why I stood for election for the FIFA Presidency earlier this year when others wouldn't. That's why I'm running again now. I'm determined to finish what was started.

I knew from the start that unseating the incumbent President would not be easy. The culture of rewards and punishment within FIFA made it extremely difficult. Even so, 73 FIFA member associations were brave enough to take that risk. And if this election is conducted according to the statutes and the Electoral and Ethics Committee do their job correctly, and the 209 member associations vote according to their convictions without outside pressure, then I am certain you will see a very different outcome in February.

I was particularly proud of the fact that my earliest nominations for the first election were from England and the United States. Under the Presidency of Sunil Gulati, the U.S. Soccer Federation's willingness to defy FIFA's leadership at a time when few others did, was a courageous and principled stand.

The current campaign has an entirely new dynamic. Since last January I have traveled to countries all across the world, large and small, and listened to their member association Presidents. I can assure you that they recognize that the February election is crucial in determining which direction FIFA takes, the path to continued controversy, scandal and recrimination or the path that we all desire to the restoration of FIFA's reputation and credibility.

One of the things that disturbed me during my time on the Executive Committee was the feeling that FIFA was a bunker. In fact, the main meeting room for the Executive

Committee is three stories underground, gray, and with no natural light. [laughter] That setting was symptomatic of FIFA's entire approach to governance and its outlook. I want to work with the member associations to build a structure and a cultured FIFA that is outward looking and operates in accordance with practices that are fit for the 21st century.

As a first step, we need to adopt principles of good governance and transparency in actions and not just in words. I will immediately take steps to publish the minutes of Executive Committee meetings, making sure they are accurate, and institute proper disclosure of financial information. I will also make public the full findings of the Garcia report.

These steps cannot be called reform nor be seen as an achievement. They are the most basic set of acceptable norms of good governance today. FIFA also needs structural changes. Its commercial arm needs to be separated from a sporting side. Commercially, I can guarantee that there will no longer be any secretive or no-bid processes.

FIFA needs to establish a highly qualified and fully committed working group to focus on the development of the sport, which is the essence of what FIFA should be about. FIFA needs term limits for elected officials to clear the way for new leadership and new ideas. Two consecutive terms for the President, as well as the Executive Committee members is enough. And age limits should not be an issue. It can be considered a form of discrimination. If someone is capable of doing a good job, well they should have that opportunity. And that principle should apply to young people as well as more senior people.

FIFA needs to provide more opportunity for others, with football to have a voice, within football to have a voice. As a member of the Executive Committee I argued for the representation of players, clubs, and coaches. And I also recognized the importance of professional leagues around the world as the backbone of our sport. FIFA is the umbrella for football worldwide, for the rules of the game, for the World Cups, and most importantly, for the development and continued growth of the sport.

The 209 national associations are the real owners of FIFA. They lead football and they are the FIFA Congress. They decide the future of FIFA, and FIFA can only move forward as an organization with their support and full participation. We cannot let problems at FIFA make us cynical about the game. Football can literally change lives. It teaches self-discipline and the value of hard work. It encourages teamwork. It empowers our youth, both boys and girls. It brings people together.

I have experienced the positive power of football many times and in many places. Nearly five years ago I established the Asian Football Development Project, a nonprofit NGO to support the development of football throughout Asia. For example, working with other NGOs and governments, the project has brought the benefits of football to victims of human trafficking in Cambodia to Syrian refugees in my home country of Jordan and to children in even the most remote areas of Bhutan. I would take

this concept of working with NGOs and governments for real football social responsibility globally through FIFA.

As the most popular sports in the world, football is sometimes a target. It was no coincidence that the terrorists in Paris attacked the Stade de France along with cafes and a music club in targeting locations integral to French life. In January of this year ISIL gunned down 13 Iraqi teenagers in Mosul for simply watching a televised football match between the national teams of Iraq and Jordan.

The football associations in Afghanistan, Libya and Somalia have been under attack, yet they continue to provide opportunities for their fellow citizens to enjoy football. The government of Nigeria is another great example in action using football to deradicalize former members of Boko Haram.

Football is more than just a game. Football is a culture. It is a language understood worldwide. Football bridges races, culture, religion, ethnicity, and is an incredible catalyst for unity instead of division. It deserves a governing body that is worthy of respect.

That's what motivates me to seek the Presidency of FIFA. That is my mission and the mission of all the football associations, players, officials, cultures and fans who want to see FIFA for what it should be, a real credible and trustworthy service organization for the game. Thank you very much.

[applause]

JOHN HUGHES: Thank you so much, Your Highness. Several questions about the level of scandal, I guess, at FIFA. And let me just give you a flavor of a couple of them. Do the latest indictments of FIFA officials for alleged corruption show that FIFA and the Confederations are beyond saving? And what has to be done to rebuild FIFA and restore confidence of fans and donors? Can FIFA recover the confidence of fans? So basically saying, are these problems so severe, is FIFA beyond saving?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: First of all, it is not beyond saving. At the end of the day, we do need a change of leadership at the top. I mean it's a change of culture that we need. And that will permeate down throughout the structure. Having said that, the way we look at it is that we have to turn FIFA into a real service organization. We have to reverse the pyramid so that we put the priorities of our players, our fans and the sport at the top of the pyramid.

At the end of the day, you have your 209 national associations. They will not change their structures and what have you. You have to have a change within the governing body itself. And it's okay to ask for help, and I would do that. And I think that, if we really focus, and we have a different change of culture, then we can get things done. And if the mandate comes from the Congress, it will happen. Thank you.

JOHN HUGHES: How about getting down some levels down into the National Soccer Federations? How would you lead FIFA in working with the Federations to limit the amount of corruption occurring within countries around the world? And do you believe that FIFA is the problem here? Or does the problem, does the corruption go down into the continental and national federations as well?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well I think in order to tackle corruption, you have to deal with the National Associations on the ground. Each country has a different system, a different way of doing things. Particularly right now, they have a [00:37:02] system in FIFA where they give support and they give aid. But we have to do a real program where you go into a country and you deal with their needs, and you help them along the way, and judge them by how they act.

So I think that it really has to be much more of a hands-on approach, and a follow-up, and working with people in the local areas, as well as engaging with governments and other stakeholders. And primarily, not to turn a blind eye, which is exactly one of the problems that has been the case when convenient, up to now.

JOHN HUGHES: With the recent arrests by Swiss officials just yesterday, people are not wondering if the cleaning up of FIFA is done, but rather who is next, this questioner says. And as Presidential elections approach, there are rules in place to prevent outsiders from running. If the rules protect those already in FIFA from outside competition, where an outside candidate could bring real change to an organization that badly needs it, then why should the fans really believe that FIFA is serious about cleaning up the corruption, not just within the game, but within its own walls? Long question, but basically saying, if you can't have outside candidates, can you really guarantee that the corruption is going to be cleaned up?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well we have had outside help in FIFA, and that's exactly the problem. We've had, first of all, Mark Pike[?] who came in to help with reform, the reform process in FIFA. We've obviously had Michael Garcia and so on, Dominico Scala, who is also somebody who came in to work on proposals for reform. And now even a reform committee within FIFA itself.

But all along, the problem was that those recommendations were never implemented. And that's the crisis that we have. So we have all these recommendations out there, but you need to guarantee that you have someone who can implement them. And if you do, then things go well from there.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner notes that your proposals for change in FIFA are far-reaching and fundamental, according to this person. But how will you get a supportive Board that will allow you to make these changes?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: If you have the mandate, you can work. And that's the way that things are. That is the reality. But, quite frankly, these are not far-reaching ideas. These are the real basics and norms of good governance for any

organization anywhere in the world. And we have to adopt it. I do believe, though, that this election, this time, is crucial. One of the reasons why it's so important, obviously, to save FIFA, is because it is the umbrella for football all over the world. And it would be a real shame to be dragged down by these people. And that's why this is the most important opportunity to get it right. And if we don't this time, then we'll be in real serious trouble.

JOHN HUGHES: Give us a quick lay of the land on your election. As I understand, there's five candidates total, and you're actively campaigning. How confident are you? How tough is the field? Is it really going to come down to you and one other? Or just give us a state, a play in the race as you see it.

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well I'm not playing the politics. I am going out, and I am talking to national associations. I have a different method of doing it, by looking at their needs as well, and taking what's important, and putting it as part of a manifesto which I will be coming out with soon. At the end of the day, I believe that if things are done correctly, and each national association has the right, without pressure, to make their own decisions, then I think that I will be the candidate who wins this election.

JOHN HUGHES: You are in a campaign, you are in the United States. What are you doing here in the United States to help your cause? And what if somebody wanted to help you get elected? What can people do to play a role in this race?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well, unfortunately, it's not a public vote. I think things would have been a little bit different earlier this year if it was. But I think definitely, that around the world, and I do know that national associations are realizing that fans and the stakeholders in football are not happy with the situation. And they are feeling a lot of pressure because of that. I know that a lot of the people in football are ashamed to wear the FIFA badge right now. They want to improve the image of FIFA. There are a lot of people from younger generations who want to be involved as well in decision-making in FIFA. So if we get things right, I think that the future is bright.

JOHN HUGHES: U.S. Soccer supported you in your first campaign for the Presidency, but has not taken a position in this campaign. Do you expect to get U.S. support again?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well, I think that's a question for Sunil Gulati. [laughter] But I definitely look forward and hope to get the support of U.S. Soccer and have the chance to speak with—obviously with the Board as well, as well as support from the CONCACAF region. I'll be at the final—I'm in the final, so I'm looking forward, maybe, to at least unofficially have the chance to have a conversation with stakeholders in U.S. Soccer. And I have a lot of friends among them as it is.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner says, defend the one country/one vote rule for the FIFA Presidency, and should votes be made public?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: I think that obviously, one vote per country is a must. And everyone has the right to have a vote with that. As for it being made public, I would certainly support it. Unfortunately, that's not going to be the case this time around, but maybe for the future.

JOHN HUGHES: Maya Dodd, your former colleague on the FIFA EXCO has recently led a call for the inclusion of women in the governance of the sport. What is your point of view on the role of women and gender equality at FIFA?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: I think I will support my colleague Maya Dodd, and [00:44:15] as well. I think that it is an important step that they—some of the reforms that they proposed to have a women's representative from each confederation. There should be women's representation on each national association as well. But it is a small step, and there is a lot more that can be done.

We do want to reach a day where there shouldn't be a quota for anyone. But this is a very good start, I believe. And women's football is one of the biggest growth areas within the game. And we have to do all we can to promote women's football. And for ourselves in Jordan, we're very proud to be hosting the under-17 Women's World Cup. And it's the first time that a tournament like that takes place in our region. So together, I think we can do so much more for women's football.

JOHN HUGHES: In 2014 the German men took home over \$35 million in prize money for the World Cup Title. This is a stark contrast to the \$2 million the U.S. women won. What are your thoughts on this gender pay inequality? And do you have any plans to close this gap and to support and grow the women's game?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Sure. I think that's a very big issue right now. And obviously, what happened in Canada, it was not reflective of the amount of support for the World Cup itself. And we have to look at changing those dynamics. And I've been in discussions with that, with colleagues and women's football.

At the same time, one of the things that we do see within FIFA, and honestly, within national associations, is a worry that if you invest more in women's football, that somehow it takes away from the men's game or investment in the men's game, which is totally incorrect. And therefore, we have to have a lot more emphasis and really give the women's side of the game a little more independence, because that will just help to get them moving in the way that they want.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner says, there seems to be a contradiction between FIFA's interest in supporting women's development in soccer internationally and allowing countries that discriminate against women to participate in approval of

FIFA events. As President would you allow these nations to continue participating? What steps would you take to ensure this discrimination ends?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well, I think we have to work against discrimination in all ways, shapes and forms everywhere in the world. And that also includes racial discrimination, which is still a very big part, unfortunately in football, around the world. Again, as for women's football, you have to lead by example. And I think that's what we're doing, for example, in Jordan. And we will push as much as we can to get women's participation more and more in the game.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner says, you spoke a lot about the development of the game. What exactly does the development of the game mean to you? And then this person says, Blatter took the World Cup to Brazil, Russia and Qatar in the name of football's development and sort of in a negative way, obviously, from the questioner's perspective. So what do you mean by development? And what would be your approach in this?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well, development means giving the opportunities to all our players around the world. Again, you have to work on a case-by-case basis. I'd like to see, for example, a dedicated national stadium to football in every country in the world. Also, in development, you know, you have to get out the basics, the pitches, the kits that everybody needs. But there's also human aspect to development. You know, a player's career span is not that long. And around the world, there is a big need for coaches and so on to train in different areas. But they might not be able to afford the salaries.

So FIFA can set up a scholarship program to bring those coaches and so on, and let them participate and give their experiences to other parts of the world. At the same time, taking coaches from developing countries in football, and giving them experience alongside clubs or teams outside. And I put this also to a meeting of the leagues the other day in Paris. And that is where you can get that human dimension going on as well. So it's not just classroom work, but it's real physically being there and learning from the sport. And the rest you leave up, you leave up to the players on the pitch.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner said that you've said you agree with holding the next two World Cups in Russia and Qatar. But what immediate steps will you take to address the doping scandal and the human rights violations which are very much ongoing? And would you consider taking away the 2022 World Cup from Qatar?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: There are investigations, obviously, underway. But obviously, what I've said is that I believe in the rights of every country to host the World Cup. And the decision was made on Russia and on Qatar. But we have to make sure that in the future, that mistakes are not made. This idea of having a double bid was, in my opinion, a big mistake. We also have to really look at the bidding process and how it transpires, so that when you send out teams to look at countries, we base the

decision on their recommendations as to which country has the best potential to host the World Cup.

But most importantly, as we've seen, for example, with Qatar, that they have made obviously the promises to deal with the issue of workers' rights. And obviously, if I'm President, I would be there to guarantee that they're actually implemented. And obviously, we have to have within—within FIFA set standards for any bidding nation which includes human rights and workers' rights.

JOHN HUGHES: What specific financial internal controls would you implement to ensure that FIFA and its subordinate federations comply with anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well we have, within FIFA, obviously an Ethics Committee. We have to make it and support it to be a really robust and do its job to the best of its ability. The rules are there. But the problem is with the implementation. And we have to take the examples of what's happening now and make sure that that applies across the board, across the world.

JOHN HUGHES: You said at the top your speech would not be on the weighty issues of war and peace. But this questioner wonders if football can have a role in creating more world peace.

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well I think it does already. And we've seen how football being the most popular sport in the world, and being really the common language of the world, wherever you go, is a real force for good. And therefore, I think that if we get things right at FIFA, and get things going in the right way, that there is so much more that can be done. And then, if we have a good reputation, if we reach the day when nobody really knows who the FIFA President is, and we know that we're going in the right direction. But then, again, we'll have hopefully restored the confidence from sponsors and others and just spend what we have on really developing the game across the world.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner says, soccer or football does belong to the world. And what are the specific steps you can take to include the voices and opinions of dedicated fans in FIFA decisions? How do you reach out to those fans?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well I've been listening to them quite a bit as of late. But obviously, the fans are our base, and we have to listen to them, and also to help out as much as possible with the fans across the world, because there are a lot of problems even when it comes to stadiums in different parts of the world. Sometimes the issue of ticket prices as well. And I would like really to have—obviously, to have a way of incorporating them and their needs, and to make sure that FIFA should be as it should, an open body for anyone who is concerned with the game to come and give their ideas and their hopes and share their problems, and for us to work on serving their needs.

JOHN HUGHES: How do you intend on bringing the game of football to big cities in North America? And when will we see a Jordanian soccer team come to the U.S. to play an exhibition game or two against a major league soccer team?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well definitely, I think football is picking up all over the world. I mean football in the U.S. is a lot different to what it was when I was studying here, you know, in high school. So I've seen how great the progress is, and I think it's a matter of time where it's embraced in the major cities. And there's a lot of other aspects to football such as foot soul[?] and so on, and street soccer, where you can—which has a lot of appeal in other parts of the world and can be very relevant to cities as well.

As for Jordan, yeah, we'd love to come and play. I mean at least our national team to play the United States at some point. And even possibly our club teams as well. And hopefully, maybe our women's national team. But on that, again, I'd like to thank Mary Harvey for taking care of our under-17 women's team who came out earlier in the year. So there's a lot of cooperation and coordination there. And we look forward to also hosting the U.S. in Jordan at some point in the future.

JOHN HUGHES: You mentioned that soccer or football is catching on in the United States. Certainly, much more than when we were young in the United States. But this questioner points out that football, basketball and baseball still rule the sporting world in the United States. Why do you think professional international soccer hasn't caught on more than it has? Why hasn't it captured American hearts and minds like it has in so many other places around the world?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: I think that it does take time. And it's—I guess it takes time for the tradition of soccer to really catch on. And at the same time, I think that all sports complement each other. It should never be viewed as a competition between one or the other. But certainly, it's picking up. And I think that results are also very crucial. One of the biggest pushes for women's football is the result that you've had on the pitch. And I'm sure, hopefully, if the men's team also has some great results, then you'll see a big, big difference. In the last World Cup, I think all across the U.S. there was such a great following of what they've done. So I think it's a matter of time. And I'm sure that they'll get there.

JOHN HUGHES: I was given another question about changing the culture within FIFA. This questioner says, how do you rally support from FIFA members who are used to corruption? Do you believe members will be willing to depoliticize if it means they will lose privileges?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: I think that, again, if we do implement things such as term limits, I do know that there is a recommendation from the Reform Committee to have a three term limit that only starts the next three years or whenever the next elections are. So I'm not sure if that's really the right approach to

things. But if you have term limits, you give the opportunity for others, obviously, to come in. I think there's a big desire worldwide to really have a new generation of people in football. What might have been acceptable 20-30 years ago is definitely not acceptable to us now.

And I think that that realization is sinking in. But again, if you have that leadership on top that does not turn a blind eye to things, and that protects the rights of national associations as well, then it will change, I believe, very quickly.

JOHN HUGHES: Should more individual players try to take a role in FIFA to dissuade corruption in FIFA or its leadership? Or should the players just stick to football?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well, it's our job to protect the players. It's not the players who should be having to deal with these issues. It's a very sad situation when it has come to—or if it comes to that point. So, at the end of the day, now, we have to serve them. And that's our job, and that's it.

JOHN HUGHES: We've spent a lot of time asking you questions about corruption at FIFA, and in fact, even some questions about FIFA can be whether FIFA can be saved. But setting that aside for a moment, are there some things, when you look at FIFA, that you see that they're doing right and that are good signs within FIFA? And do you think FIFA has been successful in growing the world's game of football in the recent decades?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Sure. Obviously, I think FIFA has done a lot of things, especially in terms of its staff and its administration. And it's very unfortunate for them, as well, to be lumped with a lot of things that have been going on. And there have been development projects maybe, you know, I sort of think that we can do a lot more instead of having a sort of drip-feed, drip-feed system where national associations have to keep continuously coming back to FIFA, don't get the entire packages that they need to develop their sport and support for national associations.

If you have good strong football associations who have their dignity and are self-sustainable, then you're going to have a strong organization. And you're going to take people away from corruption or doing practices that are not—that are not correct. That's my belief. And so I think that that, you know, there are positives. What's working, we're not going to fix. But there is so much more that we can do.

JOHN HUGHES: This questioner asks about your role as a member of a royal family, a very storied, well-known royal family, and wonders if leading FIFA would have even greater political interest than your predecessor as being part of a royal family. I'm not sure exactly what they mean by that phrasing. But let me ask you, has being a member of a royal family in this FIFA election, does that set up any particular advantages or roadblocks for you, as you go about your campaign?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well first of all, there is no royalty in football. And that's the way it should be. And I'm here just as a person to do the job because—because I love the sport, and I grew up loving it in my country, and working with my own football association in Jordan. And I got involved with them maybe at a time when I was the average age of our football player. And therefore, had a different perspective and always took their concerns to Board meetings, not the other way around. And that's the same philosophy that I go by today. But again, there is no royalty in football. And I dislike politics. And I think the most important thing is really to get on with things and get the job done.

JOHN HUGHES: One non-soccer, non-football question here. You are a member of the Jordanian government. This questioner has a question about what is Jordan doing to diversify its economy during such a volatile time for the region? Now the questioner could mean many things by volatile time. But let me drill down in one specific area. As I understand, Jordan is taking in an extremely large number of Syrian refugees, having an effect on the country. How are you handling the influx of the refugees? And how is that affecting the Jordanian economy and life in Jordan going forward?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Well first of all, I'm not a member of the Jordanian government at all. But I think Jordan is going through a very, very difficult time with the crisis in our region, as are others of our neighbors, including Lebanon and so on. It's a difficult neighborhood to be in. Regarding the refugees, we have done, as is our tradition, to obviously do what we can for our neighbors and help them out as much as possible. But it is a very difficult time for Jordan, for its economy.

But at the end of the day, Jordan being a country without any natural resources, has really invested itself into its people. And that's where we have our greatest strength for our education and to have a real hardworking community. And that's the direction we've always gone in. And we'll get through this just fine, and we'll do all we can to help our neighbors, and particularly right now, the Syrian refugees.

And on that note, we have used football as a great tool to helping them out, because as refugees, when they first came into Jordan, we realized that, okay, you give them the basic services, but you have all these kids. And they are the majority, young boys and girls, who have nothing to do with their time. So we teamed up with different governments, as well as with NGOs, to introduce football for boys and girls, as well as teaching them skills like mine risk awareness and so on. And I think the UNHCR will tell you right now that it is one of the most successful programs that has happened to refugees anywhere in the world, and it's something that unfortunately, if the situation ever arises, that it will be emulated elsewhere.

JOHN HUGHES: We are almost out of time, but before I ask the last question, I have some housekeeping. The National Press Club is the world's leading professional organization for journalists. And we fight for a free press, worldwide. To learn more about the Club, go to our website, press.org. And to donate to our nonprofit Journalism Institute, visit press.org/institute. I'd like to remind you about other events that are

happening at the National Press Club. Today, in fact just down the hallway, in the Bloomberg Room, the National Press Club is publicly reading articles by Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, for 24 consecutive hours. We began at seven a.m. We're continuing until seven a.m. tomorrow. The Club is doing this to draw attention to the 501 days Jason Rezaian has unjustly been held in an Iranian prison. And reading the articles is a reminder to the world that Jason Rezaian is a reporter. He is a journalist. And he's not anything else. And he should not be in jail.

On Tuesday—And please, stop in the room on your way out. It's very interesting to sit and listen to a couple articles. On Tuesday, December 8th, David Skorton, the new Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution will address a National Press Club Luncheon. I'd now like to present the National Press Club's world cup to our speaker. [laughter]

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Thank you very much.

[applause]

JOHN HUGHES: That is very valuable, and it travels very well as you go around the world and talk about your candidacy for the Presidency. So final question. I understand that you are a dedicated Arsenal fan. That's the team in the UK league, is that right, in Britain? Arsenal, Go Arsenal. Of course you are, now, running for President of FIFA. So do you need to pledge, and if so, are you going to make that pledge today, that you're going to set aside your preferences for Arsenal, no more rooting for Arsenal because, as the President of FIFA, you need to root for everybody. So is it going to be bye-bye to the Arsenal?

HRH PRINCE ALI BIN AL HUSSEIN: Look—[laughter] To run for FIFA President, you know, I will promise to dedicate my whole self to the organization on football around the world. But over my dead body will I give up my support for Arsenal. [laughter] Thank you.

[applause]

JOHN HUGHES: How about another round of applause for our speaker?

[applause]

JOHN HUGHES: I want to thank you for coming, your Royal Highness, and thank you for answering so many direct questions. And we hope that you'll come back soon to the National Press Club. You're allowed a new mug every time you come. So a lot of people like to build the collection over time, and we want to encourage you to do that as well. I'd also like to thank the National Press Club staff, including its Journalism Institute and Broadcast Center for organizing today's event.

If you would like a copy of today's program, or to learn more about the National Press Club, go to our website. That's press.org. And again, to learn more about our

nonprofit, the National Press Club Journalism Institute, the website is press.org/institute.
Thank you very much. We are adjourned.

(gavel)

[applause]

END