Chair of Aston Villa FC, Nassef Sawiris

Chair of the Football Association, Debbie Hewitt

President of UEFA, Aleksander Čeferin

Subject: Aston Villa's match against Maccabi Tel Aviv must not go ahead

I am writing to demand immediate action is taken to ensure that Aston Villa's match with Maccabi Tel Aviv on 6 November does not go ahead. The FA and UEFA must work to cancel the match and expel Israel from membership from international footballing bodies. If this does not happen, Aston Villa FC must refuse to host and play the match.

Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza has killed many tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, including many hundreds of Palestinian footballers. It has annihilated Gaza's footballing infrastructure such as stadiums, training facilities and pitches.

In the occupied West Bank, Israel has systematically targeted Palestinian sports infrastructure, while its military invasions of towns and refugee camps have killed scores of Palestinian footballers. Last year, Israeli forces deliberately destroyed Jenin Municipal Football Stadium during their military offensive on the city.

Allowing Israeli football teams to compete in international competitions sanitises this horrific violence and allows Israel to cynically present itself as a normal country, obscuring the truth that it is carrying out a genocide in Gaza, and imposing a regime of settler-colonialism, military occupation and apartheid against Palestinians.

The Israel Football Association directly participates in Israel's crimes against Palestinians. It contains at least six football clubs based in illegal Israeli settlements on stolen Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank. These football teams are part of the infrastructure of Israel's military occupation, ruled illegal by the International Court of Justice.

Maccabi Tel Aviv has itself been directly involved in Israel's atrocities. The club has sent "care packages" to Israeli soldiers committing genocide in Gaza and organised videos of club employees serving as Israeli soldiers as motivation ahead of matches.

Moreover, the club's fans have a long history of anti-Palestinian racism and violence. This was exemplified in Amsterdam last year, when its fans marauded through the streets,

attacking residents while chanting genocidal slogans. If the match goes ahead these fans will descend on Birmingham, putting local residents at risk of racist violence.

I am sending this letter to the FA, UEFA and Aston Villa FC to ask that each takes action respectively to ensure that the match does not go ahead. The FA and UEFA must work to cancel the match and ensure Israel is expelled from international footballing bodies. While Aston Villa FC must refuse to host and play the match.

Yours sincerely,