

JOAQUÍN ALMUNIA

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 21 March 2012

Mr. le Président, *des Ricard,*

*When we met last December, we discussed our common concerns about the financial viability of the management of certain football clubs.*

*Since then, our services have been working together to identify the convergences that exist between the UEFA Financial Fair Play rules ("FFP") and the State aid control that the European Commission carries out.*

*The European Commission has expressed concerns that clubs in the short term pay inflated transfer fees and wages for players, even when their true financial position should not allow them to do so, thus gaining an advantage on the field. In my view, such policy of clubs seems particularly unjustified in the context of the current economic downturn where austerity measures are being introduced in all Member States.*

*Against this background, I consider of paramount importance to fully support the objectives of the FFP, recognizing the value of robust licensing systems, including cost control mechanisms, to promote good governance in sport.*

*The central objective of FFP (namely to "live within your means" or "break even") ensures prudent economic management that will serve to protect both the interests of individual clubs and players as well as the football sector in Europe as a whole.*

*This principle is also consistent with the aims and objectives of European Union policy in the field of State Aid.*

*FFP and State Aid policy are also consistent insofar as each legal framework provides for specific recognition of expenditure directed towards matters such as youth training and development, social and community projects and investment in infrastructure.*

*Let me therefore express the hope that this joint statement will form the basis of further cooperation between UEFA and the Commission with the common aim to promote fair competition between football clubs.*

Yours sincerely,

*Bruc à vous,*

Mr Michel Platini  
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