



**Media Alert:**

**The Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) apologizes to the football world for the inappropriate conduct of Mr. Luis Rubiales during the FIFA Women's World Cup Final 2023**

Madrid, September 05, 2023

STATEMENT FROM THE ROYAL SPANISH FOOTBALL FEDERATION (RFEF)

The Royal Spanish Football Federation, through its President, Mr. Pedro Rocha, considers it is essential to present the most sincere apologies to the football institutions (FIFA, UEFA, FAs), the players, especially the players of the Spanish National Football Team and the English National Football Team, all stakeholders involved in football and the fans around the world, for the totally unacceptable behavior of its highest institutional representative during the final of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 and in the moments that followed.

Those actions do not reflect at all the values of the whole Spanish society, its institutions, its representatives, its athletes and the leaders of Spanish sport. Spanish society is an example of tolerance and civility, in all social and political spheres and has been an example of behavior and sporting decorum, as it has demonstrated for decades in all sporting events in which it has participated. That nobility and international prestige of our society and our sport have been tarnished in recent days by the actions of Mr. Luis Rubiales.

The damage caused to Spanish football, to Spanish sport, to Spanish society and to the values of football and sport as a whole has been enormous.

The RFEF wants to convey to the whole of society and to the whole of world football its deepest regret for what has happened, which has tarnished our national team, our football and our society. We feel deeply sorry for the damage caused and therefore, we must ask for the most sincere apologies and acquire a firm and absolute commitment that facts like these can never happen again.

Both the governing body of the world of football, FIFA, and the bodies responsible for sport in Spain have immediately adopted the appropriate measures, opening disciplinary proceedings against Mr. Rubiales, and in the case of FIFA's decision, the immediate suspension of his functions as president of the RFEF. The RFEF is providing all the documentary and administrative support required by both disciplinary bodies in order to have a definitive resolution as soon as possible to repair the damage caused.

Winning the World Cup was one of the proudest moments in the history of the Spanish Federation and one of the most important moments of Spanish sport and of women's football. The actions of Mr. Rubiales both at that moment and in the following hours are not acceptable under any circumstances and for this reason the RFEF immediately withdrew from its website all those inappropriate and meaningless communications that did not value what was achieved by the National Team and did not take into account the statements of the player about these facts.



To be clear, this position was that of Mr. Rubiales, not that of the RFEF. We are particularly saddened and embarrassed by the additional hurt and distress this has caused. The actions of Mr. Rubiales do not represent the values defended by the Spanish Federation, nor the values of Spanish society as a whole, and his actions must be attributed solely and exclusively to him, since he is the only one responsible for his actions before society, before the sporting bodies and, if applicable, before the courts.

We are sorry that this incident has disrupted what should have been an ongoing celebration of football both for our national team and that of England's Lionesses, who were a truly remarkable rival in a thrilling final.

On Monday 28 August 2023, the RFEF issued a statement in which the Presidents of the Regional Federations unanimously demanded the resignation of Mr. Rubiales as RFEF President for his improper conduct. A review of the current management structures of the organization was also announced and this remains underway.

In this regard, in order to protect Spanish football and ensure that such behavior is not repeated, a thorough investigation of the actions taken by Mr. Rubiales was immediately launched. At the same time, all of the presidents of the member federations of the RFEF have committed to carrying out a thorough review of all policies and procedures of the organization. They firmly and unanimously commit to have in the coming days a whole set of actions to improve the governance of the Spanish Football federation and to repair, as far as possible, the damage caused.

We have privately sent to the relevant authorities and institutions this statement which we now make public.

Finally, we want to once more congratulate our national team for their historic win, recognizing the impact and legacy that their victory will have in the future of Spanish football. We are convinced that millions of people of all ages were inspired by their spirit, and we cannot be prouder of the way they have conducted themselves, both on and off the pitch. In due course, it is our intention to give the spotlight back to them and to celebrate their achievement in the way that they deserve.

**Mr. Pedro Rocha President of the RFEF**

For any media inquiries, please contact the RFEF media department at: [prensa@rfe.es](mailto:prensa@rfe.es)

Photo of RFEF President, Pedro Rocha, attached (source RFEF).