

FIFA: two trials and their endings

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The cases arising from the football federations show the limits of criminal justice in complex international matters. The trial against three former officials of the German football association and the former FIFA secretary general concerning a payment of CHF 10 million connected with the 2006 World Cup opened in Bellinzona in March 2020. After it had been suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the charges became time-barred on 27 April 2020. The proceedings ended without a judgment.¹ The episode coincided with the crisis of the OAG described below and damaged the reputation of federal prosecution.

The second trial concerned the payment of CHF 2 million, plus social security contributions of CHF 229,126, made by FIFA in 2011 to Michel Platini, then president of UEFA, with the approval of FIFA's president Joseph S. Blatter. The OAG charged them with fraud, misappropriation, criminal mismanagement and forgery. On 8 July 2022 the Criminal Chamber acquitted both. It found that the evidence supported the defendants' account of an oral agreement of 1998 under which Platini was entitled to the money for his work as adviser between 1998 and 2002, and that serious doubts remained about the prosecution's case. Blatter received CHF 20,000 in compensation.² On 25 March 2025 the Appeals Chamber, sitting in Muttenz in the canton of Basel-Landschaft, confirmed the acquittals. On 28 August 2025 the OAG announced that it would not appeal to the Federal Supreme Court, so that the acquittals became final.³

In figures. The Trafigura judgment of 31 January 2025 imposed a fine of CHF 3 million and a compensatory claim of USD 145 million on the company.⁴ The Gunvor judgment of 20 February 2025 concerned payments of more than USD 35 million between 2010 and 2011.⁵ In the 1MDB case of 28 August 2024 the court imposed sentences of seven and six years and found the misappropriation of more than USD 1 billion.⁶ In the

Karimova case of 27 July 2026 it ordered the confiscation of more than CHF 400 million.⁷ None of these judgments was final when published.

1 Notes

1. "Der Sommermärchen-Prozess ist definitiv geplatzt", Blick, 21 April 2020, <https://www.blick.ch/politik/riesen-pleite-fuer-bundesanwalt-lauber-der-sommermaerchen-prozess-ist-definitiv-geplatzt-id15854779.html>. The defendants were not convicted, and the presumption of innocence applies. ↩
2. Federal Criminal Court, press release of 8 July 2022, <https://www.bstger.ch/de/media/comunicati-stampa/2022/2022-07-08/1280.html>. ↩
3. "Waiver of appeal against acquittal for Blatter and Platini", bluewin, 28 August 2025, <https://www.bluewin.ch/en/sport/football/waiver-of-appeal-against-acquittal-for-blatter-and-platini-2845287.html>. ↩
4. Federal Criminal Court, press release on SK.2023.49 (above). ↩
5. Federal Criminal Court, press release on SK.2023.40 (above). ↩
6. Federal Criminal Court, press release on SK.2023.24 (above). ↩
7. Federal Criminal Court, press release on SK.2023.42 (above). ↩

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