

In the lead up to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, there are many headlines. Including the speech FIFA President Gianni Infantino delivered before the games began

In his speech, the FIFA President made several absurd claims, among them, that he “feels” like a migrant worker and a gay person. Maybe he meant to sound like he identified with these groups?

Regardless, Infantino missed a crucial opportunity to correct FIFA’s own actions and to call out Qatar’s human rights abuses.

Now that games are underway, LGBT rights are once again in the spotlight. Several team captains planned to wear the #OneLove armband in solidarity with LGBT people, who face terrible discrimination and state-sponsored violence in Qatar.

However after FIFA threatened to punish players for wearing the armbands, they announced they would no longer do so. Since the start of the games, fans and media have reported attempts to block them from wearing rainbow colors, flags, and other gay pride symbols to matches.

In response to FIFA’s muzzling LGBT rights, Germany’s World Cup players shared a photo on social media with team members covering their mouths on the field, saying, “It wasn’t about a political statement – human rights are non-negotiable.” Indeed.

Note: FIFA’s own governing statutes ban LGBT discrimination of the kind enshrined in Qatar’s national laws.

Meanwhile, many migrant workers who built the infrastructure around the World Cup have died or suffered injury and unpaid wages.

Human Organizations have long called for FIFA and Qatar to create a compensation fund to address these grievances and help these workers and their families.

Alas, the games have opened with no fund in sight. But time hasn’t run out, and international attention is only growing.

FIFA and Qatar are being forced to respond to calls for change and can no longer hide behind the glamour of the games. Let’s keep up the pressure – #PayUpFIFA!