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FIFA president urged to take action against Polish referee's anti-Jewish rant

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November 5, 2021 by JNS

Jewish and anti-Semitism watchdog groups are urging FIFA to take a stance concerning a Polish soccer referee who went on a rant against Jews.



Lukasz Araszkiwicz, a FIFA-trained referee and member of the Polish Football Association, was invited by the Never Again Association to participate in an online debate on Oct. 4 about how to combat anti-Semitism and intolerance in soccer stadiums around Europe.

He responded to the invitation in an email, saying he has never witnessed anti-Semitism or racism during his 17-year career as a referee and claimed that “this is just another utter balderdash spun by Jewish centres and milieus—one knows very well for what purpose.”

He added, “Please do not send me such invitations anymore because I do not agree with it at all. Jews are not a chosen people despite that eternal hubris of theirs ... and portraying Poles as anti-Semites and talking about Polish concentration camps is the biggest Jewish f*****g despicable thing since World War 2.”

Rafał Pankowski, head of the Never Again Association, and Sebastian Rejak, acting director of the American Jewish Committee Central Europe, sent a [letter \(https://twitter.com/StowNIGDYWIECEJ/status/1454813683859787784?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet\)](https://twitter.com/StowNIGDYWIECEJ/status/1454813683859787784?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet) last week to FIFA president Gianni Infantino, along with a copy of Araszkiwicz's email, and urged him to take a “principled position on this matter.”

They also pushed for Infantino to uphold FIFA's code of conduct related to issues of racism and discrimination.

“Mr Lukasz Araszkiwicz’s statement repeats the most widespread anti-Semitic myths about the Jewish community as a homogeneous group that aims to slander countries and ethnic groups—with reactions to anti-Semitism allegedly being an example of just that,” the letter stated. “Unfortunately, the words of Mr Araszkiwicz show that the use of negative stereotypes about Jews is a phenomenon that is still present also in the world of football.”

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