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Palestine Soccer Body to Seek Israel Suspension From FIFA

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Palestine's FA says Israel's travel restrictions between Gaza and the occupied West Bank are hindering the training of Palestinian players. FIFA president Sepp Blatter met with Palestine Football Association (PFA) president Jibril Rajoub, attempting to persuade the Palestinian soccer head to withdraw a bid to have Israel suspended from the governing body of world soccer.

Both leaders met in Cairo Wednesday to discuss football in Palestine and the region.

Earlier this month, the PFA announced it would submit a request at FIFA's May Congress to have Israel suspended amid unresolved complaints that Tel Aviv-imposed travel restrictions between Gaza and the occupied West Bank are hindering the training of Palestinian players.

Blatter said the request was "very, very serious," but insisted the move would harm FIFA itself.

The PFA also accused Israel of placing obstacles on the import of sports equipment as well as on visits by foreign teams and individuals into Palestinian territories. Blatter said the issues raised by the PFA would be handled, adding that he is due to meet the Israel Football Association at the Home of FIFA later this month.

This is not the first time that Palestine has requested FIFA take actions against Israel. Last year, two Palestinian footballers were reportedly shot in the feet at an Israeli checkpoint, preventing them from ever playing football again.