

Brazilian legends urge reform

Open letter from veterans of women's football addressing current situation in Brazil

We, the player alumni of the Brazil Women's National Team (WNT), are greatly saddened and distressed by developments at CBF in women's football and in our national team, including:

- The poor treatment of women as leaders and players over many years. These are only the most recent examples: coach Emily Lima, despite the support of the players as expressed in a letter to CBF of 19 Sept., was fired abruptly; and five leading players – Cristiane, Rosana, Andreia Rosa Francielle and Maurine – have retired, exhausted from years of disrespect and lack of support.
- The failure of CBF over many years to provide meaningful opportunities to the players to progress into leadership -- even when we gained our coaching qualifications, at great expense and with the encouragement of the CBF. We have so far had one former WNT player (Daniela Alves) working with the Brazil WNT set-up, and despite promises, and only Emily Lima has had the chance to take a leadership role in the national team.
- The lack of women in leadership roles in CBF; the absence of any structures within CBF to enable women to take part in the management and governance of football; and the absence of voices from those who have lived the women's game, in decisions about the women's game.
- The failure to support and nurture women's football at all levels of the game, from the grassroots up, in Brazil.

We, the players, have invested years of our own lives and all of our energy to build this team and this sport to its strength today. Yet we, and almost all other Brazilian women, are excluded from the leadership and decision-making for our own team and our own sport.

We call on CBF to bring gender equality reforms to Brazil

Last year FIFA made major reforms, including the compulsory inclusion of women on its Council, and the addition of objectives to promote the development of women's football and the inclusion of women at all levels of football governance. Members like CBF are obliged to take into account the importance of gender equality in the make-up of their legislative bodies.

CBF still has no women on its governing board. There are almost no women among its Congress and senior management. There are no meaningful pathways for former players to find their way into CBF and help to run their own game.

Over many years we have lived and watched in despair as Brazil's women were neglected by CBF. The events of the last week -- where players' voices were ignored, and some are now retiring in protest -- is the result of a long history of lockout. While some validly choose to remain inside the team and seek change from within, the fact that players have to make such a choice raises bigger issues. It has made us determined to speak out and demand change.

It is time for CBF to overhaul its practices, in line with FIFA's reforms and principles¹.

We are grateful for the opportunity to have played for our beloved country for so long. We will remain thankful for the rest of our lives for the chance to serve our nation and team, and to come so close to realising our dream of being world champions.

Specifically we call on the CBF to:

- (1) Abide by international reforms to governance by including women at all levels of decision-making, especially on its Board.
- (2) Build an inclusive pathway into the game for the women who have practised the sport all their lives, by:
 - a) Creating a Women's Football Committee within CBF, comprising women's football experts, that is empowered to build the framework for how women's football is developed, organised and run in Brazil.
 - b) Creating meaningful pathways for women into coaching, administrative and governance roles in CBF.

¹ in particular, Articles 2(e)&(f), 3, 4 and 15(j) of the FIFA Statutes, and FIFA's Ten Key Principles for women's football, passed at FIFA Congress 2014 in Sao Paulo:
https://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/bodies/02/36/77/51/10_keys_en_neutral.pdf

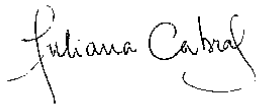
The actions we are taking now, are motivated by a desire that all of the women and girls that follow in our footsteps are able to achieve more than we did, including on and off the field.



Marcia Tafarel



Sissi do Amor Lima



Juliana Ribeiro Cabral



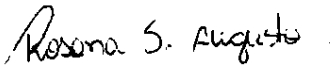
Miraildes Maciel Mota ('Formiga')



Cristiane Rozeira



Francielle Manoel Alberto ('Fran')



Rosana dos Santos Augusto



Andréia Rosa de Andrade



Our views are expressed below

“The CBF encouraged us to invest in courses that would build our capacity to coach, but now that we are qualified all they show us is sexism. The actions from CBF directors do not match their speech. The macho CBF culture is an unsurpassable barrier for women. We simply have to speak up against the disrespect that they are showing.”

Marcia Tafarel, former WNT player with 27 caps who competed at the 1991 and 1995 FIFA Women's World Cup and the 1996 Summer Olympics.

“The failure to invest in women's football in Brazil is a national tragedy. I have coached in the US for the past thirteen years after playing professionally and for the WNT in multiple world cups and Olympics. To achieve success, CBF needs to transform how women are supported, funded and empowered to lead the sport in the Brazil. This starts by allowing women to sustain leadership roles.

Sissi do Amor Lima, 47 caps, Golden Boot winner of the 1999 Women's World Cup in which she scored 7 goals, professional coach in California

“We need people committed and involved with Women's Soccer who are willing to act on behalf of the sport. Enough of 'anything' does.”

Juliana Ribeiro Cabral, former WNT Captain and veteran of two World Cups & two Olympic Games

“There was so much talk about giving an opportunity to a woman to work with the Brazilian team. And when that opportunity came, there was so little time for her to implant her working philosophy in the program. It was a hasty decision. She really did not have enough time to prepare the girls. They talked about revival, evolution of women's soccer in our country. But with recent attitudes we see that in reality there is no real intention to support development of women's soccer in Brazil!”

Miraildes Maciel Mota, better known as Formiga, former Vice-Captain of the WNT with 160 caps, and the only player in the world to compete in 6 Olympic campaigns

“I no longer serve the Brazilian team due to the latest events that we had in relation to the technical commission having been dismissed. All athletes were satisfied with the work even with the negative results. We arrived to request her and the commission's stay, but it was not enough. Coach Emily Lima brought me back, pulled me up, and helped me to recover some things I had lost. I was happy to give the team my best. My motives are broader: CBF took injured girls to the World Cup, girls who were untrained. That was too much for me. I even thought about quitting football, but thanks to God I managed to turn around with great eagerness for the hope that the sport could change. But now I am leaving.”

Francielle Manoel Alberto “Fran”, veteran of two Olympics and one World Cup, who recently resigned with 60 caps,

“I dedicated 18 years representing the Brazilian team with great pride and love! Today, like Cristiane and Francielle, I make public the desire not to defend the colors of the Brazilian team any more. Faced with the circumstances and adversities of recent events, I feel that athletes do not have a voice, and I want to expose one point of view, though it affects the vanity and ego of many. We have neither strength nor voice. And one day you get tired! Here is my wish so that people who love and treat the sport with affection and respect, occupy positions of expression within the Brazilian women's football, and that the themselves athletes gain presence and voice, in the incessant fight for change.”

Rosana dos Santos Augusto, veteran of four World Cups and four Olympics with 114 caps for the WNT

“The male chauvinistic culture in Brazil has limited the development of women's soccer. Recent events have made many players retire from the Brazilian Women's National Team. We are tired of injustice, discrimination, and sexism that prevent female coaches' ability to do their job for our country! Regardless

of whether you are a man or woman, the same rights should be given to allow all sides to succeed. There are many injustices we have faced, former and current players, that are unacceptable. For example, how can we not have the right to ask for money from endorsements or image rights?! Or be retaliated against for speaking up about the wrongs that we have faced and face today?! How can it be that it is 2017 and we have had our first female coach?! How can we have a platform to speak on if we don't have the same support that men do?! We are humbly asking you, all of you, to support us by using social media and spreading the word that we are NOT accepting status quo anymore. We need change. With your help we know that we can begin to change the injustice that we have endured for way too long from the Brazilian Confederation of Football. Respect! We want our voices to be heard! Please help us with the an impact quote for change.”

Cristiane Rozeira, member of four Brazilian WNT World cup and Olympic campaigns, who recently resigned with 131 caps; holds the Olympic record of 14 career goals

“I am another player from the WNT who is manifesting in this situation. There are so many people who are fans of women's football and who support us. Thank you so much for supporting the dreams I have been able to realize, and also those that will now remain unrealized. I have been in the WNT for 7 years and have seen many things happen. Many times we lacked the strength and courage to speak out due to fear of not being selected, and similar concerns. But today I am here to say that we need people who dream big, and who are able to bring player experience to the heart of how women's football is led in Brazil. It hurt to learn that Emily was dismissed from this recent team that was developing in a direction where we could really make a impact. I saw that with this selection there was something special. I could see changes that I had not seen over 7 previous years. I really believed that we would be able to reach gold medals in World Cups, the Olympics, etc. But unfortunately people who were making a difference were not giving time to make this happen. So I am here. CBF: please appreciate that you do not understand women's football deeply, because you have not worn the jersey. You need to put people into leadership roles that have that understanding. Thank you for everything.”

Andréia Rosa, member of WNT who recently resigned with 34 caps. Competed in the 2006 South American Women's Football Championship and in the 2008 Olympics.

Player alumni from other WNT have offered their support

“The FIFA reforms put in place long overdue measures to make the game more accessible to women. With it came commitments to fight discrimination in all its forms, grow the women's game and to promote women in leadership and governance roles in football. So we should be seeing those reforms bearing fruit. Instead, we're seeing developments in the women's game that are very troubling. For the reforms to work, they need to be implemented down to the Federations.”

Mary Harvey, former USA WNT goalkeeper, FIFA Women's World Cup winner, Olympic Gold Medalist

“The Brazilian Women's National Team has been a world power house for decades in spite of inadequate support. Christiane is perhaps the most versatile and experienced attacker in the history of our game. As a teenager, she gave me the worst whooping of my career in the 2004 Athens Olympic Quarter Finals and I have been a fan of hers ever since. But I have never admired her more than this moment where she has risked everything on the postulation that the power of her personal network, built from years playing across the globe, will overcome the cultural and systemic barriers that have kept not only female footballers, but all women who suffer from gender violence and discrimination, from prospering. As a former captain of the Mexico National Team, I wish I could have known more and done more for my teammates while I was playing. I stand 100% by Christiane and the women of the Brazilian National Team in this essential demand for Human Rights and Justice, and I'm hopeful that we will see Christiane & Co. playing at the international level again soon.”

Monica Christine González Canales, former captain with 83 caps for the Mexican WNT

“The Players are integral to the game, failure to protect and advance their interests, holds the game to ransom. Trading off good will and exploiting those that represent the heart beat of the game, holds no respect for players of the past or those aspiring to be the future.”

Kate Gill, former captain with 86 caps for the Australia WNT

“Cristiane’s character and her commitment are extraordinary. This player at the top of her game has been serving the Brazilian national team for 17 years. To lose one of our best – that’s telling you something is wrong. I implore CBF and other world organisations to step up because you are losing a valuable product for the sport and your own organisation.”

Joey Peters, former vice-captain with 110 caps for Australia WNT; former player for Santos FC (Brazil)

“I’ll never forget coaching England against Brazil at Wembley during the London Olympics, where they helped create a huge occasion for the women’s game. It’s very sad to see top players walk away due to the lack of respect. Players, coaches and teams need to be properly supported to keep growing the game. That’s especially true for coaches, because the only way to get better players is to have better coaches. Federations must give female ex players a meaningful pathway into coaching, because currently we are wasting half the talent pool. It should be possible, even normal, for women to have senior decision-making roles in football - especially the women’s game.

Hope Powell, 66 caps for England WNT, first woman to gain Pro licence, 15 years as coach of the England WNT, coach of Great Britain women’s Olympic football team in London 2012.

“It’s time for federations around the world to implement the reforms that FIFA has set in place. Women’s football and the inclusion of women are now top-level objectives of FIFA under its new Statutes. Under principles agreed at the 2014 FIFA Congress in Brazil, federations should have women involved at all decision-making levels, including the Executive Committee. Anyone who excludes women from decision-making, silences their voices and neglect the women’s game is operating contrary to FIFA’s reforms and principles. It’s heart-breaking to hear these resignations when women bring so much growth, and value to football.”

Moya Dodd, former vice-captain, Australia WNT; one of the first women on the FIFA Executive Committee

“I have had the privilege of being teammates with Formiga and Cristiane. What amazing technical abilities and skills these players have, it has given me the absolute respect for the Brazilian football talent. But it always made me wonder, how is it possible Brazil don’t have any World Cup or Olympic gold medals? The situation that led to Cris and the other players quitting the WNT is the obvious (and now also the public) answer to that question! The players have been extremely loyal to the FA for many years and tried to solve the situation with speaking up internally. We have, as your teammates around the globe, followed that struggle hoping to see a change. The importance of listening to the players voice and taking that expertise into serious consideration is a key for success in every federation. Listen to the players, including keeping a diverse leadership both of and on the field. Let the amazing team you have prepare with resources and use the former players’ expertise. Reorganized, Brazil will no longer be without star-players or gold medals. I stand behind you and your right to be listened to as a player.”

Caroline Jönsson, former Swedish WNT goalkeeper with 80 caps

“If these women didn’t have to be fighting for dignity, respect and resources in addition to fighting to win, imagine where their game could go. The CBF cannot expect the women’s game in Brazil to fuel itself solely on the sweat, dedication and dreams of female players forever. This is a breaking point--the players’ voices cannot be silenced any more.” -

Caitlin Fisher, former player U-21 WNT (USA); former player for Santos FC (Brazil)

Romário joins the call for change

A sad reality. The dismissal of Emily from leading the Brazilian Women’s national team triggered the exit of three players until now. Cristiane, the best attacker of the Olympic Games – whether masculine or feminine – with 14 goals – left sadly. She said, “I suffered the poor treatment of CBF for 17 years. I do not have strength to continue.” Francielle, “Fran”, also left, saying, “I could not see the coherence of working towards something that I do not believe can go right.” And left wing Rosana, currently playing with Paris

Saint-Germain, and with four Olympics to her credit, also announced she would leave the women's national team. In the book I am launching in Brazil, "Um Olho na Bolha, Outro na Cartola", I comment about the disrespect that CBF has shown to women's football. We are still lacking a competitive national championship. And despite the difficulties, they did not even give coach Emily one year to prove she could revive the national team.

Romário de Souza Faria, Brazilian football player who was one of the most prolific goal scorers in the sport's history. He won the Golden Ball as the most outstanding performer in the 1994 World Cup after helping Brazil win the tournament.



Romário Faria

September 30 at 9:00am · 🌐

Triste realidade!

A demissão de Emily Lima do comando técnico da Seleção Brasileira de futebol feminino, detonou a debandada de jogadoras, três, até agora. Cristiane, a maior artilheira em Jogos Olímpicos, tanto no masculino quanto no feminino, com 14 gols, saiu com um depoimento muito triste: "Aguentei (o desprezo da CBF) por 17 anos. Não tenho mais força".

Francielle, a Fran, também saiu: "Não vejo coerência em fazer parte de um trabalho que não acredito que possa dar certo". E a lateral-esquerda Rosana, do PSG, com quatro Olimpíadas no currículo, também anunciou a saída da Seleção.

No livro que estou lançando pelo Brasil – "Um Olho na Bolha, Outro no Cartola – comento sobre o desprezo da CBF com o futebol feminino. Ainda nos falta um campeonato nacional competitivo. E, apesar dessas dificuldades, não deram nem um ano para a técnica Emily promover um trabalho de renovação na Seleção.

Descrição da imagem: [#legendaacessivel](#) [#pracegover](#) Arte exhibe Seleção Brasileira de futebol feminino em pose para foto e vem acompanhada do seguinte texto: "CBF despreza o futebol feminino".



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[The future is at stake: time to show that words are meant to take the form of real actions](#)

Published on LinkedIn on September 28, 2017 by Mayi Cruz Blanco, who was Head of Women's Football Development Department at FIFA for 9 years.



It is September 2017, and we have woken up again to a story that feels a tale of a century ago or longer back in time. [Emily Lima](#), the first ever female coach of the Brazilian Women's National Team (WNT) has been dismissed from her role; after only ten months of work, having started one of the most advanced programmes the Team has ever experienced. In a bold action of protest [Cristiane](#), Brazil WNT legend is also retiring today.

The Brazilian Football Association (CBF), is one of the most privileged in the globe in terms of talent; they have one of the biggest pools of male and female players, in a country where the love for football feels like religion. The potential does not stop on players, imagine the number of retired stars that could be leading the game at different levels? In the women's game this is one of the saddest part of the story. Most of Brazilians former female players are not serving in their own country. Why is this still the case? Why in 2017 is not possible that women see themselves as leaders in their own game? I have personally met in Brazil so many former female players with great potential to lead. Unfortunately, they are not found among the leadership of the football organisations. I found myself being the only woman in the meeting-room, as I was representing FIFA.

Throughout the years I worked on Women's Football Development, I witnessed incredibly talented women being taken out their coaching-roles at national level. Regardless of their success, experience and knowledge, they would leave football, due to lack of opportunities or else they experienced the same fate as Emily Lima – those that follow women's football closely know those names very well. So much talent to despair! I could never understand, nor accept, that gender determines how humans are assessed.

In 2015, [following a global survey](#) FIFA introduced [a leadership programme](#) and [a scholarship programme](#), for female coaches and leaders and more earmarked funding went to the women's football development programmes-portfolio. The findings were clear: to advance the women's game there was a strong call for more women on the side-lines and at the decision-making table. It showed that the number of female coaches in football is very low, with only 7% of registered coaches from the 177 associations that participated being female, while the results also demonstrated that successful member associations in women's football have a higher level of participation of women at coaching levels.

The success of female coaches has been highlighted across the history of the women's game and witnessed by followers all over the world in the latest biggest tournaments. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2015 and the UEFA Women's European Championship in 2017 were both won by women. [Since 2000 all major women's competitions winners have been won by female-coached teams – except one.](#)

Lima's dismissal shows once again the importance of having women sitting at the table and being able to have a voice on crucial decisions in their own sport. A key matter on improving governance in football is advancing the gender-parity agenda. How many women are there within the Association's board? How many women are represented at technical structures? How many opportunities are they given to have a say in decisions that pertain their futures? How many women are considered to lead women's teams let alone male teams?

More than ever, global football governing bodies such as FIFA and the Confederations, need to take a leading role to support women in football. At the other end of the structure, National Associations have the duty to create the conditions for women to have a career in the game. They should have a supporting and mentoring system in place. More women in football is one of the key pillars of [FIFA's reforms](#) and recently launched [FIFA Forward Programme](#). All these initiatives should be aligned with [FIFA Women's Task Force](#) recommendations given during the FIFA reform process. As the guardians of the game, FIFA, the confederations and the National Associations need to stand as strong advocates.

There is a need for concrete measures, building awareness and a truly inclusive environment. Situations like the one happening in Brazil are no longer acceptable. It is time to show that words are meant to take the form of real actions.

Share and support - we want Emily Lima, Cristiane, and her Team-mates back.

41 Likes





Ella Masar McLeod @emasar3 · 7h

Below is Cristiane's statement w/ English subtitles! Its 2017 n they are considered 1 of the best in the World.They deserve better! #equality

Ella Masar McLeod @emasar3

Because futbol is so much bigger than just a ball between the white lines ... I stand by Cris, it's time 4 a change!
download.wetransfer.com/us2/c829b18e25...

17 86



FIFPro @FIFPro · Oct 2

ICYMI:

Quitting the seleção 🇧🇷 after 17 years - and not the way she wanted

Powerful video by Cristiane Rozeira 🙌

youtube.com/watch?v=l3p2Ey...



21 33

FIFPro Retweeted



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crisrozeira Follow

crisrozeira Decisão mais difícil da minha vida. Obrigado a todos por estes 17 anos. #selecaobrasileira #futebolfeminino #brasil #orgulho #gratidao

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futfemdazeira Estamos contigo @crisrozeira , vcs tem o poder de mudar essa história. gratidão! Adere @martavsilva10

tellesgabii @thauan7 cara eu n sei nem o que dizer... isso me deixa mt indignada. Não que eu esperasse coisas mt boas da CBF mas pq, conseguiram se superar. Isso aí é só a ponta do grande iceberg de merda que eles fizeram

ana_lamardo @ellen_mendess uma pena! Não só pela cris te tomada essa decisão mas tbm pelo o que fizeram com a comissão da seleção!!!

2,866 likes

1 DAY AGO



Verónica Boquete @VeroBoquete · Sep 29

🇧🇷 It's happening! 🙌 One of the best is stopping because...women's football deserve better! Cris,you have all the respect of women's football 🙌



17 3P2 887



Francis Awaritefe @FrancisAwaritefe

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I support Cristiane. Women pro footballers should'nt have to beg for equality of opportunity & fairness. This is an indictment on football.

moya dodd @moyadodd

Unforgettable! And tragic that Brazilian women's football has struggled so much since then m.youtube.com/watch?v=l3p2Ey... twitter.com/asifburhan/sta...

9:49 PM - 30 Sep 2017

18 Retweets 35 Likes

2 18 35



Caitlin Murray @caitlinmurr

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Brazil WNT legend Cristiane is retiring. Among her reasons: Being underpaid and ignored by federation + decision to fire coach Emily Lima. twitter.com/cintiarlem/s...

3:46 AM - Sep 29, 2017

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Letter from members of the Brazilian WNT to President of CBF expressing their support of Coach Emily Lima before she was dismissed

Newcastle, Australia

19 September 2017

Dear CBF President Marco Polo del Nero

We would firstly like to thank you for your support and the opportunities you have given us.

We wish to communicate to you that we held a meeting with supervisor Marco Aurelio Cunha on 19 September 2017 in Newcastle, Australia. We met in order to express the views of current athletes playing on the Brazilian women's national team in relation to the work of the technical commission charged with leading the national team.

All athletes agreed that this current technical commission is best prepared to continue a new cycle of development.

We appreciate that recent results were not what we expected, but we should take into account the limited time we had to prepare, issues around the selection process, and most of all the extent of changes in the approach taken in relation to training, and effort needed to rebuild women's football once again after a long period of disregard.

We understand that this process requires time, and we are confident that the work underway is of excellent quality and will produce good results in the medium term.

We are grateful for your understanding.

Yours faithfully,

Signed by 24 athletes who at the time were members of the Brazilian Women's National Team

