

**CONIFA ASIA Report to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs -  
Division for Inclusive Social Development - Sport for Development and Peace**

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**Part 1: Implementation of Recommended Activities Outlined in UNGA Resolution 79/8 - Sport as an Enabler of Sustainable Development**

The President of CONIFA Asia, Ruby Ann Kagaoan, submitted a report to the Division for Inclusive Social Development - Sport for Development and Peace of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The report focuses on the achievements of the CONIFA Asia Cup London held from July 1-4, 2025. The key highlights are as follows:

The period covered by the UNDESA data collection was February 2024 to January 2026. In that period, CONIFA Asia supported developing nations and various communities in enhancing their capacity in sport, football in particular. This was achieved through the CONIFA Asia Cup 2025, which provided expertise, technical assistance, and logistical support to develop sport-based programs and utilized digital technology to advance sport as a tool for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The CONIFA Asia Cup has given a voice to nations that are often excluded from mainstream sports governance structures. As an innovative continental football championship, it uses sport events to raise awareness of sport for development and peace at local, continental, and global levels. It promotes and supports specific initiatives related to sport for development and peace, allocating the following percentages of its endeavor to five of the 17 SDGs:

- **SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being: 20%**
- **SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities: 30%**
- **SDG 13 - Climate Action and Sustainability: 5%**
- **SDG 16 - Peace-Building and Conflict Prevention: 40%**
- **SDG 17 - Partnerships and Global Cooperation: 5%**

Through the CONIFA Asia Cup London, CONIFA Asia expanded its efforts on a significant scale to promote sport for development and peace, achieving historic milestones in humanitarian sport and the advancement of human rights. CONIFA Asia also established innovative partnerships to promote policy and program development in the field of sport for development and peace.

Notably, the CONIFA Asia President partnered with the English Football Association (FA), a pioneer in football and its international game, to officiate the CONIFA Asia Cup London (2025). The CONIFA Asia President also introduced a sustainable sportswear sponsor for the Uyghurs, breaking barriers between FIFA and CONIFA and, for the first time, integrating sustainability into a CONIFA event.

## **Part 2: Overview of the CONIFA Asia Cup London**

The CONIFA Asia Cup London took place from July 1 to July 4, 2025. The tournament featured refugee and diaspora teams from Tamil Eelam, East Turkistan (Uyghurs), and Tibet.

This event aligned with the UN SDGs 3, 10, 13, 16, and 17, and contributed to the implementation of the 2018 UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace (SDP), particularly:

- Policy development
- Integrity and ethics in sport
- Social inclusion
- Data collection
- Research
- Leveraging sports events to promote the SDGs
- Digital innovation and accessibility

The *objective* of the CONIFA Asia Cup is to provide an international sports platform for nations and ethnic groups that have been excluded by FIFA.

The tournament had a *global and regional scope*, with participating ethnic communities from Asia, Europe, and North America. Target participants included youth, indigenous peoples, and refugees.

The English Football Association (FA) was the *major partner* for the 2025 edition of the event.

### **External Funding**

CONIFA Asia did not receive external funding for the CONIFA Asia Cup London. The Tamil Eelam Football Association (FA) and East Turkistan FA covered the costs for the pitch, while CONIFA advanced payment for referees to be reimbursed by Tamil Eelam FA. Tamil Eelam FA also covered the cost of the English commentator. The three participating teams were responsible for their accommodation, meals, and both international and local travel expenses.

CONIFA faces challenges in securing funding for its events, as it is not recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the United Nations, or any other major international sports or development organizations.

### **Details of the CONIFA Asia Cup**

#### **Main Activities**

Since its launch in 2023, the CONIFA Asia Cup has provided an international football platform for 54 million people from four nations recognized by the United Nations but excluded from FIFA: Tamil Eelam,

Tibet, Hmong, and East Turkistan. These participants are footballers who are refugees or descendants of refugees who escaped from genocidal and oppressive regimes.

CONIFA Asia currently represents nations with a total population of around 550 million people. Some football associations are not active due to financial constraints, since it is difficult for independent associations to secure sponsorships and partnerships, despite their efforts to promote the UN SDGs and peace-building initiatives.

### **Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact**

The CONIFA Asia Cup has amplified the voices of nations that have had to defend themselves against violence and massacres. If the United Nations recognizes our work within CONIFA, we would be able to achieve significantly more for humanity by securing greater support from institutions and corporations to fund our activities and events.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

In light of the absence of external funding, the President of CONIFA Asia has been relying solely on empirical data and social media analytics for monitoring and evaluation.

### **Lessons Learned: Three Main Challenges in Organizing the CONIFA Asia Cup**

1) *Funding* and 2) *media support* are crucial for our efforts. However, we encounter challenges due to 3) *the lack of accreditation and recognition from the UN, IOC, and the Council of Europe.*

### **Lessons Learned: Three Recommendations for Similar Future Initiatives**

1. We need to gain support from human rights and international development institutions for our initiatives.
2. It is essential to raise awareness that the current structures of sports governance allow certain national governments to exclude ethnolinguistic groups and nations, further perpetuating injustices against these UN-recognized peoples and nations. Examples include the Chinese Communist Party, the Taliban, and the Syrian government's army, among others.
3. Some nation-states have national football associations that are distanced from Euro-centric sports governance, such as those in Oceania, resulting in their exclusion from mainstream sports governance. Additionally, there are occupied territories that wish to represent themselves based on their ethnic identities, yet they remain under the radar because they fall under the jurisdiction of their Western occupiers' national sports federations. An example of this is Hawai'i, which is governed by US Soccer. Although Hawai'i has been playing football since the 1920s, three decades before the US government made it a dependency, it still lacks independent representation in the sport.