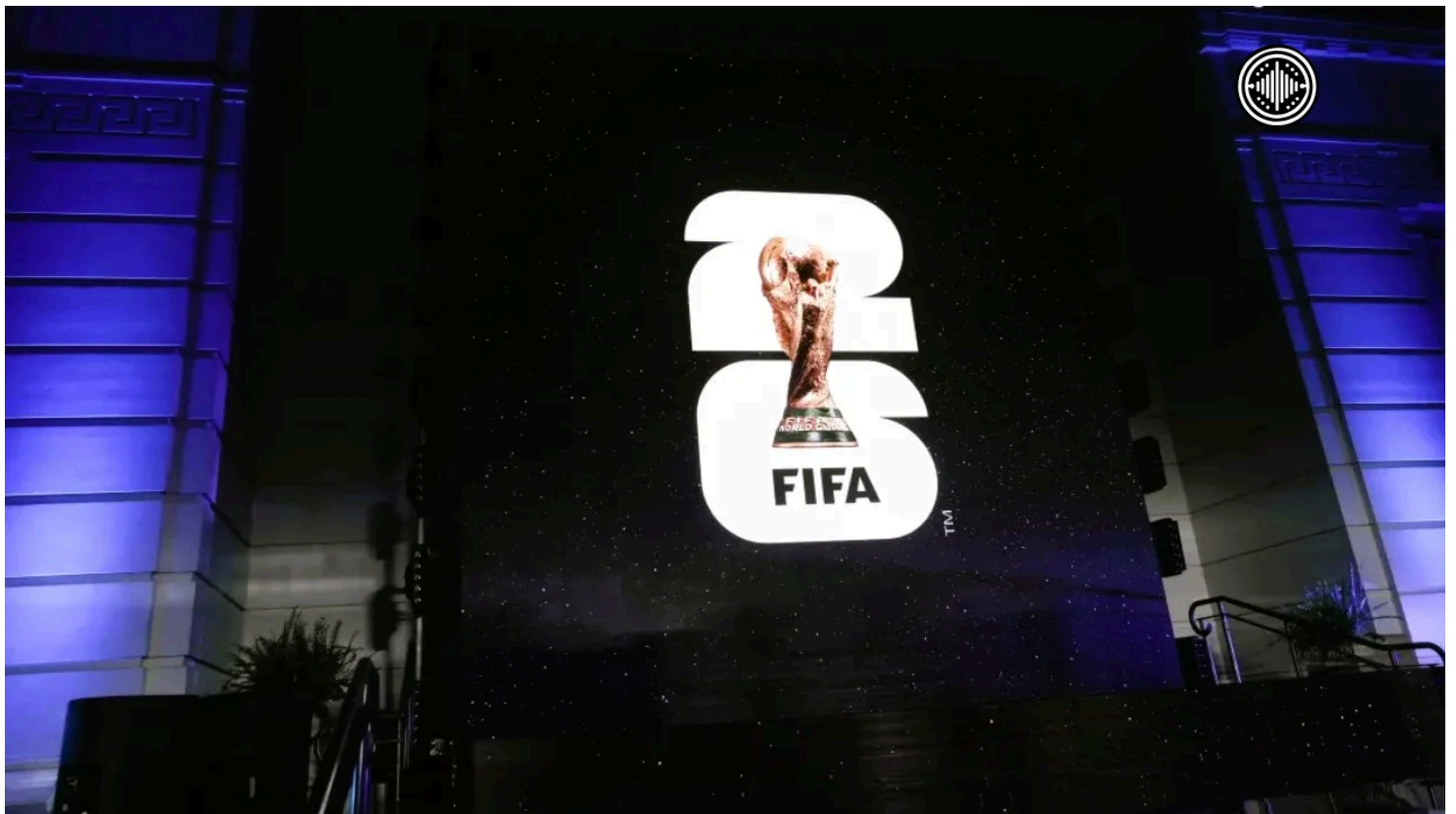


Rights Groups Warn 2026 U.S. World Cup Could Threaten Safety of International Fans

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— Categories: Human Rights



More than 80 civil rights, immigrant advocacy, and labor organizations are raising serious concerns about next year's FIFA World Cup in the United States.

In a letter sent to FIFA on July 1, groups including the American Civil Liberties Union, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the NAACP said they are “deeply concerned” about U.S. immigration policies under President Donald Trump. They fear that these policies could harm millions of fans expected to attend matches across the country.

The groups point to an executive order banning travelers from 12 mostly Muslim and African countries and to ongoing raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in many communities. Some of these same communities will be hosting games next summer.

“If FIFA continues to stay silent, not only will millions be placed at risk, but the FIFA brand will also be used to improve the image of an increasingly authoritarian government,” the letter said.

The 2026 tournament, which will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, is set to begin on June 11. FIFA expects record attendance from fans around the world.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino has said that “the world is welcome in America,” promising that visiting teams and supporters will be treated with respect.

However, U.S. officials have been clear that strict rules will apply. Vice President J.D. Vance said in May that all visitors will need to leave when their visas expire.

“We want them to come, we want them to celebrate, we want them to watch the games,” Vance said. “But when the time is up, they’ll have to go home. Otherwise, they will have to talk to Secretary (Kristi) Noem.”

The groups are urging FIFA to call on the U.S. government to guarantee that fans will not face profiling, harassment, or threats of deportation.

FIFA has not yet responded to requests for comment.

This is not the first time FIFA has faced human rights criticism. Before the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, the organization was accused of ignoring labor abuses.

“The World Cup should be a celebration that brings people together,” the letter concluded. “It must not become an excuse to target immigrant communities.”