



FCBARCELONA

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION BY SANDRO ROSELL

It is a great honour for FC Barcelona to be here alongside his excellency, President Shimon Peres, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, a man committed to his country, a man who has had an active and influential role in the Middle East Peace Process, all of which has made him one of the most recognised politicians in the world.

I have been told that FC Barcelona are the most popular team in Israel and Palestine and that is something that fills everyone related to the club with pride. We have the responsibility to use that fact for the benefit of peace.

Our club is not one that is only worried about winning or losing. We like to say that we are “more than a club”, because Barça is a club that is committed to improving society and that believes in sporting values. Peace, peaceful co-existence between peoples, democracy and freedom are universal values that FC Barcelona has always defended throughout its history. It is for that reason that we are here today.

We know that football is an universal language that should be used to bring people together. FC Barcelona, modestly, wishes to make themselves available in order to contribute to the efforts to strengthen the bridges of peace and dialogue between the Israeli and Palestinian communities. The best way we can think of to do that is with a ball.

We want to make our team, our players available to take part in a football match with the hope that this game will serve to extend the channels of dialogue within the two communities that will help bring them closer together.

Tomorrow, Friday, we are going to Ramallah to meet his excellency Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian National Authority. We would like, with the Palestinian and the Israeli Leadership, to promote the idea of a football match for peace.

We would like this match to be one without financial interest, one from which all the proceeds would be directed to projects aimed at helping young people in the two communities.

We understand that peace will only be possible if we build confidence, respect and understanding between the two peoples. We believe with all our heart that a match involving Barça, with the collaboration of Israelis and Palestinians, can contribute to reestablish those links which are indispensable for people to live together peacefully.

Thank you to everyone. Shalom

February 21, 2013