



Diary notice: 9.3.2023

FOOTBALL'S OLYMPIC TORCH REACHES VIETNAM

The 6th epic journey of The Ball from the home of football in London to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, promoting climate action and gender equality, visits Hanoi from 9 to 11 March 2023



The **Friedrich Ebert Stiftung** (FES) Vietnam Office and the **Hanoi Academy for Journalism and Communication** are hosting The Ball – the beautiful game's equivalent to the Olympic Torch – in Hanoi from 9 to 11 March 2023. Amongst others, **Minh Nguyet**, former Vietnamese national female football player is going to sign The Ball.

The Ball is traveling from the site of the world's first official game of football in Battersea Park, London in 1864 to Eden Park in Auckland, New Zealand, where the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup will kick-off on 20th July 2023.

On the Ball's journey, signatures and pledges have been gathered to support gender equality and climate action around the world. The Ball has been signed by more than 55,000 people across 55 countries since 2002. Over the past year, 52 partner organizations have come together to organize more than 30 events and workshops that harness the love people have for football to encourage action on climate change and gender equality.

In Hanoi, **Spirit of Football** will share its educational methods on sustainability and gender equality. After the two-day workshop with students from the Hanoi Academy for Journalism and Communication, The Ball will attend a public event at the Academy. The workshop in Hanoi will include a digital link-up to the German Bundesliga Football Club **Werder Bremen**.

Highlights and statements

Former Vietnamese national female football player, awarded the Golden Ball 2015, Minh Nguyet is going to sign The Ball. The FES in Vietnam is excited to host The Ball and raise awareness for climate action, as Julia Behrens, the Project Director Climate & Energy in Asia, emphasized:

"Vietnam is one of the most affected countries by climate change. At the same time, Vietnam has become a big emitter of greenhouse gases, too. Bringing the Ball to this country that is crazy for football is a great chance to gain support and awareness for socially just climate action."

The Hanoi Academy for Journalism and Communication sees hosting The Ball as contribution to efforts to reducing Vietnam's emissions:

"Vietnam is increasingly heavily affected by climate change impacts. We are honored to join The Ball as we are committed to the country's target Net Zero by 2050. We commit to join hands in reducing emission for the safety and development of our Earth."

The first person to sign The Ball on its 12-month global climate action and advocacy mission was **Katie Rood**, the professional footballer who plays for Hearts FC and the New Zealand National Team had this to say: *"Everyone loves the World Cup, but if we are to be able to continue playing it in the future, we need collective and urgent climate action. The journey of The Ball across land and sea from London to New Zealand is an opportunity for football to get its environmental act in order. I am going to take action. Are you?"*.

Spirit of Football's Ambassador and Liverpool FC manager **Jürgen Klopp** is also supporting The Ball: *"It is a ball for us all. Be part of our team. Everyone can play. Respect your teammates, your opponents and the environment. One Ball, One World."*

Do you want to be involved in the project? Follow The Ball's journey and [make your own pledge](#). To find out more about the non-profit organization Spirit of Football: <https://linktr.ee/spiritoffootball>

Next stations

After the workshop in Hanoi, The Ball will visit activities of Football for All in the Hue province, before heading to Cambodia and Thailand. Have a look at [The Ball Presentation Deck](#) for an outline of the project and the current route through Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Oceania.

Background Information:

Supported by the **FIFA Foundation** and the **Swedish Postcode Foundation**, **Spirit of Football** developed and tested educational resources with our partners **Pledgeball** and **Football for Future** focusing on sustainability and football from March to December 2022. We have been using these resources running workshops in several countries and are rolling them out on a **gender equality, sustainability and climate action** tour with The Ball in 2023.

The Ball is being carried (and kicked) by a team of educators from Spirit of Football and our non-profit gender equality partner **Equal Playing Field** in collaboration with our football for good network partner **Common Goal**. Together we will deliver workshops and run an advocacy campaign that begins in Vietnam (March), makes its way across South East Asia (March to May) and into the Pacific (June), eventually reaching New Zealand (July) and Australia (August) in time for the 2023 FIFA World Cup. We are the official sustainability partner of **Festival 23** – the youth festival being organised by **Football United** (and Common Goal) in Sydney in August 2023.

People we meet are being asked to make personal **pledges in terms of gender equality and also for our planet** (sustainability). We are connecting to like-minded partners around the world and en route through Asia and into the Pacific to learn from them and to highlight their work at the same time.

The Ball was presented in cooperation with the United Nations **UNFCCC at COP 27** in Egypt last November: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRHtxL5wzjI>

For more information, please contact: Iris Albullet: iris@spiritoffootball.de or Andrew Aris: andrew@spiritoffootball.de