

More than 90 Minutes – Sport and Football as a Platform to Fight Antisemitism and Discrimination

Location: United Nations Headquarters, New York

Date: 26 June 2026

Duration: 70 Minutes

Room: CR 9

Even Starts at: 11am

Organized by the World Jewish Congress and What Matters as part of the Together Through Sports initiative, in partnership with the UN Office of the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect

Rationale:

Held one day after of the German National Team’s FIFA World Cup fixture in New York, this high-level discussion will examine the growing role of sport as a platform for diplomacy, social cohesion, and the elevation of marginalized voices in society.

At a time of increasing polarization, extremism, and social fragmentation worldwide, sport remains one of the few global languages capable of transcending political, religious, and cultural divides. From football stadiums to international tournaments, sporting platforms possess a unique ability to bring together governments, communities, civil society, and the public around shared values of respect, inclusion, and human dignity.

Convened for the New York-based diplomatic community at the United Nations, the event will explore how sport can serve not only as entertainment, but as a meaningful tool of modern diplomacy — capable of combating hatred, fostering dialogue, strengthening social resilience, and amplifying the experiences of vulnerable and marginalized communities, including Jewish communities confronting rising antisemitism globally.

The discussion forms part of the ongoing *Together Through Sports* initiative led by the World Jewish Congress and What Matters, which seeks to engage major sporting institutions, clubs, leagues, federations, and international stakeholders in efforts to address antisemitism, extremism, historical memory, and social responsibility through sport.

Format:

The program will feature perspectives from international sport governing bodies, football leadership, the diplomatic community, and senior United Nations representatives, while

also highlighting historical examples of the intersection between sport, society, propaganda, identity, and human rights.

Opening Remarks:

- Chaloka Beyani Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, United Nations
- Ambassador Ricklef Beutin, Germany’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York

Speakers Include

- Bernd Neuendorf, President, German Football Association (DFB)
- Daniel Lörcher, Managing Director what matters gGmbH, Vice-President Borussia Dortmund
- Dr. Andreas Kahrs, Managing Director what matters gGmbH
- Maram Stern, Executive Vice President, World Jewish Congress

Moderator

- WJC Representative to the UN Yfat Barak-Cheney

The event will be moderated by representatives of the World Jewish Congress, with a historical introduction delivered by What Matters.

Audience

Members of the United Nations diplomatic community in New York, UN officials, civil society representatives, sporting stakeholders, and invited guests.

Budget

WJC will be covering expenses for UN room, AV, livestreaming, and other incidentals relating to the event.