

Canada to Welcome the World and its Game in 2015

The Canadian Soccer Association has been successful in its bid to host the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015™ - the premier women's sporting event in the world. The announcement was made today at the Home of FIFA in Zurich, Switzerland by President Joseph S. Blatter following the FIFA Executive Committee meeting.

"We would like to thank FIFA for entrusting the Canadian Soccer Association with this prestigious event," commented Canadian Soccer Association President, Dr. Dominic Maestracci. He added that "we are committed to the growth of women's soccer both in Canada and internationally and anticipate that this event will be another successful FIFA competition that will have a lasting impact on the sport in this country."

"On behalf of the Government of Canada I wish to congratulate the Canadian Soccer Association on its successful bid to host the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015™ and the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup 2014" said the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of State (Sport). "Canadians will once again welcome the world to cities across the country as we watch and cheer our National Team at the highest level of competition. The Government of Canada is proud to be a key supporter of Canada's bid and we look forward to watching our team compete with the world's best." The Government of Canada through Sport Canada's Hosting Program has committed up to \$15-million in operating costs to the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015™ and the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup 2014.

The FIFA Women's World Cup™ is hosted every four years, with the next event scheduled from 26 June to 17 July 2011 in Germany. For 2015, the event will expand from 16 to 24 participating countries and from 32 to 52 matches. As it is the new practice, the FIFA Women's World Cup™ host nation will also host the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in the preceding year, so both the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup 2014 and FIFA Women's World Cup 2015™ are awarded together to the same host nation.

"The successful bid would not have been possible without support from all levels of government and we wish to express our sincere appreciation for the role that they have played in our successful bid," acknowledged Canadian Soccer Association General Secretary, Peter Montopoli. "In particular, the Government of Canada has been a key partner from the onset of the bid process along with the respective provincial and municipal governments."

In November 2010, the Association welcomed participants to bid information sessions to provide information for potential host cities of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015™. In total, seven Candidate Bid Cities were able to commit to being included within the bid submission: Vancouver, BC, Edmonton, AB, Winnipeg, MB, Ottawa, ON, Montreal, QC, Halifax, NS and Moncton, NB. The Canadian Soccer Association formally submitted its Bid Book to FIFA on February 11, 2011 after working closely with all levels of government and the Candidate Bid Cities to prepare the bid documents.

The Canadian Soccer Association will now work closely with the Candidate Bid Cities over the coming months to prepare for FIFA's initial site inspections which are expected to occur in the fall. Official Host Cities will be announced some time following the site inspections after a thorough review by FIFA.

In Winnipeg, Manitoba Soccer Association Executive Director, Héctor Vergara mentioned, "Today is a fantastic day for Canadian Soccer and we congratulate the Canadian Soccer Association on being selected as the host country for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup. We will work very hard with our partners, the CSA and FIFA to ensure that Winnipeg is one of the best host cities for this prestigious World Cup."

"I am delighted that FIFA has selected Canada as the host country," said Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger. "It's now going to be up to Winnipeg to show Canada and the rest of the world that we deserve to play host to the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, and we have no doubt we can accomplish that goal."

Mayor Sam Katz added, "I'm excited that Winnipeg is a potential host for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup. It would be a great opportunity to welcome the soccer community from around the world to the heart of the continent."

The Canadian Soccer Association has a strong history of hosting FIFA events, starting with the FIFA U-17 World Cup Canada 1987. Canada has since hosted the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Canada 2002 (inaugural event) and the FIFA U-20 World Cup Canada 2007. The record-setting 2007 event attracted close to 1.2 million spectators to the 52 matches and generated an estimated \$259 million in economic activity across Canada. It delivered an excellent return for the government at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, supporting more than \$43 million in taxes at those three levels.

In Canada, roughly 43% of all registered players are women, twice as much as it was eight years ago when Canada hosted the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Canada 2002. Canada has also enjoyed success on the international stage, winning CONCACAF women's championships in all three age categories since 2008. Those three titles were the 2010 CONCACAF Women's World Cup Qualifier (which qualified Canada for its fifth consecutive FIFA Women's World Cup™), the 2008 CONCACAF Women's Under-20 Championship, and the 2010 CONCACAF Women's Under-17 Championship.

The Canadian Soccer Association, in partnership with its members and all its corporate partners, provides leadership in the pursuit of excellence in soccer, both at the national and international levels. The Canadian Soccer Association not only strives to lead Canada to victory, but it also encourages Canadians towards a life-long passion for soccer.