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## **OPEN LETTER FROM SCOTTISH TOUCH TO YOUTH PLAYERS AND FAMILIES**

Dear all,

As some of you are aware, over the course of 2016 there has been a significant dispute in Singapore touch over the governance of the sport there.

We know that some of you have been directly affected by this. During the year, we have provided advice and support to several families.

In recent days, the sport's governing body, the Federation of International Touch (FIT) has stated that it recognises Touch Football Singapore (TFS) as the governing body there. This letter is not to comment on that decision or the process FIT has followed in reaching it.

TFS has subsequently stated it is indefinitely banning a number of players for playing in so-called 'unaccredited' competition.

I am writing on behalf of the STA Board to make clear Scottish Touch's position on this.

Scottish Touch's primary obligation and the personal commitment of the Board's Directors is to the protection and support of our member players and families. We believe strongly in this, and as a national governing body, we are required by Scottish sports authorities to do everything we can using relevant laws and regulations to fulfil this.

For clarity, by 'laws and regulation', we mean not only FIT's regulations governing the sport of Touch, but also international and national laws and protocols regarding children's rights, discrimination, rights of participation, competition law, and child protection.

Until notified otherwise by FIT, we consider TFS' bans to be a Singaporean domestic matter. We await further communication from FIT, who we believe are the correct entity with jurisdiction for our players (social and representative) outside of Singapore. In the event that a Scottish player is sanctioned by FIT we will provide support and operate with the laws and regulations I detailed above.

Over recent months we have made clear to FIT that we strongly oppose sanctions against players caught up in this issue. In particular, we have made clear that we believe bans against minors (i.e. players aged under 18) to be against Scottish and international laws and best practice guidelines, and to be ethically incompatible with the ethos of touch as a sport of participation for all.

I hope this is helpful in explaining the position of Scottish Touch. If you require advice or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

*Michael Bottom*

**MICHAEL BOTTOM**

Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of the Scottish Touch Association Board