



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOOTBALL – MATCH-FIXING

#### DECISION OF THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) IN THE CASE KF SKËNDERBEU V/ ALBANIAN FA

*Lausanne, 13 April 2018* – The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has issued its decision in the arbitration procedure between KF Skënderbeu and the Albanian Football Association (AFA). The appeal has been upheld and the decision issued on 23 June 2017 by the AFA Ethics Committee (the Challenged Decision) is set aside.

On 1 June 2016, the UEFA Appeals Body issued a decision in which KF Skënderbeu was declared ineligible to play the UEFA Champions League 2016/2017 after results of more than 50 of its matches were found to have been manipulated for betting purposes. On 26 July 2016, CAS dismissed an appeal filed by KF Skënderbeu and confirmed the decision taken by the UEFA Appeals Body. Following the UEFA/CAS procedure, the AFA Ethics Committee initiated a procedure at the national level.

On 23 June 2017, the AFA Ethics Committee issued the Challenged Decision, finding that KF Skënderbeu had violated the AFA Code of Ethics and Code of Sport Discipline and removed KF Skënderbeu's "Champion" title for the 2015-2016 season, sanctioned the club with a fine of 2 million Albanian Lek and deducted twelve points from the classification for the 2016/2017 season. On 4 August 2017, KF Skënderbeu filed an appeal at the CAS seeking the annulment of the Challenged Decision. A CAS arbitration procedure was initiated and the CAS Panel in charge of this matter held a hearing in the presence of the parties on 22 January 2018.

After taking into consideration all arguments made by the parties, the Panel found that the sanctions imposed on the Club by the AFA Ethics Committee must be set aside as the AFA lacked a proper legal basis for imposing the sanctions related to the facts at stake. However, the CAS Panel also emphasized that the present decision was not based on the lack of reliability of the evidence in the match-fixing cases. Even less can this decision be qualified as a departure from the jurisprudence established by previous CAS panels. To the contrary, the CAS Panel found that the reports established by the UEFA Betting Fraud Detection System (the "BFDS") were a valuable tool in the detection and subsequent sanctioning of match-fixing violations. However, in the present matter, the Panel did not even need to examine the BFDS reports in detail, in the absence of any proper legal basis in the AFA regulations to impose sanctions at the national level.