



TAS / CAS
TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DU SPORT
COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT
TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DEL DEPORTE

MEDIA RELEASE

FOOTBALL

ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS BETWEEN OLYMPIQUE DE MARSEILLE / WATFORD ASSOCIATION FC LIMITED / PAPE ALASSANE GUEYE / FIFA

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) CONFIRMS THE DECISIONS ISSUED BY FIFA WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TRANSFER BAN IMPOSED ON OLYMPIQUE DE MARSEILLE WHICH IS SET ASIDE

Lausanne, 21 July 2023 - In the appeal arbitration proceedings between Club Olympique de Marseille (OM), Watford Association FC Limited (Watford FC), the Senegalese footballer Pape Alassane Gueye (the Player), and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) concerning the decision rendered by the Dispute Resolution Chamber of the FIFA (FIFA DRC) on 25 November 2021 (the Challenged Decision), the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has rendered its decision today.

In the Challenged Decision, the Player was found to have breached his contract with Watford FC without just cause and was ordered to pay compensation of GBP 2,307,875 to Watford FC, with OM, in its capacity as the Player's new club, jointly and severally liable for the payment of the compensation to Watford as it was considered to have induced the Player to breach his contract with his former club. In addition, the Player was sanctioned with a restriction of four months on his eligibility to play in official matches and OM was banned from registering any new players, either nationally or internationally, for two registration periods.

The Challenged Decision set out above has been confirmed by the CAS, with the exception of the transfer ban imposed on OM, which is set aside.

OM, the Player and Watford FC all filed separate appeals at the CAS against the Challenged Decision. The Player and OM sought the annulment of the Challenged Decision, whereas Watford FC sought an increased compensation payment. The three appeals were consolidated and referred to the same Panel of arbitrators which held a hearing with the parties on 8 and 9 March 2023.

After taking into consideration all the evidence and arguments put forward by the parties in the three procedures, the Panel reached the same conclusion as the FIFA DRC in determining that the Player had indeed terminated his contract with Watford FC without just cause and that compensation of GBP 2,307,875 should be paid to Watford FC by the Player and OM jointly and severally. However, the CAS Panel determined that OM had in fact rebutted the presumption of inducement and annulled the disciplinary sanction imposed on OM.

The Arbitral Award has been issued to the parties today. It will be published in the CAS database in due course.