



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOOTBALL

#### THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) DISMISSES THE APPEALS FILED BY THE BOLIVIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION

*Lausanne, 29 August 2017* – The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has dismissed two appeals filed by the Bolivian Football Federation (BFF) against decisions issued by the FIFA Appeal Committee (FIFA AC) dated 12 January 2017. Accordingly, the FIFA AC decisions are confirmed and the matches played between Bolivia and Peru on 1 September 2016 (2-0) and between Chile and Bolivia on 6 September 2016 (0-0) are both declared to be forfeited and awarded 3-0 in favour of Peru and 3 - 0 in favour of Chile, with the resulting adjustment of FIFA 2018 World Cup qualification points.

One month after the matches in question, the Peruvian Football Federation and the Chilean Football Federation discovered that the Paraguayan-born player Nelson Cabrera might not have been eligible to play for Bolivia and informed FIFA accordingly. FIFA then initiated an investigation into the fielding of Nelson Cabrera by Bolivia in those two matches. In a decision dated 27 October 2016, the FIFA Disciplinary Chamber found that the BFF had breached the FIFA rules regarding nationality and, as a consequence, FIFA ordered that the matches between Bolivia and Peru and between Chile and Bolivia played in September 2016 be forfeited. On 12 January 2017 the FIFA AC confirmed such decision.

The case was referred to a CAS Panel composed of Prof. Massimo Coccia, President (Italy), Efraim Barak (Israel), and José Juan Pintó (Spain). A hearing was held in Lausanne, Switzerland on 5 July 2017. In the parties' written submissions, and at the hearing, it was not disputed that Nelson Cabrera did not meet the eligibility criteria to play for the national team of Bolivia. Rather, the BFF questioned the validity of FIFA's right to initiate an investigation into the matter and argued that there were inconsistencies between the FIFA Disciplinary Code (FDC) and the Russia 2018 World Cup Regulations, the latter regulations providing that official protests must be submitted within an hour of the match in question.

The Panel dismissed such arguments finding that FIFA had the right to initiate *ex officio* disciplinary proceedings against Bolivia under the FDC within a time limit of two years (Articles 108 and 42 FDC). Accordingly, the Panel dismissed the appeals and confirmed the challenged decisions.