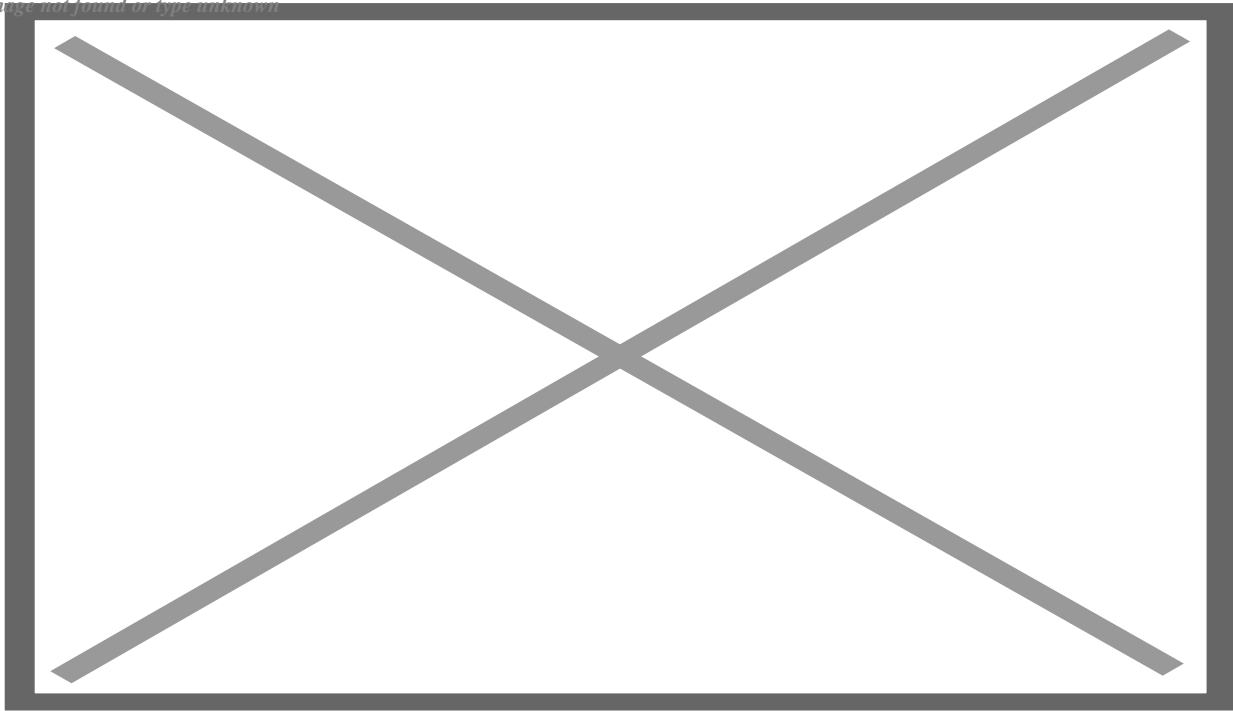


Rubiales scandal dominates news headlines in Spain

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Madrid, August 29 (PL)-- The scandal surrounding the kiss without mutual consent of the highest soccer federation in Spain to a female player, maintains its predominance today in the news of the country.

The fundamental addition is the position of the United Nations, which asked Spain to deepen the matter, especially addressing sexism in sport with a focus on respect for women's rights.

'There is a critical problem of sexism that continues to exist in sport and we expect the Spanish authorities and government to address it in a way that respects the rights of all women athletes,' analyzed the spokesman for the secretary general (Antonio Guterres), Stéphane Dujarric, at a press conference.

In fact, Dujarric was emphatic in pointing out that what happened offers no indication that it was consensual.

Until recently, the president of the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF), Luis Rubiales, became a sort of information whirlwind of the national reality with the most diverse and unexpected edges.

Everything exploded from the kiss of discord, when Rubiales deposited "a peck in the mouth" to striker Jenni Hermoso during the award ceremony in Sydney of the Women's World Cup, which Spain won on August 20.

After unconvincing and even defiant reactions from the then president of the RFEF, came a barrage of criticism from the Prime Minister himself, Pedro Sanchez, to numerous political, social and sports personalities.

The barrage of criticism, repudiation and rejection of Rubiales' attitude met with an unexpected obstacle. When it was thought that he would resign by calling an RFEF assembly last Friday, he did the opposite by digging in and threatening to take legal action to defend himself.

FIFA disqualified him for 90 days, in addition to the majority repudiation of the Iberian country. But some dark holes, such as the accusation by Rubiales and his family that Jenni Hermoso lied in her statements, and ambiguous attitudes of certain clubs and coaches further complicated the matter.

For the time being, gender equality groups, the professional footballers' union, some past and present players, academics and a broad spectrum of Spanish society seem determined that the case should end in an exemplary way.

The scandal landed in the political arena and is marking differences of criteria or discordant points of view between the left and the right, at the same time engaged in the battle to form a new government in the Iberian nation.

On the other hand, the Administrative Court of Sport (TAD) and the Superior Sports Council (CSD), together with the National Prosecutor's Office, are a priori the entities that could give the final touch to the Rubiales file.

However, the hunger strike of his mother in a church in Motril, Granada, and people who speak of manipulation of what happened against Rubiales, leave the atmosphere more tense than normal.

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