



US bars head of Palestinian Football Association from attending 2026 World Cup

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World Cup

[Jibril Rajoub](#), head of the Palestinian Football Association, revealed that the United States denied his visa to attend the 2026 World Cup, despite his presence in Mexico City to participate in events for the tournament, which is being co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

As [reported by the Associated Press \(AP\)](#), Rajoub was unable to obtain a U.S. entry visa. This prevented him from attending World Cup matches and official functions in his capacity as head of the Palestinian FA—events that heads of national federations typically attend during the tournament.

Rajoub stated that football is supposed to be a tool for uniting people, not dividing them, arguing that barring accredited sports officials from attending the global event runs counter to the message the game seeks to promote.

Rajoub's case emerges amid a broader crisis regarding U.S. entry visas during the 2026 World Cup, as several sports officials, referees, and journalists from various countries have faced similar difficulties despite having the necessary accreditations to attend the tournament.

In this context, FIFA President Gianni Infantino acknowledged the existence of challenges related to visa procedures but emphasized that the organization does not have the authority to intervene in sovereign decisions regarding immigration and entry into host nations.

The exclusion of the Palestinian FA head from parts of the World Cup raises new questions about whether all accredited participants will be able to access the tournament, especially as FIFA promotes a message of inclusion and openness, describing the 2026 edition as the most expansive in World Cup history.

Featured image via Philipp Schmidli/Getty Images

By [Alaa Shamali](#)

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1. News

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1. 2026
2. association
3. attending
4. bars
5. cup
6. football
7. from
8. head
9. news
10. palestinian
11. world

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1. News