AIDS Groups Allege Condom Distribution Blocked at World Cup

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A coalition of HIV/AIDS groups in South Africa alleges that the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), or the International Federation of Association Football, is blocking the distribution of condoms at World Cup soccer events, *The Guardian* reports.

The coalition—which includes the AIDS Consortium, the Southern African HIV Clinicians Society and the Treatment Action Campaign—said FIFA's tight restrictions on venues mean that only official sponsors are allowed in, which will effectively block the distribution of condoms and safer-sex information.

In a statement, the coalition noted: "FIFA has not permitted civil society organizations to distribute HIV or health related information…or provided confirmation that condoms may be distributed at stadia and within the fan-fests. This is despite the fact that commercial sponsors selling alcohol will have dedicated spaces available."

According to the article, the AIDS groups said they have asked to meet with FIFA and local organizers to discuss their concerns. FIFA said it is unaware of any requests, but there is a meeting underway to address the issues. The World Cup starts June 11 in South Africa.

About one in five adults in South Africa has HIV, and statistics show 1,400 new HIV cases and 1,000 AIDS-related deaths every year.

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