

# Russia Bashing: Will the West Secretly Try to “Embarrass” Russia During the World Cup?

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*Featured image: The Russian President Vladimir Putin and FIFA President Gianni Infantino attend a meeting in Sochi on 31 May (Photo: Sputnik/Aleksey Nikolskyi)*

*“I can assure you that all aspects have been taken into account and we have taken note of all threats,” said **Alexei Sorokin**, head of World Cup Organising committee. “The right balance will be found between security and comfort for fans.”*

However, because of the recent months’ ‘Russia ‘bashing’ – by the UK and US governments in particular – I have reason to be worried.

Earlier this week, incoming right-wing Italian populist prime minister **Giuseppe Conte** used his maiden speech to call for the lifting of sanctions against Russia and, in effect, an improvement of relations with Putin, opening up a deep rift amongst the EU politicians and bureaucrats in Brussels.

Last week, even the wine loving head of the EU, Jean-Claude Juncker, called for an end to ‘Russia-bashing’ some two months after countless Moscow diplomats across the EU were expelled in response to the alleged use of a nerve agent in the UK, that has now been proven beyond any reasonable doubt to have been a fabrication of lies by a desperate Conservative British government trying to deflect the public from its many other problems. The President of the European Commission added that he believed it was time to fully renew ties with Russia.

**Jean-Claude Juncker** is not renowned for having a formidable intellect, yet he showed rare common sense and wisdom by making this statement.

The good news, if you can call it that, is that the idiots that prepared these ‘false flags’ like the Skripal affair, are just that: incompetent idiots, fortunately for Russia.

Everybody, by whom I mean ordinary people on any British Street, will tell you they believe the British government is and has been lying over the Skripal affair, such is the disillusionment of the public in its government. The mass media which sadly includes the BBC, has a different Orwellian script of the Skripal events which of itself is an absolutely frightening development.

Also, alarm bells rang in my head when I read almost the same headlines that appeared on June 4th in several publications and media outlets, ABC, Associated Press, Reuters, New York Times et al who all seemed to pick similar headlines. Words to the effect:

“World Cup security is Putin’s top priority, but threats exist”.

That the Western government-controlled mass media attempts to instil the fear of terrorism is an indicator that the West itself is not beyond secretly orchestrating such acts. Forgive my cynicism, but if it can fabricate the Skripal affair, for me, anything now is possible.

That said let’s get back to the World Cup itself.

Some of the largest Western corporations with long-standing FIFA relationships are in full support of the World Cup. The official sponsors and partners, include Adidas, Budweiser, McDonalds and Coca Cola. Bastions of Western imperialism!

In Sochi, on 31 May, FIFA stated unequivocally that Russia is “absolutely ready” to host the 2018 World Cup in June and July. In the presence of the Russian President and high-ranking officials in Sochi, one of 12 World Cup cities, FIFA’s head **Gianni Infantino** said preparations for the month-long tournament were complete.

“Russia is absolutely ready to host the world, to celebrate a summer of festivities here in this beautiful country,” Infantino said.

Russia will host the World Cup from 14 June to 15 July in stadia spread across several cities, including Moscow, St Petersburg and Sochi, having worked for years to build new stadia and transportation infrastructure for the tournament.

Putin responded

“We understand our responsibility, we understand that much still needs to be done... all the events are still ahead,” adding Russia will do “all in its power” to ensure that the tournament meets the highest standards.

“We are all hoping that our players will be fully in the game, will give themselves entirely,” he said. “And most importantly, that they play the strong-willed, uncompromising soccer that the fans value and love.” Putin concluded.

“We know how important of course the last weeks are to finalise the little elements which are still missing,” he said.

One little-publicised aspect has been from analysts at Moody’s Rating Agency regarding the economics of the World Cup and the consequences, if any, of staging this event.

“The games will last just one month and the associated economic stimulus will pale in comparison to the size of Russia’s \$1.3 trillion economy,” said **Ms. Kristin Lindow**, Senior Vice President at Moody’s.

“We do not expect the World Cup to make a meaningful contribution to broader economic growth in Russia,” she said in a statement.

“The impact is likely to be even lower than that of the Sochi Olympic games, which developed an under-built resort area that is more accessible than many of the regions where the World Cup will be staged,”

Nevertheless, Moody's said certain regions would still derive some economic benefit from the investments.

Moody's added

“food retailers, hotels, telecoms, and transport will see a temporary boost in revenue” from the World Cup.

The construction sector was the main beneficiary of investment, but this has already been accomplished and completed by the Russians.

We can only hope that the World Cup in Russia is a success and, to quote one of the greatest ever managers (Liverpool FC) that ever lived, the legendary **Bill Shankly** “Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more serious than that.”

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