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On Visit to Libya Former Italian World Champion and Coach Gentile, Could Sign Contract to Coach National Team

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Claudio Gentile, the former Italian international footballer and Italy Under 21 coach wants to coach Libyan national team

If he has his way, former Italy international defender and 1982 World Cup champion Claudio Gentile, who has also been a member of the Italian national team coaching staff and Italy Under 21 coach, would soon become coach of Libya's national football team that on Sunday plays its first 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifier in Lome against Togo.

According to his lawyer and friend Michele Andreano, Claudio Gentile, who was born in Dhara, Libya in September 1953, was pleasantly surprised by the warm welcome he received from the Libyan people, in his first trip to Libya for 50 years, last February.

It strengthened his resolve that one day he could not only return to his homeland, but also become Libya's national football coach.

Gentile is making another visit to Libya this weekend where he will be accompanying 20 Italian businessmen. He is scheduled to visit Tolmeta, Leptis Magna and some of Libya's beautiful beaches, Mr Andreano said.

Gentile is also bound to visit the district of Cyrenaica and his birthplace at Dhara. He will arrive in Benghazi at noon on Sunday June 3 on Alitalia's inaugural flight to Benghazi, and on June 6 fly to the Libyan capital, Tripoli. He has also expressed the wish to visit Misurata and witness for himself the damage sustained by the city during last year's uprising.

The former Italian international is expected to meet



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Libya did the unexpected by beating Cameroon 1-0 at the neutral stadium of the 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifiers with a dramatic 90th minute goal by Hassan Sfaxi, in neighbouring Chad.



201 Cup Zan Hop Bea

African champion: their chances of reaching the World Cup when they beat Zambia 1-0 in Ndola in the 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifier on Saturday. The match ended with the tea spoils.



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representatives of the football teams of Benghazi and Tripoli, but only to say hello, and to see again the enthusiasm the Libyans have for football.

However, asked if Gentile would be meeting with the Libyan Football Federation, or whether he could become Libya's national coach Mr Andreano pointed out that this trip by Gentile has nothing to do with football. This is purely a pleasure trip, he said.

Pressed to say if Gentile had reached some agreement with the Libyan Federation or if the negative it was for financial reasons, Gentile's lawyer said they never even talked about money. He said the issue was never addressed.

He said he knew that the sum of 2.5 million Euros was mentioned by some quarters, "but this was never the sum requested by Claudio Gentile, and his staff, to become the new manager of the National team. What is fundamental for him is to achieve a good level of integration between his staff with the technical Libyan staff.

"Should any agreement be reached Gentile will bring with him an assistant coach, a goalkeepers' trainer, a sports doctor, two massage therapists, a nutritionist and a chef, that is, an international staff of the highest level to make Libyan football squad successful and help the team to reach the top level of international football within the next five to six years."

Mr Andreano said that what matters for Mr. Gentile is to realise a solid, stable and scientific planned project. It was this method that he used to lead Italy to the Olympic bronze medal.

For this reason, Gentile would wish to establish a top quality national sports centre and some national football schools in order to educate the youngsters in the game and give them a technical, social and international background.

The creation of a football school is at the very centre of Claudio Gentile's proposal.

Dario Vitale
(Marketing and Communication Office,
Società Italiana Sviluppo & Impresa srl.)

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