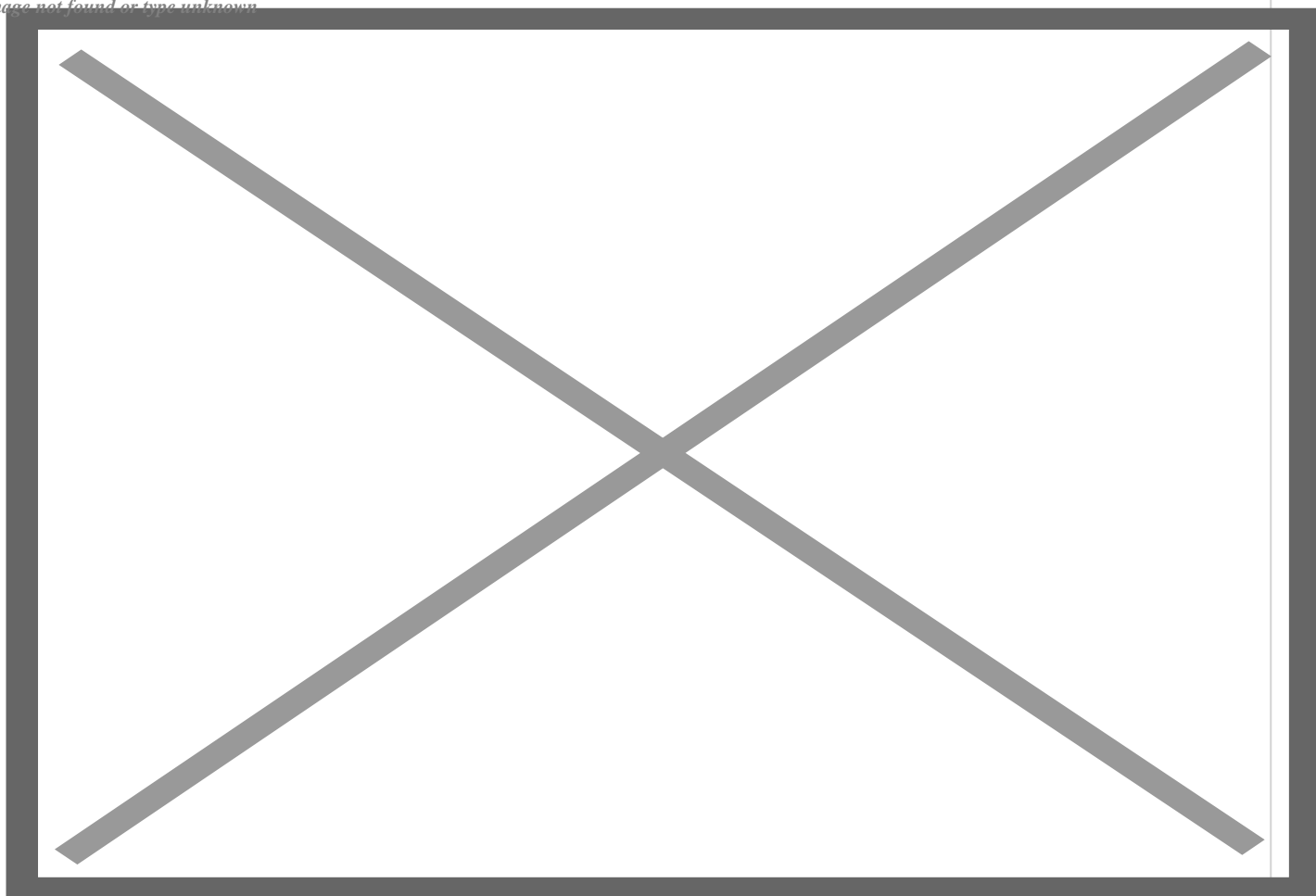


Fraccari: WBSC to financially support baseball revitalization in Cuba

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Fraccari proposed the creation of baseball clubs. Photo: Prensa Latina

Havana, January 17 (RHC)-- The president of the World Baseball and Softball Confederation (WBSC), Ricardo Fraccari affirmed Monday in Havana that the organization will grant financing to projects concerning the development of the sport of balls and strikes in Cuba.

"I am in Cuba to open doors, not to close them," said the Italian-born executive at a press conference held at the Latin American Stadium, which marked the official closing of his five-day visit to the largest Antillean island.

Fraccari assured the economic support of the WBSC to the integral strategy to revitalize Cuban baseball, from the lower categories to high performance.

The federator revealed that in the coming days the work signatures will be made effective that will allow in the short and medium term to grant financial support to the national sport of the Caribbean nation.

He also referred to the possibility of increasing the hiring of Cuban players in foreign leagues, and raised the need to develop a legal plan to protect the Federation economically in case of abandonment of the contracted players.

The top representative of the WBSC offered his support to Cuba in view of the visa difficulties they have faced to attend tournaments in the United States and Puerto Rico.

In this regard, he pointed out that the Confederation requires each organizing country to guarantee visas for all participants.

Another of the topics addressed by Fraccari was the idea of creating an international tournament at club level that would serve to make baseball more popular in the world and contribute to its return to the Olympic Games.

The tournament would have its first edition in 2023 and would be held in a format similar to the Champions League in soccer, where the champions of the different leagues would participate, starting in their continents until they reach the final phase.

The president of the world baseball and softball organization arrived in Havana on January 13 for an official visit to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the National Series, celebrated on January 14 with an exhibition game between the Industriales and Granma teams, the last champion.

His agenda also included exchanges with sports and administrative authorities of the island, as well as visits to baseball-related facilities.

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