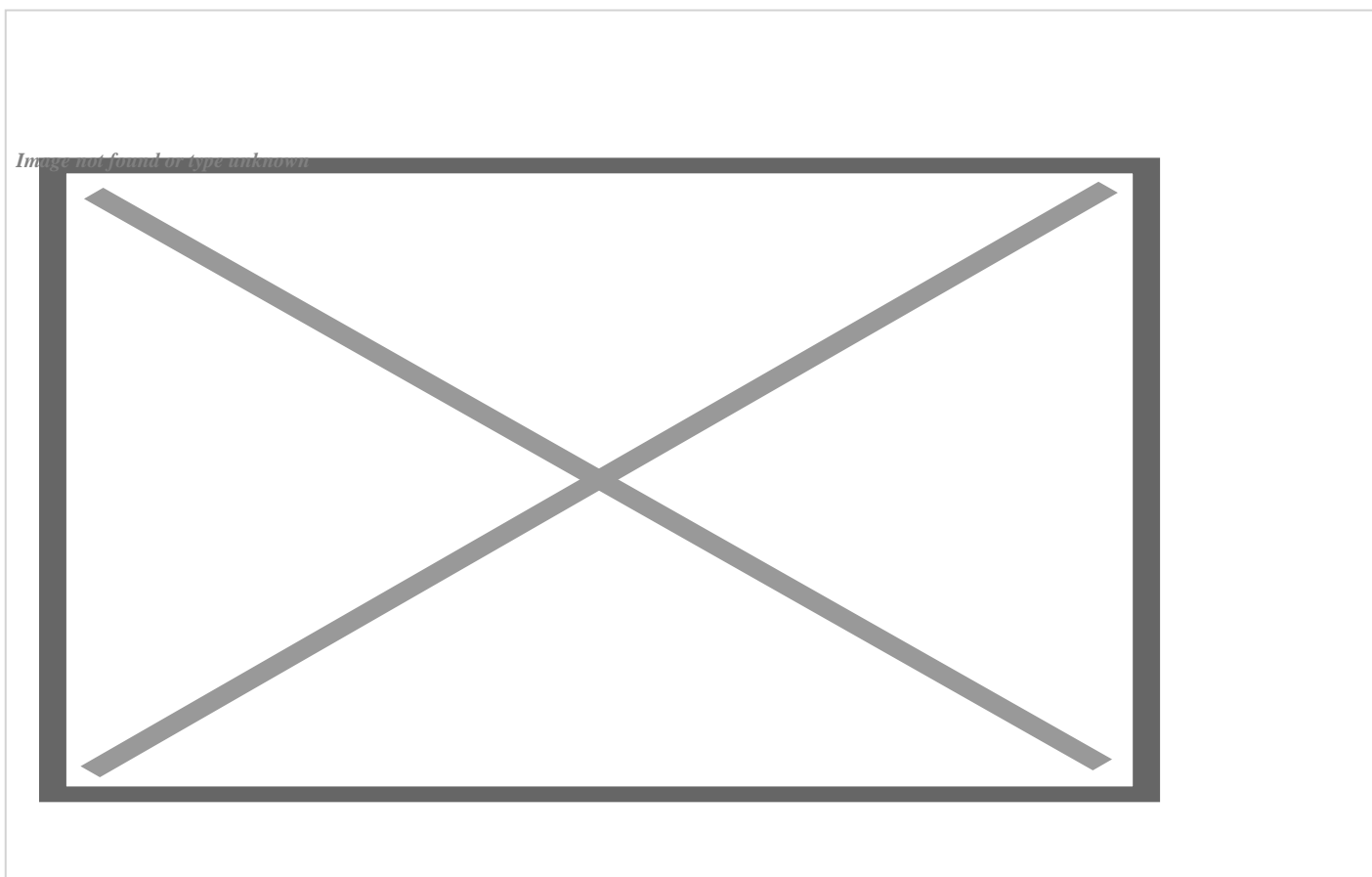


2030 Fifa World Cup to be played in six countries



Asuncion, October 5 (REU).- Morocco, Portugal and Spain will host the 2030 world soccer tournament, a unique tournament in which Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay will host the opening matches to celebrate the competition's 100th anniversary, Fifa said Wednesday.

It is the first time the World Cup, which Fifa described as global, will be held on three continents and six countries.

"The Fifa Council unanimously agreed that the single bid will be the combined bid of Morocco, Portugal and Spain, which will host the event in 2030 and automatically qualify from the allocation of existing places, Fifa said in a statement.

"Taking into account the historical context of the first Fifa World Cup (...), the Fifa Council further unanimously agreed to organize a unique centenary celebration ceremony in the country's capital Montevideo (...), as well as three cup matches in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay, respectively," it said.

In an unusual move away from traditional forms, the holding of the matches in South America was announced by Conmebol president Alejandro Dominguez and the heads of the soccer associations of the nations involved, ahead of Fifa's report.

"We believed big. The 2030 Centenario World Cup starts where it all began. Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay will host the inaugural matches of the #MundialCentenario!" wrote Dominguez on social network X.

"A 100th anniversary World Cup could not, should not fail to remember and not rise to the occasion, and that is how the full Fifa Council understood it," Dominguez later told a press conference.

"Uniting three continents to celebrate the centenary of the most beautiful sport in the world. Soccer unites six countries, a historic event and we are tremendously happy," Dominguez added.

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The head of the Paraguayan Football Association, Robert Harrison, said that the national teams of Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay are automatically qualified for the World Cup, without clarifying what will happen with the South American qualifiers.

The president of Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pou, celebrated the fact that the opening match of the tournament will be at the Centenario Stadium, which hosted the first World Cup and lifted the trophy on that occasion.

"100 years later, Uruguay and our Centenario will be at the center of the world's attention to live the inauguration of the #MundialCentenario 2030. This recognition does justice to those pioneers who built the history of soccer!" he also said in X.

The Argentine Football Association (AFA) affirmed that its national team will play the first match of the 2030 group stage at home and with its fans.

The 2022 World Cup, in which Argentina was crowned champion, was held in Qatar. Portugal and Morocco have never hosted a World Cup, while Spain last hosted in 1982.

"I am sure that together with Morocco and Portugal we will organize the best World Cup in history," said Pedro Rocha, acting president of the Royal Spanish Football Federation.

Spain gets to host the tournament weeks after its former boss, Luis Rubiales, was forced to resign over an alleged sexual assault at the women's World Cup.

Fifa also said the 2034 World Cup will be held in the Asia or Oceania region, and that member associations from those territories will be invited to bid to host the tournament.

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