

# *The WBSC can help Cuban ballplayers more*

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**Ricardo Fraccari President of the World Baseball Confederation**

Havana, January 15 (RHC/JIT)-- The president of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), Riccardo Fraccari, assured in Havana that his entity can support even more the insertion of Cuban players in several professional leagues of the planet.

Thus he responded to the request for criteria on the rupture by the U.S. government of the agreement between Major League Baseball (MLB) and the Cuban Baseball Federation, signed in December 2018 and canceled in April 2019.

We all know how the agreement broke down during the Donald Trump administration and it is an issue we have addressed at WBSC. But the problem can not be only the MLB, there are other leagues in which the Island's players can be inserted and we help them to play and return to their country, said the Italian federation.

What we saw in Mexico during the U-23 world championship in 2021 should not happen again. I am very happy because the authorities of the FCB and the Inder are looking in the direction of their athletes playing abroad and here, he added.

Fraccari also addressed the issue of the presence of the sport of balls and strikes on the Olympic stage, in which he said that the modernization of the sport intends to lead to a permanent space in the future calendar of these events.

Decreasing the number of participants and the length of the games, and delighting young people, are challenges still faced by the WBSC, even though the decisions taken in recent years have reduced the duration of the challenges by 45 minutes, for example.

Fraccari alerted baseball "puritans" that playing seven innings under the five rings could reduce the number of participants and the time of the games.

The possibility for Cuba to host a WBSC international event could come as early as 2024, as long as the requirements are met in an environment of growing international interest in hosting this type of event.

Regarding the development of baseball<sup>5</sup>, the executive highlighted its incredible development even in a continent with no baseball tradition such as Africa.

Asked about the WBSC's position on the diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games, the experienced leader said that Olympism should never be mixed with political issues or limit the participation of athletes.

Fraccari insisted that his visit to Havana has as objectives to participate in the celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the First National Baseball Series, as well as to evaluate the way in which the WBSC can support projects for the development of both sports on the island.

He will visit Cienfuegos on Sunday to tour baseball facilities and greet a dear friend: Antonio Muñoz, the Giant of Escambray.

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