

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **SOFTBALL MOVING FORWARD ON ITS OWN**

*Olympic Reinstatement Efforts Will Continue as Independent Sport*

PLANT CITY, FLORIDA (USA) – “The (International Softball Federation) has always acted as an independent sport, and presently plans to continue that internationally accepted practice.” That statement was part of a letter that Don Porter, the president of the sports’ world governing body, sent recently to International Baseball Federation President Riccardo Fraccari. The communication was intended to make clear softball’s position as it relates to seeking to be re-admitted to the programme of the Summer Olympics.

Mr. Fraccari had written to Mr. Porter stating that a joint baseball-softball bid is the “only way back into the Olympic program.” Last month at a meeting in Venezuela the ISF president received the unanimous support of the Board of Directors to continue plans to re-present softball – both women’s and men’s fast pitch – for consideration for the 2020 Olympic Games. A decision on the sports for that programme will be made in 2013.

Mr. Porter noted in his letter to the IBAF president that, “Softball has been an independently governed sport for many years and its independent and separate proposal was accepted in 1991 by the (International Olympic Committee) when softball was added to the Olympic programme beginning in 1996.”

He further noted that, “Softball, on its own, meets all criteria for inclusion as an Olympic medal sport, a position it has enjoyed through the 2008 Games in Beijing, which completed softball’s fourth Olympiad as a medal sport.”

The ISF ran a “BackSoftball” campaign aimed at getting the sport reinstated for the 2016 Olympics but was not among the two sports on the IOC Executive Board’s shortlist recommended last August for addition to those Games. Softball had first been left off the programme of the 2012 Olympics following a tie vote at the IOC Session in Singapore in July 2005.

The ISF is the world governing body of the sport as recognized by the International Olympic

Committee (IOC) and SportAccord (formerly the General Association of International Sports Federations). Softball (women's fast pitch) made its Olympic debut at the 1996 Games in Atlanta. There are 128 affiliated countries in the ISF and millions of participants in the sport worldwide.

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