

PRESS RELEASE

The Confederation of North, Central America
and Caribbean Association Football.



CONCACAF Appoints Members of Caribbean Professional League Task Force

Body of experts charged with examining feasibility of regional circuit

Monday, March 3, 2014 (Miami) – The Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) announced today the formation of a new task force to examine the feasibility of a potential Caribbean professional football league, as the Confederation deepens its commitment to the growth of the game across the region.

"I am certain that there are immense untapped opportunities for football in the Caribbean," said CONCACAF President Jeffrey Webb. "We need to evaluate thoroughly how best to convert potential into a viable structure that could create new futures for clubs, players, fans and the game as a whole."

Among those studying the prospects for growing the club game in the Caribbean are leading figures from the two biggest leagues in CONCACAF -- Don Garber, Commissioner of Major League Soccer, and Decio de Maria, President of Liga MX. In addition, England's Premier League will support the process in an advisory capacity.

"Our focus will be to analyze the feasibility of a sustainable business model – one that can serve as the cornerstone to build a league that provides a platform for Caribbean talent, as it develops equity and value in the long term," said Garber.

"Analyzing past attempts to develop such a project in the region will provide important information as we seek to create an entity that serves the good of the game. Any new plans must respect existing structures in each country and successfully fit into an already crowded international soccer calendar," said de Maria.

"The Premier League is honored to be one of the special advisers to this task force. We are making our entire executive team available to offer any help we can in realizing the potential for top-class professional football in the Caribbean," said Richard Scudamore, Chief Executive of the Premier League. "The region's football fans deserve it," he added.

The task force will analyze all the possible options for developing a sustainable league structure in the Caribbean, with the objective of improving playing standards and overall professionalism.

As some nations in the Caribbean possess established domestic leagues, the group will review current infrastructures and assess what competitive format would achieve the best outcomes for long-term success.

Dr. Yves Jean-Bart, President of the Haitian Football Federation, will chair the group.

The members are:

Dr. The Right Honourable Keith Mitchell (Prime Minister of Grenada)
The Right Honourable Edward Seaga, O.N., P.C. (former Prime Minister of Jamaica and Chairman of the Jamaican National Premier League)
Mr. Damien Hughes (General Secretary, Caribbean Football Union)
Mr. Simon Firth (Partner, Maples and Calder, Cayman Islands)
Mr. Don Garber (Commissioner, Major League Soccer)
Mr. David John Williams (Owner/President, W Connection Football Club, Trinidad and Tobago)
Mr. Decio de Maria (President, Liga MX)
The Honourable K.H. Randolph Horton, JP, MP (Speaker of the House of Assembly of Bermuda)
Mr. Randy Harris (President, Barbados Football Association)
Mr. James Johnson (Senior Manager Member Associations, FIFA)
Mr. Shaka Hislop (Football Commentator and Former Trinidad & Tobago National Team Captain)

Special advisors:

The Premier League (England)
Mr. Jefferson Slack (Senior Vice President, Global Business Development, IMG)
Mr. Kieran Foley (Group Head Marketing, Digicel)

“This is an outstanding group containing individuals with extensive experience and invaluable expertise from across the Caribbean, CONCACAF, and beyond,” said Webb. “I am looking forward to working with the task force as we focus on the challenge of truly advancing the game. It is a goal that can only benefit the whole of CONCACAF, and the football world in general.”

The task force will hold its first meeting on March 12 in Los Angeles.

There has been a previous attempt to institute a Caribbean league. From 1992-1994, clubs from as far north as Jamaica and south as Guyana competed in the Caribbean Professional Football League. After changing competitive formats and league name over its three seasons of play, the circuit ceased operations before the 1995 season.