

Cuba discusses new draft Constitution

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A far-reaching, popular debate regarding Cuba's new draft Constitution started last August 13th —anniversary of Fidel Castro's birth— and will last until November 15th.

This draft Constitution is the result of a hard work that has lasted years. Finally, the National Assembly of the People's Power (NAPP) —led by Raul Castro and President Miguel Diaz-Canel— had the final words in its writing. The resulting document was widely discussed in recent days and was subjected to some amendments. At the end, it was approved unanimously.

A total of 135,000 popular debates are expected to be carried out. All of them will be held in workplaces, neighborhoods, military units, and Cuban citizens abroad. Opinions will be taken into account. In this regard, the National Assembly of the People's Power will approve a final version that will be put to secret and direct voting of the electorate.

The current Constitution, with two major changes consulted with the population, has been in force for 40 years now. It was mandatory to change it and write a text that could reflect all the changes in the international arena and Cuba that sprang after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The distribution of the State power in the world went from bipolarity to multipolarity.

New phenomena of extraordinary importance such as the increasing threat to mankind of climate change, the collapse of capitalism in the financial swamp, the exponential stress of work exploitation, and the resources plundering by the capital are obvious worldwide. The cultural war of international capital against surrounding people —led by some leaders in the U.S.— is pretty serious; namely, the ongoing imperial attacks against Venezuela and Nicaragua.

However, the most important principles of Cuban socialism remain safe even though the market has now a major role in the domestic economy —it is still subjected to the State, though. Foreign investment has been boosted and has grown. Thousands of private business have flourished and private property has been given the green light in certain means of production and services. Every part of it triggers objective and subjective realities different from those existing when the Constitution of 1976 was adopted. Today, the Cuban society is much more educated, complex, and diverse. It needs a more inclusive regulatory framework. This new text does not include Communism among the goals to pursue in Cuba as the world correlation of political forces have changed a lot, but as the chairman of the NAPP Esteban Lazo stated: “(we) don’t give up on our principles.”

As a matter of fact, the text affirms that in Cuba is governing “the economy system based on the socialist property of the main means of production by the people as the leading rule of the main property, and the planned direction of the economy regulating and monitoring the market according to the interest of the society.”

And the “Cuban Communist Party, unique, follower of the ideas of Jose Marti and Fidel (Castro), Lenin and Marx, organized force of the Cuban nation based on its democratic character and continual bond with the people, is the leading and superior force of the society and the State.” Not even water is this clear. Though it is recommended to read the whole text to better understand its profound Cuban and international revolutionary tradition. “The Republic of Cuba bases its international relations on the exercise of its sovereignty and the anti-imperialist, international principles.”

Simultaneously, the document submitted to the people’s approval seeks to set the principles that will not jeopardize, but ease everything related to the market to strengthen and make sustainable the economy of Cuba.

The definition of same-sex marriage is a huge step forward in human beings and a universal concept of love. But it will certainly face enormous challenges and heated debates in the people, believers or not.

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