
Cuba Strengthens State Entrepreneurial System, Eases Private Sector

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Cuba is improving the state entrepreneurial system due to its key role in economic development, and it is making the rules that govern the private sector more flexible, Marino Murillo, president of the Commission for the Implementation of Guidelines, told the People's Power National Assembly (Parliament) on Saturday.

When speaking at Havana's Convention Center at the extraordinary session of the Cuban Parliament to analyze economic matters, the head of the Commission in charge of following up on the strategies to update the country's socioeconomic system noted that measures have been taken in both sectors.

According to Murillo, the state entrepreneurial system has undergone several transformations since 2011, when the 6th Congress of the Communist Party approved the 274 Guidelines for the Economic and Social Policy.

Work is underway in 22 new medium- and short-term impact (this year) measures to boost the state enterprise, which is facing financial difficulties and less flexibility than non-state forms of production, actions that are pending for approval, Murillo noted.

Among the initiatives is the chaining of the companies linked to the Mariel Special Development Zone (ZEDM, in Spanish), a key component in the projects to attract foreign investments, which will allow Cuba to diversify markets, promote exports and reduce imports based on an increase in domestic production.

Regarding the private sector, Murillo said that additional rules will be announced soon to make it more flexible, although without renouncing the control of that sector, which is considered a complement of the socialist state enterprise.

Over the past few months, rules were announced to make self-employment more flexible, considering that there are nearly 600,000 self-employed workers in Cuba.

According to Murillo, the country's leadership has established other priorities in the implementation of the guidelines until 2021, in addition to those related to the state enterprise, including the monetary ordering with the currency unification and exchange and the conclusion of the Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030.

Murillo also referred to the comprehensive revision and improvement of the policies that support the socioeconomic update, considering that some of them did not have the expected results.

Regarding the current situation, marked by economic challenges that to a great extent are the result of Washington's hostility and the tightening of the economic blockade of Cuba for nearly 60 years, he noted that it should not be interpreted necessarily as an obstacle to the implementation of all 206 policies approved by the Congress of the Communist Party.

Although the situation is complex, progress does not always depend on a financial problem but on our capacity and intelligence for implementation, Murillo added.
