

# *New electricity rates in Cuba will protect vulnerable families*

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**Minister of Economy and Planning Alejandro Gil. Prensa Latina Photo**

Havana,]December 14 (RHC) The new electricity tariffs to be implemented in Cuba as of January 1 as part of the monetary order process will protect vulnerable families and government practice in place on the island.

Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Alejandro Gil explained that the increase in prices will occur in the energy sector and other areas due to the elimination of the monetary and exchange duality foreseen for next year.

Gil, who is also minister of Economy and Planning, commented that raising the rates is not a strategy of the country to decrease the demand in the middle of the complex economic scenario of the country, where the US blockade constitutes an obstacle for the purchase of fuel.

So much so that by 2021 we foresee a 2.5 percent increase in consumption concerning this year, which is included in the economic plan that will be submitted to the National Assembly for a vote next week, Gil said when he spoke Sunday in a special broadcast on Cuban television.

The aim is to express with more objectivity the production costs and encourage savings, but all based on social justice stressed the Deputy Prime Minister.

However, he pointed out that the Cuban government chose to apply a 'socialist formula' to protect those with lower consumption.

In that sense, the head of the Commission for the Implementation of the Guidelines of the Cuban Communist Party, Marino Murillo, recalled that although the electricity tariff will increase, so will the population's income.

Although the so-called Ordering Task foresees the elimination of subsidies and undue gratuity, in this case, those households that consume less than 350 kilowatts, which are 89 percent of the families, will continue to be subsidized, Murillo said.

He pointed out that of the 30 billion pesos foreseen to subsidize vulnerable people, about 18 billion will be destined for the electric energy sector.

For his part, Liván Arronte, Minister of Energy and Mines, referred to how the country's energy matrix is composed, where technologies with different types of fuels are used: national crude, imported fuel, diesel, and to a lesser extent, renewable sources.

With the arrival of the new year, the Cuban convertible peso (CUC) will disappear in Cuba, and only the Cuban peso (CUP) will be able to be used for all the operations in the island, with an exchange rate of 24 per 1 to the dollar.

This reorganization process includes, in addition to the elimination of the double monetary and exchange circulation, the suppression of excessive subsidies, and the transformation of the income of pensioners, workers, and social security beneficiaries.

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