

# *Accountability: A close link between delegates and constituents*

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By María Josefina Arce

From the middle of next month until November 30, a genuine act of our participatory democracy will take place in Cuba: the rendering of accounts by the delegates of the People's Power of their management to their electors, an exercise supported by the current Constitution.

These assemblies in the communities are a close and broad link between the inhabitants and those elected to represent their interests and respond to their concerns.

Ana María Mari Machado, vice-president of the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba, has

pointed out that this is a process in which everyone is listened to and criteria are exchanged in order to improve the conditions where we live.

Hence, it is also a space to raise the most pressing problems of the neighborhoods, those that have their own solution and those that transcend that environment and are the responsibility of various administrative entities.

This exercise of broad citizen participation has been present since 1974, when the People's Power system was launched in an experimental way in Matanzas, and two years later it was extended to the whole Cuban territory.

But it is not the only way to channel problems; it is the delegate's responsibility to be attentive and always ready to attend to his constituents, either in his weekly office or anywhere in the neighborhood.

The delegates who will be accountable for their management as from October were elected at the polls last November, in a process that began throughout the country in October 2022 with the assemblies to designate the candidates in each community.

Among them are workers linked to production and services, health, education, legal, sports and culture, as well as peasants, students and housewives.

This exercise of participatory democracy is a duty, but also a right of Cubans to evaluate the work of those they have chosen to represent their interests.

Cuban authorities emphasize that accountability is a direct way for citizens to participate in the exercise of power, with their concerns or suggestions regarding the solution of various problems, both of the community, the territory and the nation.

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