

# *Penal Process Against Canadian Entrepreneurs and Cuban Officials Ready for Sentencing*

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Havana, June 30 (RHC) — Havana's Provincial Court has declared a penal process against Canadian entrepreneurs and former Cuban officials ready for sentencing with the prosecution demanding from eight to 20 prison years for the accused, plus a 91-million dollar compensation for the damage inflicted to Cuban economic and tax entities.

An article published in Granma newspaper explains that during a public and oral hearing June 9th to the 21st at Havana's Provincial Court addressed the crimes of bribery, actions to the detriment of economic activity, falsification of banking and trade documents, criminal deception, trafficking in currency and tax evasion against Canadian entrepreneurs Vahe Cy Tokmakjian, Marco Vinicio Puche Rodríguez and Claudio Franco Vetere.

Vahe Cy Tokmokjian was accused of using fraudulent and corruption-oriented mechanisms to benefit from trade negotiations with Cuban entities, thus causing considerable damage to Cuban economy. He was also accused of unauthorized operations related to financial intermediation, of illegally transferring huge sums of money out of the country, of altering registered information and affidavits in order to evade

taxes, as well as of giving money to several workers, who were involved in activities foreign to those legally authorized or were not hired by Cuban entities.

Also accused were former Cuban directives from the former Sugar Ministry, including a deputy minister, from the Mining industry and from an International Economic Association entity, as well as workers from the Tokmakjian Group operating in Cuba.

The prosecution demanded 20 prison years for former sugar deputy minister Nelson Ricardo Labrada and 15 year-imprisonment for Vahe Cy Tokmakjian, and from 8 to 12 years in prison for the rest of the accused.

The prosecution also demanded that the accused give a 91-million-dollar compensation for economic damage inflicted on several Cuban entities and the tax system, which would be provided with the goods and money occupied during the investigation to Vahe Cy Tokmakjian and the rest of the companies involved in the process.

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