

# *Constitutional fight*

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By Guillermo Alvarado

As of next July 5, when its work ends and the Chilean Constitutional Commission is dissolved, a two-month period of arduous struggle begins in the field to ensure that the text of the new Magna Carta is approved in the September 4 plebiscite.

In this way, the Fundamental Law imposed by Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, which lasted from September 11, 1973 to March 11, 1990, and which laid the foundations for the installation of neoliberal governments, would be left behind.

The fight for the popular consultation, where the vote will be mandatory, is expected to be difficult because the business sectors, the political right wing and the mass media have campaigned to confuse various sectors of society, urging them to disapprove of the new Constitution.

Paradoxically, there is great confusion within the indigenous communities, which are precisely among those who stand to gain the most from the change of the also known as the Law of Laws.

This was confirmed by several Constituents representing native peoples, among them Elisa Loncón, in the Metropolitan Region, and Adolfo Millabur, from Bio Bio, quoted by the Chilean newspaper El Mostrador.

"The communities in the south have legitimate doubts about the new Constitution, and one perceives that the negative narrative that was installed from the beginning has generated uncertainty," said Millabur.

There are at least 50 articles that address the rights and guarantees of indigenous peoples, such as land restoration, the principle of plurinationality, the creation of territorial autonomies, reserved seats in collegiate bodies and ancestral justice systems.

The former president of the Constituent Commission, Elisa Loncón, attributed to the government of Sebastián Piñera the responsibility for not duly informing the native communities. There was a lack of civic education, she added.

In general, a deep work must be done so that the "I approve" option is imposed on September 4, but much more in the indigenous peoples that traditionally have been on the margin of the great national decisions, because that is what the conservative politicians wanted.

Of the total inhabitants of the South American country, 12.8 percent are part of an ancestral community, that is, some 2,286,000 people, most of them concentrated in the Metropolitan Region and La Araucanía.

Until today, their identity, culture, history and traditions have been outside the constitutional framework, which in various ways limits the exercise of their rights, an anomaly that must end.

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