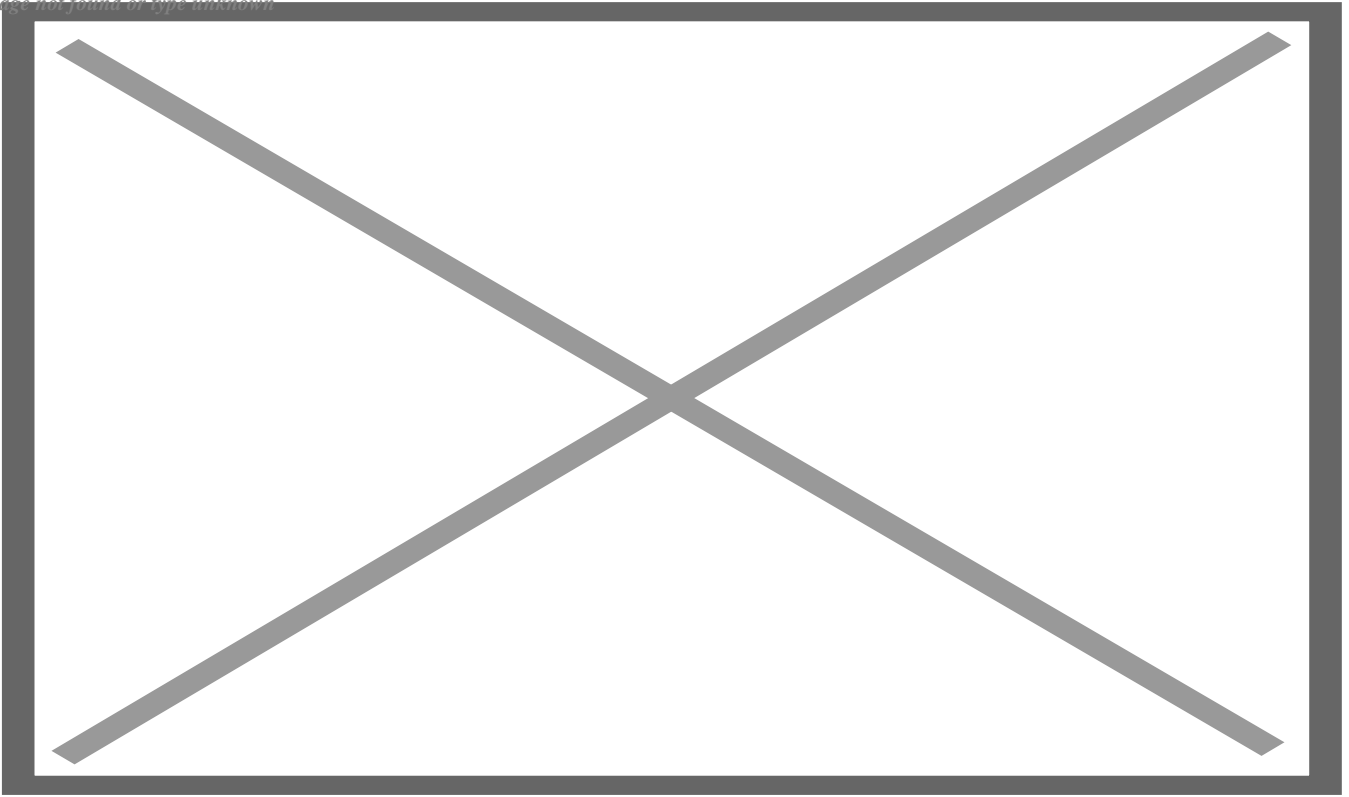


# *Legal norms are approved to be presented in the Cuban Parliament*

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**Photo: Estudios Revolución**

Havana, October 2 (RHC) -- At a meeting of the Council of Ministers, headed by Miguel Díaz-Canel, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and president of the Republic, three draft bills were approved for presentation at the next ordinary session of the National Assembly of People's Power in December.

The Presidency reports on its website that the highest organ of government gave course to the draft Public Health Law, as well as the Policy for the approval of the Special Social Security Regime for the Agricultural and Forestry Sector and the draft Decree Law; and the draft Decree Law of the Protected

Areas System, the latter two to be approved also by the Council of State.

During the meeting, it was revealed that the first proposal ratifies Public Health as a right of the people, and it develops constitutional rights and guarantees and duties of the people.

This was explained by Tania Margarita Hernández, First Deputy Minister of Public Health, who added that it updates the obligations of the State and the Government to guarantee accessible, free and quality services; establishes functions and obligations at the local level; deepens the concept of "One Health", which was not in the previous Law, and allows the integration of several disciplines.

In its articles," he said, "the bill includes, among other aspects, the end-of-life determinations; the principles and purposes of Public Health; as well as the functioning of the activities of the National Health System".

He also mentioned that, for its preparation, multiple consultations were carried out, both with specialists from the health sector and others closely related to it, and international documents and legal instruments of various kinds were evaluated.

Regarding the Policy for the approval of the Special Social Security Regime for the Agricultural and Forestry Sector, the First Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Security, Yaniris Hernández Vento said that it broadens and unifies the coverage of the risks to be protected, as well as provides for a differentiated treatment for the accreditation of the time of services of the agricultural worker directly linked to production.

"Currently, there are three special Social Security regimes in force for economic actors in the agricultural and forestry sector, which generates inequalities in aspects such as the mode of financing, the scope of protection, the rights granted and the coverage of risks," she added.

She said that this proposal unifies and adapts these current regulations.

For his part, Ydael Pérez Brito, Minister of Agriculture, commented that the proposals that have been made were agreed with the producers, and said that the document is more inclusive and beneficial for all.

Meanwhile, Julio García Pérez, president of the AZCUBA business group, pointed out that this is an issue that will have a very favorable impact, especially for many people in rural areas, since now all the economic actors will be on equal terms.

The draft Decree Law of the System of Protected Areas has among its novelties that for the first time it is established that the declared protected areas are part of the Natural Heritage of the Nation, while recognizing other conservation measures for areas not declared as protected, such as biological corridors and the Turquino Plan.

In this regard, the Prime Minister of the Republic, Manuel Marrero Cruz, highlighted the role of the administrator of protected areas, a new figure that favors attention to these places.

He also called attention to the fact that some of the protected areas are the scene of illegal activities, especially logging and poaching, becoming scenarios of different types of indiscipline.

The Council of Ministers meeting also approved other documents related to the social and economic development of the nation, such as a proposal of actions to mitigate the current problems of rural areas in Cuba, and the report on compliance with the Housing Policy.

The approved actions aim at creating a more favorable environment for the permanence of its inhabitants in rural areas; increasing endogenous food production for local self-sufficiency, as well as increasing income and improving people's living conditions.

Among other tasks, to be carried out by the different agencies of the Central State Administration, it is foreseen to guarantee sectorial investments to be executed in rural areas, with adequate exploitation; to facilitate the acquisition of housing, construction materials, equipment and other incentives for professionals who live and work in those places.

Likewise, it is intended to recover the agricultural communities founded by the Revolution, in addition to creating teaching units that bring students of Technical-Professional and University Education in agricultural specialties closer to the productive forms of rural areas.

As part of the presentation of the report on compliance with the Housing Policy, detailed and critical information was presented regarding the delays in the implementation of this Program.

Vivian Rodríguez Salazar, general director of Housing of the Ministry of Construction, pointed out that since 2019, when the referred Policy began to be implemented, 127 thousand 345 houses have been concluded in Cuba and rehabilitation actions have been carried out in 106 thousand 332.

The current housing deficit is more than 800 thousand housing units. The provinces with the most complex situation are Havana, Holguin, Santiago de Cuba and Camagüey.

Rodríguez Salazar commented that among the main problems preventing further progress in the implementation of the policy are the non-compliance with subsidies, the non-materialization of investments planned to increase the production of construction materials, and the deficit of equipment necessary to expand the construction capacity and its sustainability.

He considered that the Housing Policy in the period is evaluated in setback because, despite compliance in 2019 and 2020, in the following two years the same results were not achieved and currently compliance with the current year's plan is at risk.

The members of the Council of Ministers approved, among other measures, the redesign in each territory of the strategy for the production of materials, with an increase in local raw materials that guarantee autonomy in their production and respond to the needs of the Program. (Source: ACN)

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