

Chilean Communist Party refuses to sign agreement on Constitutional referendum



Santiago de Chile, November 15 (RHC)-- Guillermo Teillier, president of the Communist Party of Chile (PC), insisted on Friday that citizens had to play an important role in the process of writing a new Constitution.

Referring to the agreement signed on Friday by 11 opposition parties and officials -- but which the Communist Party refused to sign -- Teillier nevertheless welcomed a referendum as "an undeniable step forward" to define the mechanism that will allow drafting a new Constitution.

He said that although the CP would not sign the agreement, the party is "going to participate in the whole process, undoubtedly, in Parliament, the Chamber of Deputies, the Constitution Commission, and then in the whole process that comes forward. The struggle is not over, the struggle continues," he said in an interview for Radio Nuevo Mundo station.

Teillier stated that the CP maintains points of difference, because "the two-third quorum agreed so the matters to be discussed were approved and what will be part of the new Constitution, is very high." He stressed the importance of not only creating the conditions for the referendum, but also responding to the

situation of workers, their low wages and pensions, health problems, the elderly and others.

He also insisted that no leftist party political activist could stay away from this process: "We all have to supervise (the process), but above all the social movement, the workers' organizations, which led and forced the government to completely surrender their positions."

Chile's lawmakers on Friday agreed to hold a referendum next April on replacing the constitution drafted by Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990), bowing to demands of millions who want the country's social and economic model overhauled.

Chileans will be asked whether they approve the idea of a new constitution and whether current lawmakers should serve on the commission that would redraft the document.

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