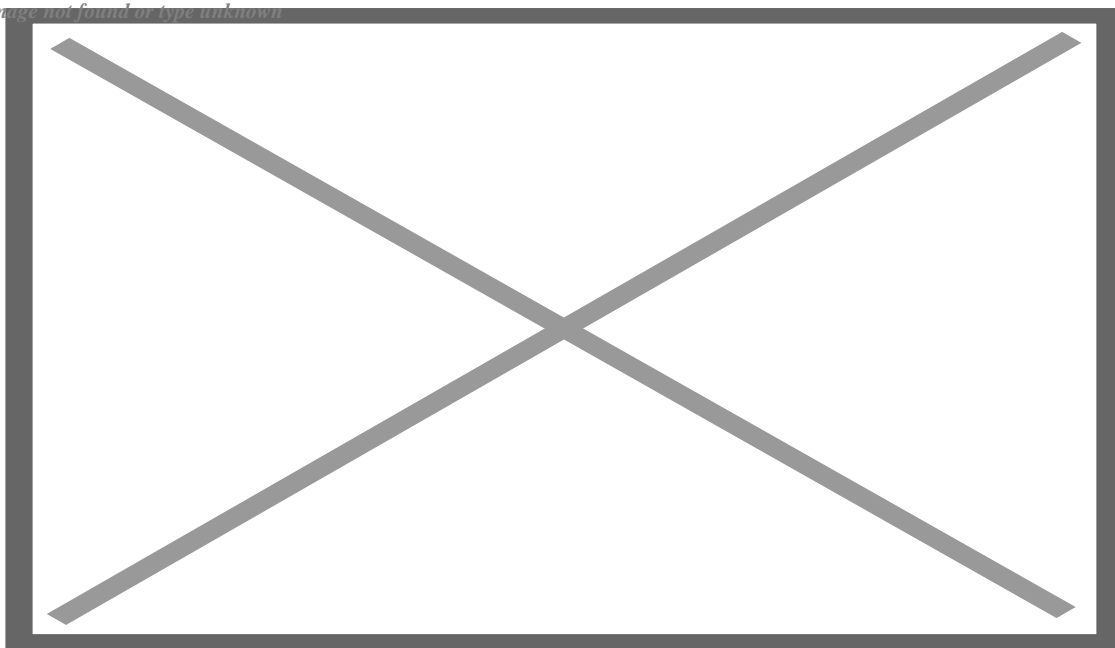


Feeling the reality at the base and always listening

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National Assembly of People's Power. Photo: Irene Pérez/ Cubadebate.

By Roberto Morejón

With a minimum of formalities and a great desire to listen, candidates for deputies walk through Cuban streets and communities to learn more about the expectations, shortages and achievements in the occupations of their constituents.

These are not protocol visits and even less to promise solutions to a wide range of problems that are difficult to solve under Cuba's current economic conditions.

Precisely, explaining the scope of the U.S. blockade, the impediments in the access to international credits and the derivations of the pandemic together with the effects of world inflation, are the objectives of the aspirants to the National Assembly of People's Power.

Recently nominated in extraordinary meetings of the municipal government assemblies, the men and women who will most probably be the next deputies for a five-year term, prefer to listen rather than talk.

In schools, universities, factories, workshops, highlands, villages far from the provincial capitals, peasant settlements and businesses of self-employed workers, the 470 candidates are listening to their concerns, answering doubts and accepting suggestions.

They do so on issues to be discussed in the legislature and invite their interlocutors to redouble their work, the only way to improve the welfare of the nation.

As the main organ of state power in Cuba represents a diverse society, the candidates for seats in parliament contribute to the country's readiness for the popular vote at the polls on March 26.

On that day, voters will determine whether they agree with the nominations, and the experience derived from the candidates' meetings with the communities, a process set for the penultimate week of next month, will be important for their decision.

During this period, they will also visit tourist centers, polyclinics, homes for the elderly and the physically handicapped, as well as service units.

There, as well as in the other locations, they will learn about the challenges of fulfilling the mandates and innovations to replace imports or to get out of the impasse productions stopped due to the acute material limitations.

The next Legislature, made up of 221 grassroots delegates, 135 from the provinces and 114 from the national level, will have an even greater knowledge of the complex reality of Cubans, their successes and conflicts.

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