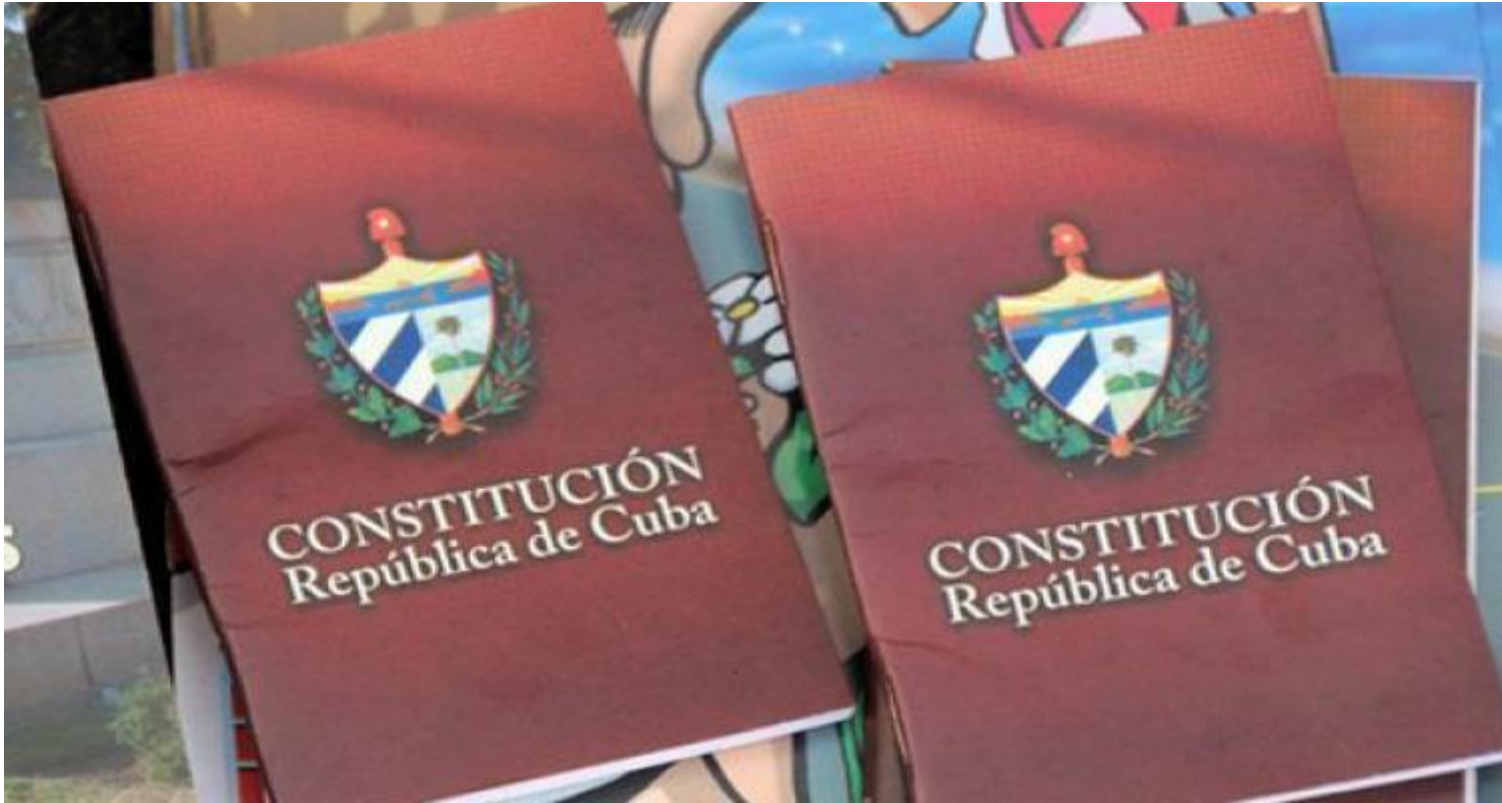


# *Cuban lawmakers debate content of draft Constitution*

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Havana, July 21 (RHC)— Cuban lawmakers debated the content of the proposed text of a new Constitution, in a plenary session of the Parliament held Saturday in Havana's Convention Center.

In making a general description of the content of the draft text, during the first ordinary session of the 9th Legislature, the Secretary of the Council of State, Homero Acosta, said that the process is seeking a total reform of the Constitution.

"The draft of the new Magna Carta will be submitted to popular consultation, providing Cubans with full participation in the drafting, a process without precedents that gives a profoundly democratic example to the world," said Acosta.

The proposed text ratifies the principles of the socialist character of the Revolution, the guiding role of the Communist Party, and the irreversibility of the economic and political model.

The new Constitution would create the post of a prime minister alongside the president, splitting the roles of head of government and head of state.

In the meantime, it recognizes forms of property not included in the previous charter, it brings the protection of citizen's guarantees to higher standards, reinforcing the right to equality and opposes all

types of discrimination, and makes explicit the principle of not discriminating based on gender identity.

It establishes that Cuba is a Socialist State of Law, which seeks collective and individual prosperity.

It also creates a new presumption of innocence in the justice system.

The draft also proposes that marriage be defined as the union between two individuals, thus paving the way for the legalization of same-sex marriage.

The proposed Magna Carta includes a preamble, 224 articles, divided into 11 titles, 24 chapters and 16 sections,

The debate held Saturday elicited over 80 interventions from deputies. The debates of Cuban lawmakers will continue on Sunday.

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