

Cuba's New Constitution Will Recognize Private Property: Report

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Ruling Communist Party newspaper Granma published a summary of the new constitution on Saturday, saying a draft it had seen included 224 articles, up from 137 previously.

Cuba will officially recognize private property under a new constitution that also creates the position of prime minister alongside the president, state media reported on Saturday.

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Cuba's current constitution only recognizes state, cooperative, farmer, personal and joint-venture property.

But former President Raul Castro's market reforms, aimed at boosting the economy and making socialism more sustainable, prompted hundreds of thousands of Cubans to become [self-employed since 2010](#), in new privately-owned businesses ranging from restaurants to beauty salons.

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constitution on Saturday, saying a draft it had seen included 224 articles, up from 137 previously.

Granma said it enshrined recognition of both the free market and private property in Cuba's new Magna Carta, Reuters reports.

That could mean enhanced legal protections for Cuba's fledgling entrepreneurs, and foreign investors, even though Granma said the constitution reaffirmed that central planning and state enterprise are the pillars of the economy overall.

It also noted the Communist Party would remain as Cuba's dominant political force.

According to Granma, the government commission revamping the constitution will present its draft to the national assembly when it meets next week. It will then be put to a national referendum, expected later this year.

The commission is headed by Castro, 87, who remains head of the Communist Party. New President Miguel Diaz-Canel, who sits on the commission, is also expected to announce his council of ministers at the assembly meeting.

Apart from introducing the position of prime minister, dividing the roles of head of state and head of government, the new constitution makes the president head of the assembly and imposes a term limit on the presidency of two consecutive five-year periods.

Castro, who together with his late brother Fidel Castro ruled the country for nearly 60 years, had proposed the limit in 2011, as part of a bid to modernize the political system.

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