
REFERENDUM FOR THE CONSTITUTION: The Strength is in the Neighborhood

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This polling place in one of the neighborhoods of Cojímar is one of thousands across the country; it might seem insignificant to the national panorama, but in fact its lack of great singularities can give a perfect idea on the nation's mood.

«There hasn't been the slightest of problems here, Mr. journalist. Everything has gone as expected. At this hour, noon, almost everybody has already voted. We'll count the votes in the afternoon. I am sure the Constitution will be approved here», comments one of the members at the board.

The urn, as it's already tradition, is escorted by pioneers. «When I was a little girl, in capitalism, at the very few elections I witnessed, it was the military who decided. Polling places seemed barracks. I believe it was Fidel who had this wonderful idea: that children, as a symbol of purity, watch over the urns. My husband is physically impaired, these same pioneers will shortly go to the house so that he can vote», says Rosa Pereira who just moved in to Havana and for the first time exercises her right in this city.

For Esnaida Moncada, neighbor of this area for over thirty years, this is a unique moment: «I was very young when the other Constitution was approved, coming to vote more than forty years later for a new constitution is a privilege that I don't know if I'll ever have again. Do you know why I am here? For three reasons: because I have civic responsibility, because I am a follower of Martí and Fidel, and because I want to support our new president. Did you watch the message passed in television yesterday? Very pretty, very heartfelt, speaking to people with simplicity and respect. This president is in the streets! We must support him in these complex times.

Exiting the polling place, one of the children who waited his time to salute next to the urn asked his mother:

—Why I cannot vote?

—Because you are very small yet, you will have your chance one day. But don't worry, I vote for you and for me.

—At least please allow me to put the ballot in the box for you.

And so they did.
