
Petro's Resolve Amid Attacks on Reforms

By: Arnaldo Musa / Special for CubaSi
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Not a day of rest, not a minute without facing a new turmoil — this is how one could describe the governance of Gustavo Petro in Colombia. Nevertheless, he has had the distinction of leading a country that, for the first time, has a president who confronts the oligarchy without fear.

However, a Congress, where some former allies have been swayed by ambition, has blocked many of his most crucial efforts, rejecting numerous reforms that could significantly improve Colombians' lives.

On the very day that tens of thousands of his supporters took to the streets in major cities to back the labor reform, eight conservative senators from a small committee put the bill on hold — a scenario that has repeatedly played out with other proposals, as previously mentioned.

Still, the president, resilient and determined — a former guerrilla member — has achieved significant milestones. These include securing the largest minimum wage increase in history, redistributing 60,000

hectares of land once controlled by drug traffickers to farmers, building a university in Catatumbo, expanding road infrastructure, increasing the education budget, improving social policies, particularly in health, housing, and environmental protection, and advancing a comprehensive peace policy, engaging with major armed groups, albeit with limited progress.

Today, his primary goal is to push for a public referendum to secure approval for his reforms. However, this initiative must first navigate the Congressional process, which could take up to four months.

The referendum will consist of 10 to 12 straightforward questions with "Yes" or "No" answers. One example might be: "Do you agree that the night shift should start at 6:00 p.m.?"

Key topics include additional pay for Sunday work, job stability in Colombia, and nighttime wage premiums. It also addresses labor formalization for single mothers, compensation for rural service year doctors in training, and student apprenticeship contracts, among other essential issues.

This official strategy is irreversible, aiming to ensure the viability of this and other reforms.

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