



Chilean President Piñera Promises New Constitution

Amidst an explosive new wave of violent mass demonstrations on Tuesday, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera addressed the country in a [televised speech](#) from La Moneda Palace, which houses the office of the presidency. In a plea for national unity, Piñera vowed to make three major social agreements, one of which was a promise for a new constitution. He also opened the possibility of rehiring retired police officers to bring order to the streets.



“We have decided to open the possibility of reintegration to Carabiniers [national police] and Investigations [of] Police who have had a recent and prominent retirement [in order] to augment the capabilities of Order and Security Forces [combined force of Carabiniers and Investigation Police], without a doubt this is not enough,” Piñera began.

“Given the reality that we Chileans are living, this grave situation of violence threatens our democracy against our rule of law, but especially [against] those most vulnerable,” Piñera continued.

Piñera made it clear that the violent demonstrations have “to end,” adding that their end “depends on effort and commitment.”

“All political forces, social organizations, Chileans ... have to be around three major national agreements,” Piñera pleaded. “First, an agreement for peace and against violence that allows us to condemn the excessive violence that has caused so much damage.”

“Second, an agreement for justice in order to have a robust social agenda towards a fairer Chile — a Chile with greater equal opportunity and privilege. [And third,] an agreement for a new constitution, but with a clear and effective citizen participation along with a plebiscite [national referendum] so that the citizens can participate and have the final say in order to generate a grand social pact,” he elaborated.

Piñera closed his remarks by stating that he has “instructed the Ministry of Interior and State Security and National Security to file complaints tomorrow [Wednesday] against those who have encouraged or participated in the carrying out of the crimes.” He concluded, “I call on all of our compatriots to unite our wills and hearts to reach an agreement for peace and for a new constitution for Chile.”

President Piñera is a member of Chile Vamos, the country’s governing coalition of conservative and conservative-leaning political parties. He is staunchly opposed by the protesters and the country’s four leading opposition leftist parties: the Socialist Party of Chile, the Party for Democracy, Social Democrat Radical Party (all three of which are members of the Socialist International), and the Communist Party of Chile, which belongs to both the Foro de São Paulo (Sao Paulo Forum) and the International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties.

These socialist and communist parties have all called for Piñera to resign or for a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, or both.



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on November 13, 2019

Piñera's proposal calls for the country's congress to draft the new constitution, which would then be submitted to the people in a national referendum for final approval. However, the socialist and communist parties have made it clear that the only method they will accept for drafting a new constitution is through a constituent assembly.

In a public declaration signed by all of Chile's leftist parties, including the Communist Party and Socialist Party, the parties stated: "The constituent assembly is the most democratic mechanism to ensure a wide citizen participation that gives full legitimacy to the process."

A constituent assembly would be a type of people's constitutional convention that would be outside the country's current structures of government and regarded as being above the jurisdiction of the national congress, presidency, and judiciary branches of the government.

Instead of having the country's national deputies and senators draft a new constitution, delegates to the constituent assembly would instead be chosen or elected from the country's various social advocacy and community organizations, many of which are leftist, aligned with or controlled by socialists and communists.

It is unlikely that protesters or the opposition communist, socialist, and other leftist parties would agree to any new constitution drafted in large part or co-equally by members of National Renewal, Independent Democratic Union, and Political Evolution — the country's three leading conservative and center-right parties that make up Chile Vamos.

Piñera's attempt to appease the demands of protesters and the opposition socialist and communist parties in calling for a new constitution has also not been well received from those on the right.

Following Piñera's remarks Tuesday evening, *The New American* reached out to Dr. Carlos Casanova, a Venezuelan lawyer and professor of philosophy of law at the Universidad Santo Tomás and the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. "The concession of the new Constitution is a big mistake," Dr. Casanova said. "Moreover, it is outrageous that such a serious country like Chile is on its knees because of Piñera's lack of determination, when it has the power to put down this rebellion in two days." He added, "One problem is that the judiciary is largely in revolutionary hands."

Piñera's willingness to appease the protesters and communists by agreeing to draft a new constitution coupled with his refusal to activate the Chilean military, in light of Tuesday's violent mass demonstrations and widespread arson, is unlikely to have any positive impact on quelling the protesters or acquiescing their demands. Instead, it is more likely to embolden the protests and communists even more, knowing that if enough pressure is applied, Piñera is willing to make concessions. Given the present circumstances, such weakness can be dangerous, potentially inflaming an already volatile situation. *The New American* will continue to monitor and cover the situation in Chile as it continues to unfold.

Image: Screenshot from [Facebook video of President Sebastián Piñera addressing the country on November 12, 2019](#)

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