



GOBIERNO DE CHILE
MINISTERIO SECRETARÍA GENERAL DE GOBIERNO
SECRETARÍA DE COMUNICACIÓN Y CULTURA

CHILE

NEWS

International Press Department • Communication and Culture Secretariat • December 17, 2004 • No.63



On national radio and television channels, President Ricardo Lagos announced compensatory measures for the victims of political imprisonment and torture. La Moneda Palace.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ★ **The National Human Rights Institute will be an autonomous and decentralized entity, with independent legal status and its own resources. It will promote respect for fundamental rights and assume responsibility for the maintenance and confidentiality of the information on the subject accumulated in Chile, from the archives of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission – instituted in 1990 by President Patricio Aylwin and also known as the Rettig Commission – to the work of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture.**
- ★ **The church in Poconchile, a pre-Inca village in the country's extreme north, was founded in the late 16th century. An earthquake severely damaged its oak roof and adobe walls, but the community and the Altiplano Foundation organized a restoration effort – but insisted on using ancestral construction techniques. The meticulous work took a year to complete, but today, the original lines of the church shine through as if it were newly built.**

“Never again to experience it, never again to deny it” On November 28, President Ricardo Lagos officially released the contents of the report from the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture, as well as announcing the compensatory measures that will be provided by the State to the 28,000 victims. The proposal includes the creation of the National Human Rights Institute.

The bill, which was submitted to Congress on an urgent basis for immediate debate, was approved by the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies in record time. It proposes collective and symbolic measures expressing moral recognition on the part of the State and society of those who suffered illegitimate imprisonment and abuses. The measures include the reestablishment of the victims' full rights as citizens – especially for those accused of crimes they never committed – a life pension of approximately 190 dollars per month, which will increase after the age of 70; State-guaranteed continuation of their studies without cost for those who were forced to interrupt them; preferential treatment from housing assistance programs; and free care from public health institutions. In addition, those who are suffering from physical problems resulting from acts of torture will receive medical and technical support and rehabilitation.

The President noted that the report “has been able to enter, 31 years later, into a dark dimension of our national life, a profound abyss of suffering and torment.” Its aim, he explained, is to acknowledge what occurred and to remove the unhealthy veil that has covered the abuses, “not in order to revive rancor and divisions, but to strengthen the unity and cohesion of all Chileans. Because we have been able to look the entire truth in the face, we can begin to overcome the pain, to heal the wounds,” the President stressed.

Barely three weeks after its publication, the report has already had a profound impact on Chilean society and its institutions. Air Force, Navy, Carabineros and Investigative Forces have followed the Army's early lead in acknowledging their participation in acts of torture, although under differing circumstances.

Some of the communications media also issued their own “mea culpas” after the report noted the “absence of organs of public opinion capable of overseeing the actions committed by agents of the State or persons in its service.” The latest entity to announce its position regarding the document was the Supreme Court, which acknowledged the breakdown of the rule of law in 1973 and the impossibility of exercising full legal sovereignty during that period.

FACTS

Interior Minister José Miguel Insulza traveled to Washington to receive the 2004 W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award, presented by the National Democratic Institute to the Chilean government for its successful work in recovering democracy and consolidating its institutions after the dictatorship.

In its Social Panorama report for 2004, ECLAC noted that Chile was the only Latin American country to fulfill its millennium goal of reducing extreme poverty.

Accumulated exports as of November of this year have expanded by 50% compared to the same month in 2003, representing an increase of nearly 10 billion dollars. As a result, the country's net balance of trade reached a record level of nearly 8 billion dollars.

A ranking prepared by the periodical *América Economía* placed four Chilean banks among the top six in the region. The publication noted the strength of the local banking system, the banks' high profitability indexes and the quality of the services offered by Chilean banking institutions.

The U.S. financial group Cantor Fitzgerald, the world's largest provider of financial services, has chosen Chile for the site of its Latin American operations center for the trading of greenhouse gas emissions offsets, or carbon credits, through its subsidiary CO2e.

Wine Spectator, the sector's leading specialized publication, ranked Clos Apalta, from Chile's Casa Lapostolle winery, in second place on its list of the world's 100 best wines. In addition, it placed "Almaviva" – a joint venture of the Chilean winery Concha y Toro and Barón Philippe de Rothschild – and "Don Melchor," also from Concha y Toro, in 16th and 26th positions, respectively.



Santiago inaugurates modern highway

State-of-the-art highways and modern infrastructural projects promise to change the face of the Chilean capital by 2006. As a first step, December 1 saw the opening of the Autopista Central (Central Highway), the first urban roadway in Latin America to incorporate an electronic toll collection system that operates while vehicles are in free flow. It is also the world's only highway featuring an integrated system to direct traffic to three alternate urban routes, which are currently under construction in the capital. The aim is to reduce congestion and increase traffic efficiency in Santiago, thus improving the quality of life for its inhabitants.

A mechanism installed in vehicles, called *TeleVía* (TAG), electronically transfers information every time a toll point is crossed. The bill is sent to users' homes at the end of the month. Drivers may also purchase daily passes to use the highway.

The Autopista Central will feature three lanes in each direction, monitoring systems and state-of-the-art roadway technology. The 45 kilometers which have already been completed allow drivers to reduce their travel times by more than 40%. By the first half of 2006, the system will include 60 kilometers of express lanes, more than 80 kilometers of service lanes and 24-hour service along the route.



These highways form part of a larger infrastructural plan which includes an additional three highways; the doubling of the current underground Metro network from 40 to 84 kilometers by 2006, including 34 new stations; and the implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transantiago, which will modernize passenger transportation in the capital city.

Public purchasing: participation and transparency

Two years after its creation, the public purchasing system ChileCompra has become a modern virtual market or e-marketplace, radically changing the way public agencies acquire needed products and services. The new platform saves resources, promotes efficiency in management and furthers the modernization and transparency of the State.

In late October, new Public Purchasing Regulations went into effect, stipulating that all State entities must use the new portal to carry out their acquisitions. The system's basic principles – openness, universality and non-discrimination – guarantee broad access to the State's purchasing transactions for both suppliers and citizens.



Advances have also been made in the introduction of electronic invoices: 16 government offices have already been equipped to receive them through the portal. A further step has been the creation of a National Registry of Government Suppliers, which will be maintained by the Santiago Chamber of Commerce. The registry will permit the verification of data from suppliers, who will also be able to update their information through a single channel.

QUOTATIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The task of working toward a more integrated South American Community will be undertaken "on the basis of a common geographical identity which obliges us to make efforts to work in a unified manner and to take advantage of our geography. In Chile's case what is implicit is that we serve as a bridge to the Asia Pacific countries, and accordingly we also need a way to reach the Atlantic; thus, through the countries facing the Atlantic, we can enjoy our own advantages."

In his address at the South American Summit Cuzco, Peru. December 8, 2004

The work of the Commission "is a very important step, but the human rights violations constitute a chapter that will not be closed. The wounds will always remain. However, we are talking about a country that is democratically stronger and more solid, which the world regards with a certain respect because it is venturing to do something that is difficult to do."

Interview with the newspaper *El País* December 5, 2004

"I think that people speak well of Chile and its fortitude in daring to face the truth. The report places a reality before us that cannot be ignored: political imprisonment and torture were an institutional practice of the State, which is absolutely unacceptable and alien to our country's historical tradition (...). The work of this Commission in Chile and the publication of its Report have gone much farther than many imagined. (This may be) the most important act to provide reparations to the victims in their pain. The silence has ended, forgetfulness has been banished, and the dignity of each one of them has been recovered."

In a column in the Brazilian newspaper *O Globo*. December 2, 2004

"Neoliberalism is not the answer when it maintains that economic growth by itself alone can resolve the long-term issues. Certainly, economic growth is essential, but it will only bring us to full development if there are public policies that direct this growth to the benefit of those who need it most, bringing about a society with higher levels of social cohesiveness."

In a column in *Folha of Sao Paulo*. December 1, 2004

The portal currently facilitates access to more than 300,000 sales opportunities, with 84,000 registered suppliers and 655 public entities carrying out purchases, including 123 municipalities which have gradually begun to use the platform. As of January 1, 2005, the Armed Forces and Carabineros are required by the law to incorporate themselves into the system as well.

The portal's impact has been explosive: while an average of 1.7 bids were entered for each offer in 2002, approximately seven are received today, translating into increased competition and greater market efficiency. The figure for 2004 is expected to show a total transaction volume of some 1.5 billion dollars.

A campaign of love

Hard work and emotion came together as on few other occasions during the 27 hours of Chile's 2004 Telethon, a massive television crusade which has inspired and mobilized Chileans for the past 26 years, raising funds for some 20,000 disabled children currently served by rehabilitation centers throughout the country.

While each year's financial goal is an ambitious target, the bar was set twice as high this year: since the Telethon will not be held next year due to the presidential elections, the 2004 event had to raise enough funds to cover the rehabilitation centers' budgets for two years. Nevertheless, the target was not only reached but exceeded by more than 20%, with the collection of some 22 million dollars.

Led by the campaign's driving force, Chilean television host Mario Kreutzberger or "Don Francisco," artists and television personalities carried out promotional tours in numerous cities, went out into the streets and even spent the entire night engaged in their efforts to persuade people to donate money. Disabled children and adults gave firsthand testimony on the screen, and Chileans, especially those with modest incomes, once again responded to the call for solidarity.



Television viewers around the country expectantly watched a highly unusual tennis doubles match held to raise funds, featuring a team made up of President Lagos and Olympic medalist Fernando González facing Don Francisco and the entertainer Horacio de la Peña. In front of packed stands on the National Stadium's Central Court, with the temperature at 30° Celsius, the presidential team – the undisputed public favorite – emerged victorious with a score of 6-3, thanks to the Socialist leader's "powerful right," as several media commentators joked.



An animated view of Chilean children

With amusing characters and puppets that entertain both children and adults, children's shows produced in Chile have become favorites among the smallest television viewers – and even those who are not so small – by offering a fresh and updated view of their world and their interests.

The lineup includes shows such as *31 Minutos*, an unconventional and chaotic news program populated by sagacious marionettes; *Villa Dulce* and *Clarita*, the first Chilean animated series to portray everyday situations and personal problems with which

OVERHEARD

"Businesspeople are not afraid of risk, but we do not like uncertainty. Chile is a country where the rule of law is operational and where work is respected, and we are happy with that."

Manuel Pizarro, President of Endesa Spain.
November 29, 2004

"Chile has the highest level of legal security in Latin America from the point of view of investments. It must have the lowest tax evasion rate within Latin America (...) and it has developed markets of international extension."

Gustavo Wurzel, director of the Boston Consulting Group for the Southern Cone.
November 29, 2004

"I believe that Chile will come out of APEC and its bilaterals with an increased leadership role (...). We do not have a better friend in the region than Chile, and we will continue our work in this spirit."

Craig A. Kelly, U.S. Ambassador to Chile.
November 27, 2004

"We would like to see Chilean investments in the forestry sector and in the fruit-growing industry. You have been very successful in these two lines of business. Mexico needs investment and technology, and Chile has shown that it has successful enterprises in this area."

Fernando Canales, Minister of Economy of Mexico. November 22, 2004

CHILEANS AROUND THE WORLD

Chilean artist Fernando Krahn's cartoons in *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona) have been published in a book which anthologizes 20 years of his work in that newspaper. His powerful lines and devastating sense of irony have left their mark on publications such as *Esquire*, *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic Monthly* in the United States; *La Repubblica* (Italy), *Stern* (Germany) and *Tages-Anzeiger* (Switzerland).

Since December 5, the Klovicevi Dvori Gallery in Zagreb, Croatia, has displayed the traveling exhibition *Arte chileno traspasando fronteras* (Chilean Art Crossing Borders), which will also be presented in Romania, the Czech Republic and Poland. Offering works from 79 artists, the exhibition attracted more than 400 participants to its inauguration, along with all of the local communications media.

Photographer Elisa Díaz achieved significant recognition at the 64th International Photographic Salon of Japan, where she competed with a cyanotype (a 19th-century print preparation technique) against 6,544 photographers from 41 participating countries.

the audience can fully identify; and *Mira tú*, an educational program with a lively and engaging guide.

Innovation, creativity and the certainty that today's children are radically different from those of previous generations form the premises of these shows. The characters were conceived for an audience which has developed a critical view of media offerings and has become increasingly well-informed and demanding. Taking advantage of these characteristics, the new shows have incorporated subjects previously reserved for adults, such as politics, citizen participation, ecology, divorce, and social problems.

In a further step, *31 Minutos* has already begun the internationalization process: since September, "Tulio Triviño", "Juan Carlos Bodoque" and all of the ingenuity and irony of the "star news program of Chilean television" have been broadcast by the cable channel *Nickelodeon* to several other Latin American countries. Discs containing songs from the program's two seasons have sold thousands of copies in Chile, and Aplaplac, the production company behind the puppets, is preparing a movie based on the show.



Clarita

Promising ideas

Who says that Chilean young people are apathetic and non-participatory? While some may fit this description, there are also many others with good ideas and an interest in creating ingenious projects to help their peers and their communities. All that is necessary is to give them an opportunity.

This is what the Ministry of Education and the Bicentennial Commission had in mind when they created the first "School Solidarity" competition, which met with an enthusiastic response, attracting 300 projects from around the country.

The winners included an advisory project for the Seventh Region community of Villa Alegre, in which the locality's secondary school assists with the cultivation of family gardens; a solidarity-based peer tutoring system, established by a school in the Ninth Region, which has helped reduce grade repetition as well as the school dropout rate; and the "Nuevo Mundo Cyclists," from the school of the same name, located in Mulchén, Eighth Region. Mounted on their bicycles, the students operate a traveling lending library in a low-income area with below-average levels of schooling.

Chile's Undersecretary of Education, Adriana Hornkohl, praised the enormous enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by the schools, stating that the organizers "carried out this competition within the framework of one of President Lagos' most cherished aims: that the Chile of the Bicentennial will be very different from that of 100 years earlier. That it will be a more humane, fraternal and harmonious Chile. A Chile that is participative and generous, open and tolerant."

PEOPLE OF CHILE

Faces on the Plaza de Armas

In these sweltering summer days in Santiago – when temperatures can reach 35° Celsius – an alternative to the ubiquitous ice cream is a cold glass of *mote con huesillos* purchased from the vendors who set up their carts around the capital's Plaza de Armas. The beverage is made from dried peaches or *huesillos*, boiled and hulled wheat (*mote*) along with the cooking juices from the process, served well-chilled: a refreshing delicacy, according to connoisseurs.



Colorful carts in the form of little boats also offer a wide variety of snacks, such as peanuts – salted, sugared or in the shell – almonds, raisins, caramel apples and gumdrops bathed in sugar.

The city's main plaza brings together the practitioners of old-fashioned professions, most of them handed down from generation to generation. They are traditional people who exercise their time-honored occupations with dedication and caring, earning the respect of Santiago's citizens.

A common sight are the shoe-shine men, who can make even the most worn-out pair of shoes gleam again with their enthusiastic, rhythmic brushing. Friendly, playful and with a strong sense of solidarity, they display a profound knowledge of the city as well as current events in politics and sports – and in fact, of anything that is asked of them.



The esplanade across from the Cathedral is the territory of the portrait artists and instant photographers, who have immortalized hundreds of adults over the decades with their talents, along with thousands of children mounted on realistic-looking horses.

From time to time, the music of the organ grinders calls out to spectators of all ages, who gather spontaneously to see the trained parrot bow and twirl and purchase pinwheels and brilliantly-colored balls.

In fact, the organ grinders have become an official institution: to protect their

profession, they have formed a cultural corporation with the aim of preserving the little more than 30 instruments which have survived the passage of time.

Maestro Manuel Lizana, a member of one of the four small families who maintain the tradition, has crafted four new instruments with government support. He is Latin America's only hand organ craftsman, and perhaps the only one remaining in the world.



But one cannot speak of the organ grinders without mentioning their faithful companions, the "chinchineros". These "one-man bands," existing only in Chile, passionately play a bass drum carried on their backs, leaping and turning to the rhythm of the percussion and the foxtrots, waltzes, popular songs and cuecas

(Chilean folk dances) played by the organ grinders. Dating back to the 1930s, the chinchineros continue to enliven even the most serious passers-by in the city center with their contagious enthusiasm.



AGENDA

- ★ January 10-12: State Visit of the President of Bulgaria, Georgi Parvanov. Santiago
- ★ January 16-18: Official Visit of President Ricardo Lagos to Egypt.
- ★ January 19-21: Official Visit of President Ricardo Lagos to India.
- ★ January 23-25: Official Visit of President Ricardo Lagos to Germany.
- ★ January 24-28: Economic Cooperation Forum between Chile and Italy. Santiago
- ★ January 27: State Visit of the President of Spain, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. Santiago

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Javier Luis Egaña, Director Communication and Culture Secretariat / TEXT: Maureen Schäffer, International Press Department / PHOTOGRAPHS: Presidencia de la República / Autopista Central
COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE SECRETARIAT / MINISTRY GENERAL GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
depreint@segegob.cl / www.segegob.cl / www.gobiernodechile.cl