



GOBIERNO DE CHILE

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President Michelle Bachelet at the Thirty-Fourth Regular Session of Delegates from the Inter-American Commission of Women, CIM-OAS.

Municipal elections: support for the government

As is traditional in Chile, the municipal elections on Sunday, October 26 proceeded in an atmosphere of complete calm throughout the country, as Chilean voters chose the mayors and council members who will lead Chile's townships for the next four years. By the end of the day, the Concertación coalition had reconfirmed its status as the nation's leading political movement.

The final results gave 45.24% to the Concertación in the elections for council members, compared to 35.99% for the opposition pact, Alliance for Chile. In the mayoral contests, the Alliance obtained 40.56% of the vote, closely followed by the Concertación with 38.46%. Analyzing the results with Concertación party leaders, President Michelle Bachelet exhorted them to redouble their efforts to achieve unity and make further progress toward realizing the dreams of Chilean men and women: "The citizens have spoken, and they have sent us a clear message: work together for a Chile with more justice and solidarity, more effective integration and a more progressive spirit."



One innovation in the current election was the use of "assisted voting" for persons with disabilities. For the first time, disabled persons had the right to be assisted by a third party – a trusted adult who is also a registered voter – while casting their ballots. This fulfills one of the commitments in the President's program of government: advancing in equality and non-discrimination, as set forth in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Twenty-year anniversary of the "No"



"No hate, no violence, no fear. No more. Vote No!" On October 5, 1988, thousands of Chileans responded to this call, lining up in an orderly manner to vote against the proposition raised by the commanders in chief of the Armed Forces: approving Augusto Pinochet's continuance in office as President for eight more years.

The military regime had categorically rejected the opposition's proposal to hold free elections. Rather than boycotting the referendum, however, the "No" coalition – the Concertación de Partidos por el No – chose to act in accordance with the rules imposed by the regime.

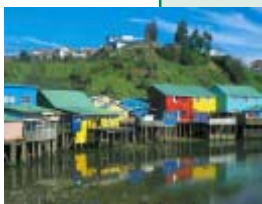
¿DID YOU KNOW?

★ Chile supplies lily bulbs and calla lily tubers to Holland, the world capital of the floral market, representing 4% of its total production (three million units per year). The process carried out in Chile involves micropropagation or in vitro reproduction, using material shipped from the Netherlands.

★ The island of Chiloé, in Los Lagos Region, has been identified by the *Lonely Planet* tourist guides as the world's third most attractive destination. The publication describes the southern locale as "a verdant archipelago with a landscape of misty farmlands and remote forests." It further points to the island's wealth of historic churches, ancient mythology and folklore, natural beauty, and its unique cuisine.

★ Chile has 48 National Reserves and 15 Natural Monuments. Together with the country's 33 National Parks, they cover a total surface area of approximately 14 million hectares, representing 19% of the national territory.

★ The Australian duo of Koby Abberton and Ryan Hipewood emerged victorious in the 2008 Punta Lobos World Tow-In Surf Competition, held in Pichilemu, in central Chile, from October 25 to November 2. A total of 48 participants competed.



QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT BACHELET

"The signing of this agreement that we have just undertaken, which is so broad and comprehensive in scope, has been possible only because Costa Rica and Chile share very deep common ideals, convictions, principles and objectives."

Upon signing the Comprehensive Association Agreement.
San José, October 28, 2008.

"It is extremely valuable that after 18 years, the Concertación has received a renewed demonstration of confidence from the citizens."

On the results of the municipal elections.
Santiago, October 26, 2008.

"In 2005, 172 young Chileans received scholarships to study abroad. This year it will be more than a thousand; next year it will be 2,500, and in 2010 we will reach 3,300. Thus, over the course of a decade we will have contributed to the specialized education and training of more than 30,000 people."

At the presentation of the Chile Bicentennial Scholarships.
Santiago, October 23, 2008.

"As an administration, we will continue on the course we have defined, which is always to place the people's interests above any other consideration in our public policies."

In response to the international financial situation.
Santiago, October 21, 2008.

"This encounter is taking place after 54 years of uninterrupted relations, culminating a process of constructing ever-closer ties, which has led us to propose giving a new impulse to our bilateral relations, promoting interchange and cooperation in a wide range of areas."

After signing agreements with King Abdullah II of Jordan.
La Moneda Palace.
Santiago, October 20, 2008.

For the first time in its history, Chile received a visit from the Monarchs of Jordan, King Abdullah II and Queen Rania. During the State Visit, important agreements were signed in the areas of public works, investments, and scientific and cultural cooperation.

The King and the President expressed their agreement on "adherence to the norms and principles of international law with respect to the peaceful resolution of conflicts" in the Middle East.



The day of the vote was extremely tense but calm. A total of 7,251,943 citizens – more than 97% of registered voters– cast their ballots. The vote count proceeded slowly, and the authorities released incomplete and inconsistent information. The Concertación had its own calculation system, however, and the advantage of the "No" quickly became clear. Finally, the government was forced to acknowledge its defeat: 54.7% for the "No," with only 43.1% voting "Sí."

"The dictatorship was defeated on the very playing field it had established with the aim of prolonging itself," recalled Patricio Aylwin, then serving as the Concertación's spokesman. On December 11, 1989, Aylwin was elected as the first President of the newly recovered democracy.

Commemorating the anniversary, President Bachelet stated: "We celebrate the triumph of reason over force, the most moving demonstration that can be made by a people determined to achieve peace and liberty, vanquishing arrogance and pride. It was the triumph of the democrats over the combined forces of the dictatorship, wealth and control of the media."



Tour to Central America

From October 28 to 31, President Bachelet carried out two important visits, traveling to Costa Rica and El Salvador with an agenda aimed at strengthening Chile's economic ties with Central America. The President also participated in the 18th Ibero-American Summit.

In her State Visit to Costa Rica, she signed a Comprehensive Association Agreement, Chile's first with a Central American nation. The accord will permit the development of an institutional framework for all spheres of the bilateral relationship, as well as instances for political, economic, cooperative and cultural dialogue. It also sets up an Association Council tasked with monitoring the two countries' relations and advancing Latin American integration, multilateralism, and ties with Asia Pacific and other regional forums. In addition, the accord will allow joint activities to promote social development.



At the Ibero-American Summit in San Salvador, the President issued a forceful call to participating countries, urging them to carry out concrete measures to protect the most vulnerable sectors of society, given the magnitude of the current world financial crisis.

She stressed the need to provide the developing economies with "emergency liquidity"; reform the regulation and oversight of the international financial system; and "make the multilateral institutions more democratic and enhance their governability." Later, during her Official Visit to El Salvador, the President emphasized cooperation in the area of public safety as well as advances in bilateral accords addressing maritime issues, science and technology, senior citizens, civil registries and the Supreme Courts of Justice.

FACTS

On October 9, President Bachelet presented the first thousand English Scholarships for professionals and technical specialists, sponsored by Corfo's InvestChile training program. The program's goal is to enable 6,000 people to become proficient in the language for their work by the time of the country's bicentennial.

According to a World Bank report, Chile leads the Human Opportunity Index for children and adolescents in Latin America, with Chileans up to age 16 enjoying greater equity in access to education and basic services. Covering 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, the survey reflects data on 200 million children.

The security of Chile's skies has been certified through two audits carried out by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the United States' Federal Aviation Administration. Among the 5,000 aspects evaluated – including airline companies, maintenance firms and the certification of simulators – not a single area of concern was noted. The audits are carried out in all countries, and their results are made available to the public.

The Guardian's recent list of the five most attractive routes for travelers in the Americas included Chile's Carretera Austral (Southern Highway). The 1,240-kilometer roadway, which extends from Puerto Montt in Los Lagos Region to Villa O'Higgins in Aysén, includes stretches on ferries and traverses landscapes of ancient forests, glaciers and fjords.

Economy: social responsibility

“Amid the international crisis, we will not cut back the resources aimed at individuals, but increase them. In the current circumstances, this is an announcement which few countries' Ministers of Finance can make,” stated Chile's Minister Andrés Velasco, referring to the bill for the country's 2009 national budget, currently under consideration in Congress. The proposed budget focuses on maintaining the administration's hallmark of social responsibility, raising overall public spending by 5.7% compared to 2008, in line with long-term income trends. Social expenditures – those which reach the people and expand the opportunities available to individuals – will increase by 7.8%.



For the second consecutive year, the greatest expansion is seen in the funds dedicated to education. These will increase by more than 450 million dollars, with the aim of ensuring equal opportunities for all students. Through the Bicentennial Fund for Human Capital, the country will finance 2,500 scholarships allowing students to complete their educations abroad. Additional budgetary priorities include the construction of 900 child care centers –

quintupling the supply of day care over four years–; the provision of benefits to more than 800,000 people through the Pension Reform's solidarity pension system; the delivery of more than 140,000 housing units for needy families; and the paving of 350 kilometers of roads and alleys to improve the quality of life for local people.

With a funding increase of 118 million dollars in health care –an area which has expanded by a factor of 13 under the Concertación administrations since 1990– the new budget will provide over ten million Chileans with access to primary health care and add 500 specialized doctors to the system throughout Chile. Investment in public works – which reached 1.358 billion dollars during the 2000-2006 period – will rise by 14.6%, allowing the country to improve its infrastructure and interconnectivity. Resources for innovation, which totaled 136 million dollars in 2008, will grow by 20%, of which 40 million dollars will be aimed at regions outside the capital.



Extra help

The measures announced on November 4 by President Bachelet to protect small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the middle class – hit hard by the world financial crisis – were welcomed as a life-giving breath of fresh air. A package of 1.15 billion dollars will be aimed at increasing resources for the sector, providing guarantees and protecting jobs, as well as stimulating demand and helping to finance home purchases by middle-income families.

The measure joins the initiative announced in October, which allocated 850 million dollars to ensure an adequate flow of liquidity in the financial system in support of SMEs.

OVERHEARD

"Chile is a key leader in the American hemisphere, demonstrating to the smaller countries that the only path to development is integration with the international economy."

Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica.
San José, October 28, 2008.

"We think that Chile will be one of the countries with the strongest growth in the future, this is clear."

César Alierta, president of Telefónica España.
Santiago, October 24, 2008.

"She (President Michelle Bachelet) is an admirable woman. I know that she works very hard to assure that everyone in Chile has opportunities."

Barack Obama, U.S. presidential candidate.
Miami, October 21, 2008.

"Chile and Jordan are separated by six time zones and more than 13,000 kilometers, but we are close neighbors when it comes to global economic integration. We seek the progressive expansion of economic freedom, boosted by innovation and strong competitiveness in global markets."

Abdullah II, King of Jordan.
In his remarks to the Chile-Jordan Business Encounter.
Santiago, October 21, 2008.

"This confirms the dynamism of the relationship and our joint efforts. The secret is in the synergy between the public and private sectors. Argentine entrepreneurs are already choosing Chile, and Chilean businesspeople are also doing their part. In the context of the international financial crisis, this business mission has come at precisely the right moment."

Jorge Taiana, Foreign Minister of Argentina.
At the seminar "Chile and Argentina: Strategic Partners for Growth."
Santiago, October 20, 2008.



Recognizing original peoples

After 18 years of deliberation in Congress, Chile has taken a historic step: ratifying Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), the only international treaty making specific reference to indigenous peoples. The measure comes in partial fulfillment of Chile's indigenous policy "Re-conocer: A Social Compact for Multiculturalism" (whereby "re-conocer" means both "recognizing" and "getting to know" other cultural



groups), announced in April by President Bachelet. The policy includes an action plan for recognizing indigenous peoples and promoting their participation, development and integration (see *Chile News* N° 93).



The international convention establishes the concept of an "indigenous people," describing the cultural, social, economic and historical circumstances which distinguish them as such. It also sets forth a compendium of political rights, including recognition and respect for their own institutions; the right to have their customs

taken into account under common law by the prevailing legal and judicial systems; the right to lands, territory and natural resources, recognizing the collective right of property based on ancestral titles and the duty to protect these; and additional rights in the areas of employment, education, social security and health care. The measure will enter into force on September 15, 2009.

The initiative continues the work undertaken by the Concertación coalition administrations since 1990, when President Patricio Aylwin signed the Nueva Imperial Agreement, a first step in which the government and indigenous peoples agreed to "travel together on the same path, to make Chile a fair and inclusive society and a democratic homeland for all of the sons and daughters of this territory."

Yet the efforts went even further. In 1993, a new Indigenous Law legally recognized the original peoples as culturally and historically differentiated entities for the first time. With this, the National Commission for Indigenous Development (Conadi) was constituted in 1994.

Caring for newborns

Thanks to its excellent progress in reducing infant mortality, Chile has been chosen to lead the Latin American and Caribbean initiative of the campaign "Act Now for Mothers and Children" (Actuemos ya por las Madres y los Hijos), in which Brazil is also participating. Announced in September by President Bachelet and Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, the program aims to achieve UN Millennium Objectives four and five – reducing infant mortality and improving maternal health – by 2015.

Coordinated in Chile by the Ministry of Health, the initiative is framed within the "Alliance for the Health of Mothers, Newborns and Children," which brings together more than 250 organizations from around the world. Its objectives are to

CHILEANS AROUND THE WORLD

At the seminar "Vital Voices of the Americas: Women as a Bridge to a More Prosperous Future," President Michelle Bachelet was honored with the Global Trailblazer Award, a distinction for outstanding leadership.

Minister Andrés Velasco was named "Best Latin American Finance Minister of the Year" by the periodical *Emerging Markets*, which surveyed economists, bankers and investors throughout the region. It is the first time that a Chilean has received this distinction.

The secretary general of the OAS, José Miguel Insulza, was presented with the Washington Office for Latin America (WOLA) Award, in recognition of his efforts to "revitalize" the hemispheric organization.

José Arenas, an acoustic engineer from Austral University, will work with NASA to help develop a new generation of Mars-bound launch vehicles, called Ares 1. His task will be to reduce vibrations within the spacecraft.

Alfredo Castro won the Best Actor award at the Latin American Film Festival in Tokyo, for his leading role in the film *Tony Manero*.

The group Kudai took the prize for Best Pop Artist of the Year, as well as Best Group or Duo, at the 2008 MTV ceremony in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Time magazine has named the posthumous novel *2666* by author Roberto Bolaño the best book of 2008, calling it "a masterpiece, the electrifying literary event of the year."

AGENDA

- ★ **November 10:** Thirty-Fourth Regular Session of the Inter-American Commission on Women (CIM), Santiago.
- ★ **November 20-21:** State Visit of the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderón. Santiago.
- ★ **November 21-24:** President Bachelet attends the APEC Summit. Lima.
- ★ **November 25-27:** Visit of the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong. Santiago.

create a platform for cooperation to combat the causes of infant mortality, such as septicemia and preeclampsia; boost individual countries' capacities to address these issues; expand access to basic health resources; promote interchange and technical-financial cooperation; and undertake regional communication campaigns.

Chile has achieved advances in this area. In 2006, the mortality rate for children under age one declined to 7.6 for each 1,000 live births – the goal is 5.3 – while that for mothers fell to 1.8 for each 10,000 live births during the same period. The challenge is substantial, since an estimated 500,000 women around the world die each year from causes related to pregnancy or birth, along with some ten million children under age five, most of them in Africa and Asia. The figures for Latin America are no better, with 400,000 deaths among children and 22,000 among women. The program's main goal will be to reduce by 250,000 the number of children dying before age five.



In an ecumenical spirit



Since 1997, when Chile enacted a new Religions Law, the country has made significant strides in expanding religious freedom, promoting a culture of respect and guaranteeing effective equality for all religious confessions. On October 10, the country took an additional step forward.

In remembrance of Martin Luther's decision on October 31, 1517, to post his 95 theses on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church, President Bachelet promulgated a law declaring October 31 the National Day of the Evangelical and Protestant Churches.

The commemorative day is "a way of recognizing the Protestant churches' contributions to national progress in all areas, and their teaching of values which enrich our communal life and support a culture of tolerance and respect," asserted the President.

Underscoring the country's ecumenical spirit and the cooperation among the creeds in Chile, the initiative joins previous measures such as those aimed at ensuring the freedom and equality of religions in public hospitals and prisons, as well as the appointment of Evangelical chaplains in the Armed Forces. La Moneda Palace, the seat of government, has two chaplains: one Catholic and one Protestant.



PLACES OF CHILE

A tour of downtown Santiago

The center of Santiago, Chile's capital city, can be viewed as the heart of the country itself, thanks to its many important institutions and cultural landmarks.

Its nucleus is the "Barrio Cívico" or Civic Quarter, with 30 hectares of buildings, most of them sheltering offices of the government, Armed Forces and Carabineros. The most significant construction is La Moneda Palace, the seat of the country's executive branch and one of the largest edifices built by the Spanish crown in its American colonies during the 17th century. Designed by Italian architect Joaquín Toesca, it was inaugurated in 1805.

Along the north face of La Moneda lies the Plaza de la Constitución, where official ceremonies are held to welcome foreign Heads of State, and the changing of the Palace Guard takes place every other day. Flanking the palace are the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Justice, as well as the Central Bank.

Since 2005, the space to the south of La Moneda has been occupied by the Plaza de la Ciudadanía, whose 10,565-square-meter esplanade includes green spaces and a reflecting pool. Beneath the plaza is the La Moneda Palace Cultural Center, one of the many public works undertaken in preparation for the country's Bicentennial of Independence in 2010.



Only three blocks to the north, the Palace of the Tribunals of Justice occupies a site with a historic past. This was the location of the Tribunal del Consulado, in whose great hall the open city council meeting was held which culminated with the formation of the Junta Nacional – the first step toward Chilean independence – on September 18, 1810.



The Plaza de Armas is surrounded by some of the country's oldest constructions: the Cathedral; the Post Office, originally the Governor's Palace; the Municipal Offices, on the spot occupied by the Cabildo (town hall) and city jail in 1670; and the National Historical Museum, which was previously the Real Audiencia, the highest tribunal of justice during the colonial period.

The plaza attracts painters and other artists, independent vendors and traditional cultural figures such as organ grinders and "*chinchineros*," who dance and spin in circles while playing a drum suspended from their backs.

The financial district includes the Stock Exchange building, the main center for the country's financial trading operations. Nearby are the headquarters of the leading banks and department stores.



Culture also occupies important spaces in the city.

Next to the Parque Forestal, along the Mapocho River, is the National Museum of Fine Arts. Dating from 1910, it was built in a neoclassical style with Art Nouveau details and touches of metal architecture, reflecting Chileans' taste for French design at the time. The glass dome above the central hall was constructed in Belgium. In front of the building stands "*Icarus and Daedalus*" (1929), the work of Rebeca Matte, the first female Chilean sculptor.



The Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, inaugurated in 1981, was a pioneer within Latin America in collecting, studying and displaying of the artistic legacy of the peoples who occupied the region before the

Europeans' arrival. It includes more than 1,500 objects from a range of cultures.

The Municipal Theater building, inaugurated in 1857 with Verdi's opera *Ernani*, was reopened in 1873 after being ravaged by a destructive fire. It, too, reflects the contemporary enthusiasm for all things French.



The neighborhoods to the east, against the backdrop of the Andes, offer an attractive mixture of cultural and bohemian locales and an active nightlife.

The Lastarria neighborhood offers restaurants, cafés and stores, along with the Museum of Visual Arts (MAVI), which displays 1,400 works reflecting developments in the Chilean plastic arts since the 1960s. A private institution, it was inaugurated in 2001. A striking mural by Chilean artist Roberto Matta adorns its façade.



For a refreshing break, one can visit the Central Market, inaugurated in 1872 with a wrought-iron structure fabricated in Glasgow. Its main attractions are on the inside:

fresh fruit, vegetables, fish and shellfish, as well as picturesque food stalls offering local specialties such as *mariscal* (seafood soup) and the conger eel chowder to which the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poet Pablo Neruda dedicated an ode - recipe included. He describes it as "thick and succulent, nourishing," containing "the essences of Chile" and mixing "the flavors of land and sea, so that in this dish you will know heaven."



O'Higgins Park is affectionately known as Santiago's "green lung." During the country's national holidays, people construct traditional *fondas* (temporary taverns roofed with branches) in the park for the celebration. There are also sports fields and an amusement park. Each year on September 19, a military parade is held on the park's ellipse to commemorate the Day of Army Glories.



The Club Hípico, founded in 1871, includes 80 hectares of gardens, natural grass horse racing tracks, and architecture patterned after the Longchamp Hippodrome in Paris.



The Quinta Normal is a 40-hectare public park which includes an artificial lake as well as numerous museums, including the National Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Science and Technology, the Railroad Museum of Chile and the Artequín Museum, which occupies the building constructed for Chile's pavilion at the 1889 Paris World's Fair.



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