



GOBIERNO DE CHILE

# CHILE

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## NEWS

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President Michelle Bachelet greets Cardinal Angelo Sodano at La Moneda Palace.

### Successful presidential tour

During the past few weeks, President Michelle Bachelet has followed a busy international schedule. After an official working visit to Japan, she participated in the APEC Leaders' Summit, in Sydney, Australia, from September 2 to 10. Last week, she attended the 62nd UN General Assembly in New York.

With Shinzo Abe, then-Prime Minister of Japan, she signed a joint declaration on the environment as well as announcing the official entry into force of the Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (SEPA) between the two countries (see sidebar).

President Bachelet also met with the presidents of the two chambers of Japan's legislature and was also granted a private audience with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace. In addition, she inaugurated a Chilean-Japanese business gathering attended by over 100 Chilean business professionals, where opportunities for joint development were analyzed in areas such as energy and trade.



### DID YOU KNOW?

- ★ Chile will be represented on every award podium at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. This is because the gold and bronze medals awarded to first- and third-place winners will contain alloys of Chilean copper, mined in the Antofagasta Region.
- ★ The world's first tracking dog for electrical faults comes from Chile. "Rex," a Labrador retriever, has been trained since 2003 to recognize the odor of burned-out wires, enabling him to help locate problems in the underground low-tension system. Thanks to this canine assistance, the time required for repair work has been reduced by 55%.
- ★ A Roof for Chile – a Chilean non-profit institution staffed by university volunteers and dedicated to eliminating the country's substandard housing – has carried its initiative to the rest of Latin America, under the name A Roof for My Country. Since the implementation of the first project abroad in 2001, the program has been replicated by nine countries and has recruited over 25,000 volunteers.



In an emotion-filled visit to Hiroshima, President Bachelet viewed the Peace Memorial Park, museum, cenotaph and the A-bomb dome. "Having been there and having seen the images at the Museum of Peace, illustrating the effects of the bomb, all I can do is confirm our country's commitment to the campaign against nuclear weapons, and certainly in Latin America."

### Trade agreement with Japan

It is Japan's first agreement with a country offering a significant agroindustrial product base, especially in food products. The treaty will particularly benefit the salmon, wine, meat, forestry and agroindustrial industries, eliminating tariffs on 90% of bilateral trade in these fields. The SEPA with Japan will generate more than 50,000 new jobs in Chile. It will also make Chile the world's first and only country to achieve free trade agreements with the four leading Asian powers: China, India, South Korea and Japan, thus solidifying its position as a business platform and bridge between the Latin American and Asia-Pacific regions.



## QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT BACHELET

"The international community recognizes my people's passion for peace, justice, liberty and solidarity. It knows about this country in the far south of the world, which – in spite of its isolation and its small population and economy – has made the great causes of humanity its own."

During her address to the United Nations General Assembly. New York, September 25, 2007.

"Today, the greatest homage we can pay to all those who lost their lives fighting for democracy, for our homeland, is to build a society, a country, which guarantees opportunities – which provides to every one of our fellow-citizen the rights and opportunities as well as the responsibilities inherent in democracy."

At the ceremony commemorating President Salvador Allende. La Moneda Palace, September 11, 2007.



"All of these efforts reflect the areas of agreement between our two nations, starting from the fact that our countries view many issues from similar perspectives, such as how to pursue development. Both countries serve, in a way, as platforms within our regions; Chile is an entry point for all of Latin America, while Australia is a platform for entry into Asia Pacific."

At a working meeting with John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia. Sydney, September 6, 2007.

"The achievements of the Concertación administrations, starting with the recovery of democracy, which have given the country governability and economic progress, have made it possible for us today to take the historic leap forward which my government is pursuing: constructing a social protection system which will guarantee the social rights of all Chilean men and women throughout their lives. At the same time, we will significantly reduce the inequality gap: an ethical imperative which our country today has both the will and the opportunity to begin resolving."

Santiago, August 27, 2007.

In Australia, she had a working meeting with Prime Minister John Howard, discussing the progress of negotiations for a free trade agreement between the two countries, which she reported are "advancing on a very good footing."



At the APEC Summit, the President called upon the leaders of the 21 member economies to undertake joint efforts to support the development of human capital. She emphasized the importance of raising the quality of education: "It is increasingly clear that nations can only achieve development through a strategy that gives people a broad and solid base of knowledge and the ability to adapt themselves to the multitude of effects generated by globalization."



### The challenge of climate change

In her address to the United Nations General Assembly, President Michelle Bachelet spoke about human rights, climate change, democracy and social cohesion. During her visit, she also met with several Heads of State.



Her first activity was directing the debate, together with Austrian Prime Minister Heinz Fischer, at the forum on Climate Change convoked by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. "The developing countries must take on a more active role in reducing the emissions that contribute to global warming. The efforts of the developed countries will not be sufficient. Chile has adopted a national strategy on climate change, and we are prepared to undertake further efforts in the areas of adaptation and mitigation, in order to achieve sustainable development," she maintained.

In her speech before the General Assembly, she affirmed that Chile will energetically promote universal respect for human rights and the strengthening of these rights. She also stressed Chile's availability and interest in serving on the UN Human Rights Council starting next year.



After holding bilateral meetings, she invited French President Nicolas Sarkozy and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to visit Chile. The latter confirmed that he will attend the Ibero-American Summit, to be held in Santiago in November. The President also invited him to visit the Antarctic for a firsthand view of the effects of climate change.



President Bachelet also participated in the World Leaders Forum organized by Columbia University, where she analyzed the challenges of democratic development in Chile and Latin America. At the dinner offered in her honor by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), she stressed that Chile's successful transition to democracy reflected the entire country's determination to work together



## FACTS

At the APEC Summit, President Bachelet and Vietnamese President Nguyen Tan Dung announced the start of negotiations for a free trade agreement between the two countries.

The U.S. periodical *Forbes* named the Maipo Valley, in Chile's Metropolitan Region, among the world's top ten destinations for wine tourism. The valley shares this honor with comparable regions in France, Italy and South Africa. The reasons for the choice included the opportunity to tour a wide range of wineries – the country's oldest – as well as the valley's proximity to Santiago.

Oracle, one of the world's leading software makers, is opening Latin America's first Global Support Center in Chile. The center will provide technical assistance to users in the United States, Canada, and other countries of the Americas.

Chile's National Corporation for Indigenous Development (Conadi) has signed a cooperation agreement with the Basque government to preserve and revitalize Chile's original languages. The agreement will also strengthen ties between the two governments' institutions for language promotion, planning and policymaking.

Chile and India have signed an agreement establishing an open skies policy for air cargo and liberalizing passenger transport services. The alliance will further strengthen the political, commercial and economic relationship between the two countries.

In Guangzhou, Chile's Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) and China's Administration for Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) have signed a protocol of understanding to monitor the effectiveness of plans applied in Chile to detect and eradicate the fruit fly. The agreement addresses the duration of quarantines, the expansion of their area of application, the recognition of free zones and the use of treatments.

and resume the path of progress, democracy and social justice which had characterized it for decades. During this event, the President received a medal presented by Mary Robinson, ex-President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Refugees. At the headquarters of Human Rights Watch, she emphasized Chile's commitment to protecting human rights: "We believe that Chile has something to say and something to contribute in support of the United Nations' efforts in this area."

In New York, the President inaugurated the Gabriela Mistral Foundation, founded to promote the study and appreciation of the Chilean poet's works in that city, one of the most important places in her life. The non-profit foundation will raise funds to support children's education in the Coquimbo Region's Elqui Valley, the site of Vicuña, where the Chilean Nobel Prize winner was born.

### A social contract for development

"Our nation needs to gather people together to discuss the issues and reach agreement about solutions, so that if this country is doing well, our success will reach the workers of Chile." With this, President Bachelet announced the formation of the Presidential Advisory Council on Work, Salaries, Competitiveness and Social Equity, "Toward a more just Chile," made up of 48 distinguished Chilean professionals from a range of fields.

The group will take aim at labor inequities in the country, addressing challenges such as modernizing the labor market, improving labor relations, raising salaries, increasing productivity and competitiveness, and enhancing worker training.

Council members, chosen for their technical expertise as well as for their distinguished careers, come from the political, economic, union, business and religious spheres. The group will be expected to examine and report on the country's most significant labor-related deficiencies and present concrete proposals to the President in a range of areas by March 2008.



### Pension reform: reducing poverty among senior citizens

After approval by the Chamber of Deputies, the pension system reform – one of the Bachelet administration's key social initiatives – has now arrived in the Senate. There, it will undergo the second step in the constitutional approval process, which is hoped to be completed in January 2008.

Aimed at correcting past defects and improving the current pension system, the reform seeks to provide all Chilean men and women over age 65 with a pension permitting them to live out the rest of their years with dignity. It will also raise

## OVERHEARD

"The ruling (on the extradition of former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori) was a judicial decision, but it reflects the considerable progress Chile has made on human rights, thanks to the efforts of abuse victims, civil society groups, and leaders like President Bachelet."

**José Miguel Vivanco, Americas Director, Human Rights Watch, New York, September 25, 2007.**

"Chile is an excellent example of an open economy, well-integrated into the globalized world, with broad free trade agreements. It is a stable country, with a democracy that functions reasonably well, and thus it serves as a point of reference."

**José María Aznar, former Prime Minister of Spain, Santiago, September 10, 2007.**

"Japan and Chile have signed a Free Trade Agreement which will make this Latin American country Japan's leading trade partner in South America."

**Shinzo Abe, former Prime Minister of Japan, Tokyo, September 3, 2007.**

"You have a high literacy rate and a longstanding commitment to educational access. You have made important progress in creating

opportunities, not only for the elites. These are the same issues we face in the United States. You have made a very good impression, and

for that reason we have come to encourage our students to study here, and to extend an invitation to students from your country."

**Margaret Spellings, U.S. Secretary of Education, Santiago, August 21, 2007. (In the photo with Yasna Provoste, Chile's Minister of Education)**



current pensions and permit the entry of new institutions into the market, among other changes.

The proposal sets up a special contribution system for women who have dedicated their lives to working inside the home, and thus have been unable to make regular pension contributions. Another group benefiting from the change will be young people entering the labor market, who will receive a solidarity subsidy for their first years of contributions. Some 600,000 senior citizens are expected to benefit from the reform during its first year of implementation, with the gains extending to an estimated 1,500,000 individuals in future years.



The reform includes a new institutional structure designed to increase the efficiency of the system. It will also add opportunities for citizen participation through a user commission, improve equity between men and women, and equalize rights and obligations for dependent and independent workers. In addition, it includes measures to promote competition in the pension fund industry, provide a closer link between fund profitability and higher pensions, broaden the coverage of voluntary retirement savings programs, and enhance fiscal discipline and transparency.

### 2008 Budget: more opportunities for all

Social investment is the main focus of the 2008 budget bill recently unveiled by Finance Minister Andrés Velasco. As the Minister explained, two out of every three pesos will be designated for social spending, as they have been during the current year. The bill includes an 11.4% increase in social expenditures and an 8.9% expansion in total outlays. The initiative also provides additional resources in the areas of human capital development, innovation and growth.

The leading announcements include millions for investment in education; 200,000 scholarships and loans for 2008; the creation of a national system to promote innovation; additional support for small and medium-sized businesses; increased police personnel, equipment and technologies to combat crime; and the resources to train 10,000 young people for high-quality jobs.

The bill has already been submitted to Congress, and it is expected to be approved by November 15. "This budget seeks to ensure that our economy continues to grow, that we remain competitive, but at the same time, that our country provides greater prosperity to all of its inhabitants," stated President Michelle Bachelet.

### Culture in the middle of the desert

The arid landscape of the northern Tarapacá Region recently bloomed – but with art rather than flowers. Since August 17, the historic saltpeter mining town of Humberstone – currently a World Heritage Site, illustrating the mineral's golden age in the late 19th century – has hosted the First Biennial of Art in the Desert. The exhibition, continuing until October 31, brings together twelve renowned visual artists and one architect for the presentation of a range of artistic creations.



The initiative, conceived by Chilean artist Benito Rojo and supported by the country's Bicentennial Commission, includes contemporary and experimental ideas such as an attempt to recreate the town's historical memory. Among the



By Carolina Ruff

## CHILEANS AROUND THE WORLD

At the Ninth Ibero-American Film Festival in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, where Chile was featured as guest of honor, Marcela Osorio received the Best Actress award for her role in the film *Fiesta Patria*. The prize for best full-length screenplay went to Rodrigo Sepúlveda, for *Padre nuestro*. The Chilean film industry as a whole was honored with the «Tatu Tumpa» award for its contributions to Latin American cinema.



José Retamales Espinoza, National Director of the Chilean Antarctic Institute (INACH), has assumed the presidency of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs for the 2007-2010 period. He is the first Latin American to direct the council, one of the most important international organizations for Antarctic coordination.

The Chilean women's racquetball team which competed in the sport's South American championship, held in Ecuador, won first place with four medals. Angela Grisar was crowned champion in singles as well as doubles with Fabiola Márquez. The men's team obtained second place.

activities offered are tours of the area on one of 20 bicycles specially created for the occasion by three artists and the opportunity to hear the story of a past inhabitant of the saltpeter town on an MP3 player. Visitors can also view replicas of work clothing, billboards depicting former workers, articles of daily use made from newspapers, and "UFOs" made of helium balloons floating in the sky of the Great North. Both the geographical region and the artistic creations themselves offer interactive experiences.



JP.Langlois (Fragments)

One unique characteristic of the exhibition is that the artwork can also be viewed at a distance, from an aerial perspective. In addition, the entire exhibition, from setup to implementation, will be captured in a documentary film.



Group O-In.

## International Day of Indigenous Women

Inheritors of a culture lasting thousands of years, Latin American indigenous women are known for their strength, their courage and their struggle to keep their roots alive. In Chile, these women – numbering approximately 345,000 – have persevered in conserving their traditions, such as their ancestral language and customs surrounding childbirth, while continuing to impart to their children their communities' ancient wisdom, respect and appreciation for nature and a love of their heritage.



In recognition of these achievements, tribute is paid to these women around the world each September 5, with the celebration of the International Day of Indigenous Women. The commemoration was instituted in 1983 in remembrance of Bartolina Sisa, a courageous Aymara woman who was executed in the 18th century, in what is now Bolivia, for struggling to defend her people's rights against Spanish loyalist forces.

This year, Chile's celebration included the signing of an important cooperation agreement between the National Women's Service (Sernam) and the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (Conadi). The agreement includes the creation of an Indigenous Women's Unit, aimed at introducing gender-based criteria and methodologies into public policies toward native peoples. It also sets up a joint program to promote economic enterprise among native women.

## AGENDA

- ★ **September 23-25:** European Union, Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Social Cohesion. Santiago, Chile.
- ★ **September 26:** Visit of Cardinal Angelo Sodano, former Vatican Secretary of State. Santiago.
- ★ **September 27-28:** Annual Progressivism Forum. Santiago.
- ★ **October 8-9:** 8th Biarritz Forum. Santiago.
- ★ **October 11:** Ibero-American Women's Summit. Santiago.

# TRADITIONAL GAMES OF CHILE

## Entertainment Chilean style

A colorful and festive environment takes hold in Chile every September; although the country's patriotic holidays officially fall on September 18 and 19, Chileans manage to extend the celebration in one way or another for the entire month. The festivities also coincide with the arrival of spring, whose warm breezes lure people outside to take walks, fly kites and revive their favorite local traditions.

Flying kites is the most typical recreation on "the 18th." As these delicate creations of paper and bamboo rise higher and higher, the sky is filled with a multitude of colors. On their long strings, they compete to soar above the others and become the kings of the sky.



*Tejo* or *rayuela*, a game practiced for centuries by the Mapuche – who called it *tecun* – was declared a national sport in 1948. The aim is to throw a half-kilo metal disk toward a taut cord or a line drawn on the ground, 14 meters from the player. The cord or line stretches across an earth-

filled box, measuring 90 by 50 centimeters. The game is usually played by teams, and point values are variable, depending on how close to the line the disk falls. If it lands directly on the line, a double point value is scored.



Another popular diversion is the greased pole: participants are challenged to climb a pole some five to six meters high and 20 centimeters in diameter, using only the strength of their arms and legs. The trick is that the pole has been smeared with grease or soap, so that climbers slide down again and again before reaching the top, where a prize awaits them.



Other games which have endured through the generations are the *trompo* (top), and the *emboque*, or cup-and-stick game. The first is a cone-shaped piece of hardwood with a metal tip. A



cord is rolled around it, which the player pulls forcefully, trying to make the top spin as long as possible. Enthusiasts make their *trompos* turn pirouettes on the ground or on their hands, or compete against opponents, trying to knock out each other's tops. The cup-and-stick game or *emboque* is also made of wood, in the shape of a bell or ball with a hole at the center. A string runs from the toy to a wooden stick, which the player uses to try to catch the toy after launching it into the air.



In the Chilean countryside, a range of traditional pastimes provide entertainment to the multitudes. Among them are the Chilean race or *carrera a la chilena*, in which riders compete bareback, holding on to their horses' manes. The spectacle is accompanied by betting, dances such as the *cueca* and *guaracha*, and traditional foods such as a delicious *asado*: meat slowly roasted over a fire.



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