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The President of the Republic visits the zone affected by the eruption of the Chaitén Volcano. Los Lagos Region.

The abrupt awakening of a giant

It is one of the most beautiful regions of southern Chile, well-known for the Futaleufú River, a favorite of kayakers around the world for its Class 5 rapids. However, it has now been plunged into anxiety and desolation, due to the unexpected eruption of the Chaitén Volcano on May 1. The event forced the evacuation of the town of the same name, which is 1,220 kilometers south of Santiago, but only ten from the volcano.

An enormous column of smoke and ash left a gray mantle on the town and its surroundings, covering homes, vehicles, livestock and vegetation. In response, the authorities quickly implemented a wide-ranging rescue operation, and President Michelle Bachelet traveled to the scene. In collaboration with the Armed Forces, aircraft, Navy ships, ferry boats and civilian barges were mobilized to transfer some 3,000 people to Puerto Montt, the regional capital, or the island of Chiloé.

On the morning of May 6, a new and more violent eruption made it necessary to evacuate those residents who had previously refused to abandon their homes, animals and possessions, leaving Chaitén a ghost town. Meanwhile, the volcanic cloud moved toward the neighboring village of Futaleufú, where evacuations were also initiated.

The Chilean government has worked in close cooperation with the Argentine authorities, who have given full assistance to facilitate the evacuees' movement through their territory, due to the complications posed by land connections.

Chilean and international experts are maintaining a vigil near the volcano, which has not yet ended its eruption phase. Chile has the world's second largest and most active volcanic chain, after that of Indonesia, and 500 of its nearly 2,000 volcanoes are considered potentially active – as was just demonstrated in Chaitén.

A two-continent tour

In April, President Michelle Bachelet pursued a busy international agenda. At the beginning of the month, she paid an Official Visit to the United Kingdom and participated in the Progressive Leaders' Summit there. From April 11 to 15, she carried out a State Visit to the People's Republic of China.

In London, the President met with Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Among other activities, she held meetings with business professionals and academics, and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Essex.



Queen Elizabeth II welcomed the President at Windsor Castle, noting the "splendid historical relationship" between the two countries. The Queen expressed her best wishes to Chileans for further economic

DID YOU KNOW?

- ★ In April, 117 Palestinians from a refugee camp on the Syrian-Iraqi border arrived in Chile to begin a new life in the country. The program "Chile, land of welcome" – in conjunction with the UNHCR and the Catholic Church – will assist them with housing, health care, education and employment, while also providing language and training courses to help them adjust to the local culture.
- ★ Several scenes in the latest James Bond film, *Quantum of Solace*, were filmed in northern Chile. Locations included the Atacama desert, the Paranal observatory and the partially abandoned port of Cobija.
- ★ Chuquicamata will soon lose its status as the world's largest open-pit mine; as of 2018, it will become a subterranean operation. The change, already underway, will cost over 2 billion dollars.

QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT BACHELET

"We Chileans are very proud to welcome the President of India, the world's largest democracy. India has been a leader among the developing countries of the world. We are also very happy to have this relationship with the country housing the world's second largest population and a very promising and strong economy, undoubtedly one of the cornerstones of the economic rise of Asia in the 21st century."

During the State Visit of the President of India. Santiago, April 21, 2008.

"Chile is outstanding, modern and efficient as a competitive platform for services and a destination for investments. Because of this, we view it as a natural bridge to Latin America. Thus, Chile is in an ideal position to contribute to the development of a new stage in the political, economic and cultural relationship between Chile and Latin America, and China and Asia."

Speaking to the Central School of High Administration in China. Beijing, April 14, 2008.

"Chile has chosen the path of integration with the world. We have established a network of 56 trade agreements, including a very recent one with China. Today, we have access to a global market of nearly four billion people, and we hope very soon to have agreements with Australia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam."

In her address to the Boao Forum. Sanya, April 12, 2008.

"This is a recognition for my country and our success since the return to democracy in 1990. I am also personally honored to receive this distinction from a university as prestigious as Essex, which is among the most significant centers of research and learning in England."

After receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Essex. London, April 3, 2008.

growth and development to assist the government in achieving its goals. In a meeting with Prime Minister Brown, the two leaders emphasized their countries' deepening friendship and issued a joint declaration on areas for joint action, including climate change, energy and the fight against poverty, inequality and exclusion.

In her address to the Conference on Progressive Governance, held prior to the Progressive Leaders' Summit, the President noted that "to be progressive today means thinking globally" as well as "placing confidence in the State." In the face of problems such as poverty, underdevelopment, climate change and international financial crises, "our task is to transform global costs into global solutions," she asserted. That is, "instead of blindly accepting that costs must be shared, we need to ensure that benefits are shared by all: the rich and the poor, different countries and regions, and even different generations."



The President's tour of China was also highly eventful. She was the first Latin American Head of State to be invited to the Boao Economic Forum, whose central topics were global warming and the Doha Round. There, she underlined the need to "rethink international financial institutions in the light of new global challenges" and to strengthen the role of emerging economies such as China and Chile in the reform process.

She met with China's three highest authorities: President Hu Jintao, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and the Chairman of the National People's Congress, Wu Bangguo.

President Hu stressed the development of bilateral ties in recent years: "China has always viewed and managed its relations with Chile as being of strategic weight," he noted, calling on both countries to strengthen political confidence and enhance mutual consultation. President Bachelet stated that "Chile has always been committed to developing its relations with China, since diplomatic ties were established between the two nations 38 years ago."

The two leaders signed several new agreements, including a Supplementary Agreement on Trade in Services, within the framework of the FTA signed in 2005. Other accords included a 2008-2001 Executive Plan on Cultural Exchange; a Cooperation and Exchange Agreement on Cultural Heritage; and a Memorandum of Understanding on small and medium-sized business cooperation, aimed at promoting bilateral exchanges, trade missions, and activities aimed at strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises in both countries.



In Beijing, the President attended the closing session of the Binational Business Council, where she called upon Chinese businesspeople to take advantage of the opportunities presented by Chile for entry into the Latin American market. She delivered the opening address to the Chile-China Business Forum, convened under the motto "Chile, a strategic partner in Latin America," which brought together more than 300 business professionals. She also inaugurated the exhibition "Mapuche: Seeds of Chile," featuring more than 300 Mapuche cultural artifacts, in Beijing's Capital Museum.

In Shanghai, the last stop of her tour, she became the first Head of State to secure participation in the 2010 Shanghai Expo, where Chile will have a 2000-square-meter pavilion.

FACTS

President Michelle Bachelet has been chosen by *Time* magazine as one of the world's 100 most influential people. In a biographical sketch written for the periodical by Hillary Clinton, the U.S. presidential candidate pointed to Bachelet's exceptional qualities:

"Being a woman in politics can be tough business, and Bachelet made it look effortless. In our meeting, I learned why: because Bachelet, 56, speaks and leads from her heart."



According to the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) prepared by the German foundation of the same name, which measures the development status of 125 less-developed, emerging or transitional countries, Chile stands in 8th place and leads Latin America. Chile's advances in democracy, the economy and management were particularly noted.

The 2007 World Exploration Trends report from Metals Economic Group placed Chile 7th among countries with the largest investments in mining exploration. According to the study, 360 million dollars are being spent in the search for mineral reserves in Chile, a figure which represents 4% of the total invested in exploration on the world level.

Chile is the Latin American leader in technological development and stands 34th in the world, according to the Networked Readiness Index of the Global Information Technology Report, prepared by the World Economic Forum. The report stressed the government's firm resolve to implement a digital agenda.

Chile can now export pork and poultry to Singapore, thanks to successful negotiations between Chile's Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) and its Singaporean counterpart, the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA), which granted export certification for these products.

President of India visits Chile

During the Indian leader's first State Visit to Chile, Presidents Pratibha Devisingh Patil and Michelle Bachelet pledged to continue strengthening their nations' bilateral relationship.

Specifically, the leaders signed a Cooperation Agreement on Science and Technology, which will allow more joint efforts in innovation, research and development, as well as an Air Services Agreement, which will promote air connections, guarantee the highest levels of security, and facilitate communications. Two Memoranda of Understanding were also signed: one on Antarctic cooperation, which will encourage joint scientific projects and training for scientific personnel; and one on cooperation in sports, which will help establish closer ties between sporting organizations in the two countries.



President Patil explained that "our countries are natural partners, with many opportunities to diversify bilateral trade." According to President Bachelet, "Chile and India have a responsibility to strengthen this relationship, and Chile is ready for this new phase: to advance toward signing a free trade agreement which will provide the foundation for new business opportunities."

On August 16, 2007, President Bachelet signed the official decree for the Partial Scope Agreement between Chile and India, which entered into force on the 23rd of that month. Thanks to its provisions, 98% of Chilean exports and 91% of those from India enjoyed average tariff reductions of 20%. During 2007, Chilean exports to India expanded by 40%, exceeding the average increase in total exports (15.5%). Imports of Indian products expanded by 3.4% in 2007, as compared to the 2006 figure of 2.8%.

Indigenous integration

To strengthen integration and improve the quality of life for indigenous peoples – commitments made by President Michelle Bachelet in her program of government – a new document was unveiled in April which identifies the main challenges and objectives for the future and summarizes indigenous policy for the next two years.

The document is entitled "Re-conocer: A Social Compact for Multiculturalism," whereby "re-conocer" means both "recognizing" and "getting to know" other cultural groups. It was based on guidelines established by the government as well as those taken on through the ratification of WLO Convention 169.

The plan aims to achieve simultaneous progress in three general areas: the political system, rights and institutions; comprehensive development for indigenous communities; and multiculturalism and diversity.



A set of specific initiatives is detailed for each area. In the first, for example, the plan seeks direct participation in Congress and other institutions, along with the creation of an Undersecretariat for Indigenous Affairs. In the area of comprehensive development, the document identifies measures to be taken immediately, such as grants of land to 115 communities and the resolution of land applications for

OVERHEARD

"I met a warm person and a close friend. I availed of the opportunity to compliment



Bachelet on the distinction of being the first executive woman President of this great country."

Pratibha Devisingh Patil,
President of the
Republic of India.
Santiago, April 21, 2008.

"China has always viewed and managed its relations with Chile as being of strategic weight."

Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China. Sanya, April 14, 2008.

"We have many common interests and a broad field of cooperation."

Wang Qishan, Chinese deputy Prime Minister. Beijing, March 14, 2008.

"Openness and transparency are the foundation of success in London, and Chile has implemented a reform policy based on openness and the market. We have much to learn from each other. One example is the mandatory private pension system, which interests us greatly in the United Kingdom. This financial innovation in Chile was the first of



its kind in the world, and it can doubtless teach us something."

David Lewis, Lord Mayor of the City. London, April 6, 2008.

"The Chilean agricultural model, without subsidies, based on the market and international openness, is the perfect example. It goes precisely along the line that the OECD recommends to its member countries, lowering intervention levels in the market and helping farmers through direct payments that are focused on specific objectives. This is what Chile is doing."

Stefan Tangermann, OECD director of agriculture and trade. Santiago, March 24, 2008.

"Chile is the South American country with the best chances of advancing to the First World. Its investments in infrastructure, education and health, as well as its orientation toward free trade with Asia, Europe and the United States, are the reasons."

Parag Khanna, director of the Global Governance Initiative and author of the book *The Second World*. March 6, 2008.

another 308; infrastructural projects; scholarships and the right to a voice in educational programs; and residential care facilities. The multicultural initiative is aimed at bringing about cultural change to increase all citizens' understanding of indigenous peoples and to promote their integration.

At the presentation of the document, the President pointed to her government's achievements in this area, including the ratification of WLO Convention 169 after 17 years of parliamentary debate; the law creating a coastal marine reserve for indigenous peoples; the National Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples, held from June 2006 to January 2007; scholarship programs; the construction of intercultural preschools and health clinics; new housing initiatives; and the approval of a constitutional reform establishing special territories, such as Easter Island. "The task in these years of democracy has been to construct a multicultural, pluralistic and diverse society, which can both recognize and express the richness of Chile's origins," asserted Bachelet.

Arturo Prat Antarctic base

Sixty-one years ago, on February 6, 1947, the first Chilean military base was established in Antarctica, with the aim of establishing national sovereignty within this territory. Located on Greenwich Island in the South Shetland, the Captain



Arturo Prat Naval Base was closed in 2002 for economic reasons. However, its facilities were reopened this year, thanks to an agreement between the Chilean Navy, the Magallanes regional government and the Chilean Antarctic Institute, supported by an investment of some 3.3 million dollars.

Ten Navy officials and staff on one-year assignments will be responsible for exercising sovereignty, overseeing ship traffic, protecting human life at sea, monitoring pollution, carrying out climate change studies and promoting Chilean scientific activity in Antarctica.

An additional task will be to inaugurate a site museum, aimed at the cultural and historical preservation of the original facilities.

Cultural embassies

An enormous metal horse with an original saddle and equipment, beautiful silver work, chiefs'



robes, pre-Hispanic wooden and stone artifacts, sculptures, musical instruments, photographs, music, poems, songs and religious texts – all of these are included among the more than 300 samples of Mapuche culture in "Mapuche: Seeds of Chile." The exhibition, organized by the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, was inaugurated by President Bachelet on April 14 at the Capital Museum in Beijing, China.

The show is the first of three "cultural embassies" to be sent abroad this year by the National Council for Culture and the Arts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the aim of displaying the best of Chilean heritage and tradition.

Captain Arturo Prat is the Chilean naval hero *par excellence*. In the Naval Battle of



Liquique, on May 21, 1879, in command of the old corvette *Esmeralda*, he faced the powerful Peruvian monitor *Huáscar*. In the desperate struggle for his already-destroyed vessel, he leaped aboard the enemy ship, where he lost his life.

CHILEANS AROUND THE WORLD

Author Jorge Edwards was awarded the second annual Ibero-American Planeta-Casamérica Narrative Prize for his novel *La casa de Dostoyevsky*. He previously received the Cervantes Prize in 2000 and Chile's National Literature Award in 1994.



With a doctorate in science and math education, Carmen Gloria Jiménez has become the only Chilean teacher to be chosen for NASA's "Educator Astronaut" program.

Dr. Daniel Muñoz, the only Chilean commissioned on the ground by the International Red Cross Committee in Darfur, will be sent as chief of mission to Bethlehem to provide humanitarian assistance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Three Chileans have accepted positions with the United Nations Human Rights Council. Academic José Bengoa was elected for a two-year term as a member of the Advisory Committee; professor María Magdalena Sepúlveda was chosen as an independent expert in the area of human rights and extreme poverty; and attorney Roberto Garretón was named a member of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. In addition, attorney Edmundo Vargas was elected president of the International Law Commission, a United Nations body tasked with codifying and advancing international law.

AGENDA

- ★ **May 5-6:** Regional Conference, "Toward the Eradication of Childhood Malnutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean." Santiago.
- ★ **May 5-6:** Visit of the Vice President of Guatemala, Rafael Espada. Santiago.
- ★ **May 7-10:** Visit of the President of Mozambique, Armando Guebuza. Santiago.
- ★ **May 13-15:** Official Visit to Chile of the Chancellor of Austria, Alfred Gusenbauer.
- ★ **May 16-17:** President Bachelet attends the European Union-Latin America and Caribbean Summit. Lima, Peru.
- ★ **May 18-19:** Official Visit to Chile of the Prime Minister of Poland, Donald Tusk.

The Mapuche exhibition will be followed by "Rapa Nui in the Pacific Festival of the Arts," scheduled to arrive on the island of Samoa in July. For three weeks, 20 members of the group "Mata Toa" ("Warrior") will demonstrate the music, dance and crafts of Easter Island at one of Oceania's leading festivals, held since 1984.



The third "embassy" will be undertaken by the theater group Cinema, who will tour France, Germany, South Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan with their work *Sin sangre* ("Without Blood"), by Italian author Alessandro Baricco. The artists will also represent Chile at the International Theater Festival in Bogotá, Colombia, considered one of Latin America's most important theater events. In Belgium, the group will also participate in the Mons International Festival.

Deep blue

Only 667 kilometers offshore from the port of Valparaíso lies Robinson Crusoe Island, refuge of pirates and repository of hidden treasures. It also conceals an enormous variety of flora and fauna within its transparent waters, forming an ecosystem that is unique in Chile. Thanks to the convergence of nutrient-rich marine currents from the Antarctic and warmer subtropical waters, diving off the coast of this island is an unmatched experience. With up to 20 meters of underwater visibility and temperatures ranging from 14 degrees Centigrade in winter and 21 degrees in summer, it provides a perfect setting for scuba diving, snorkeling or underwater tours.

As one descends into the depths, the colors blue and green predominate, and a great diversity of fish appear, such as the yellowtail, flounder and pampanito, a small blue fish with yellow fins which travels in schools. On the sea floor, octopi, black sea urchins and anemones can be seen. Robinson Crusoe also has a large population of endemic species, led by the Juan Fernández fur seal, which often accompanies swimmers, and the Juan Fernández lobster, which is abundant on the island and constitutes its leading economic resource.



In this special place, the "Chilean Trail" (*Sendero de Chile*) – a public initiative to construct a countrywide trail, encouraging ecotourism development – includes a 500-meter underwater segment. Supported by the local community, the trail is a perfect place for wildlife observation, photography and outdoor sports, with assistance from specialized guides. The trail is designed to maintain the beauty of the landscape, and there are no underwater signs, minimizing the impact of human activity.



Together with the Santa Clara and Alejandro Selkirk Islands, Robinson Crusoe Island is part of the Juan Fernández Archipelago, declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1977.

FIESTAS OF CHILE

Rodeo: national sport

“¡Al aguaité!” (Look out!) is heard each time a pair of Chilean *huasos*, or traditional riders, is called up to compete in Chile’s most important homegrown festival: the rodeo. Wearing their most elegant riding gear, they participate in a contest filled with emotion and enthusiasm, closely tied to Chilean cultural roots.

The rodeo mounts are Chilean Horses, a breed originating in Chile and first registered in 1893. Descended from the horses brought by the conquering Spaniards, they have become adapted to the country’s geography and climate conditions, with their tough hooves and energetic but docile temperament.

The origin of the rodeo traces back to the 16th century, when Spanish governor García Hurtado de Mendoza ordered the assembly of the local livestock for marking and selection each July 24 and 25, on what is today Santiago’s Plaza de Armas. In 1948, the first official rodeos were organized in their modern form, using a circular arena 40 meters in diameter. In one half of the arena is a corral called *apiñadero*, from which competitors must take a calf out using nothing but their own skills. In the other half lies the traditional *medialuna* or half-moon, with an area called the *atajada* or *quincha* at each end where the calf must be trapped.

The riders compete in pairs, called *colleras*, using their horses in a kind of pincer formation to guide a calf from the corral to the half-moon. When they arrive at a *quincha*, they must trap the calf with the horse’s chest in accordance with a series of technical requirements. To avoid injury to the animal, the *quinchas* are well-padded.

During each rodeo, the *colleras* run four calves, or five if a tie-breaker is needed.



The trapping of a calf is evaluated using “good points” – depending on the part of the calf’s body where the trapping occurs – and “bad points” if technical errors are made or the calf succeeds in escaping. A perfect score is 13 “good points.”

Declared a national sport in 1962, the rodeo, now held in March, continues to provide a gathering place for rural families. Folk music, handicrafts and traditional cuisine lend authentic atmosphere to each celebration. There are also rodeo competitions for secondary and university students.

All of the gentlemanliness and respect that characterizes the Chilean huaso is on display at the rodeo – as well as the fun-loving spirit of the rural people, who



give their horses humorous names reflecting their character or condition: “Canalla” (Riffraff), “Malulo” (Mischievous), “Copuchenta” (Busybody), “Astuto” (Clever), “Gruñón” (Grouchy) or “Pinganilla” (Good-for-Nothing).

A test of skill

At each championship, a series of maneuvers called “Movimiento a la Rienda” (Movement at the Reins) is part of the show, demonstrating the obedience and skills of each horse as well as its rider’s proficiency.

In 2005, the “Movimiento a la Rienda” underwent an important change: since then, female riders have also participated in this event.

The rodeo attracts more spectators than any other sport in Chile. In 2007, it brought together 1,872,000 fans in arenas throughout the country, for a season of 399 rodeos. There are 275 rodeo clubs and 35 associations, from the extreme north to the south, and the Chilean Rodeo Federation has 10,000 members.

Some observers have criticized the rodeo, accusing it of mistreating animals. However, experts explain that the calves are not harmed, since they are proportionately heavier than the horses. Furthermore, the trapping points are well-cushioned, and each calf is run only a single time.



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