

# *Argentina and Chile Sign Additional Protocols to Treaty of Maipu*

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Buenos Aires, December 24 (RHC-Mercopress) -- Five years after the Treaty of Maipu, the foreign ministers of Argentina and Chile Tuesday signed five additional protocols outlining steps for a new phase in binational integration.

A joint statement from the two governments specified that the foreign ministers were “honoring the agreement between Presidents Michelle Bachelet and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner five years ago to delve into our integration and cooperation ties.”

The new protocols set off the process whereby two binational entities are to be created -- one to run the Low Altitude Transandean Railway and the other make it possible to call for an international public tender for companies interested in the construction of the Agua Negra tunnel between San Juan and Coquimbo / La Serena.

A new additional protocol is to be signed during the first week of January to deal with the Las Leñas Tunnel which is to link up Mendoza with the Bernado O'Higgins area.

President Fernandez de Kirchner also confirmed that Pope Francis has invited her and her Chilean counterpart to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the treaty that put an end to the conflict over the Beagle Channel.

The Peace and Friendship Treaty was signed on November 29, 1984, after mediation by Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Antonio Samore on his behalf. It will be Fernandez's fifth visit to the Argentinian Pope.

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