

Chile Approves Same-Sex Civil Unions Law



Santiago de Chile, April 14 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has signed into law a bill recognizing same-sex civil marriage. The new law, which also recognizes civil unions between opposite-sex couples, extends important rights to same-sex couples but stops short of extending full marriage rights. "We are saying that this is a concrete step forward in the path to end differences between homosexual and heterosexual couples," President Bachelet said when signing of the bill into law. The Chilean leader added that she saw this as "a vindication in the struggle for sexual diversity rights."

The Chilean president was joined at the ceremony by LGBT advocacy groups, such as the Movement for Homosexual Integration and Liberation, who were praised by Bachelet for their leadership and advocacy work on this issue. "Today is a historic day for social diversity. For the first time the (Chilean) state recognizes that there is not only one way to build a family," said the Movement for Homosexual Integration and Liberation in a press release.

The group also compared the signing of this bill into law to the recognition of the right of women to vote. The law was praised by other legislators, including Karol Cariola of the Communist Party, who said on Twitter, "With this law the country recognizes the existence of families with same-sex parents." A bill to recognize same-sex civil unions was first introduced in 2003, and will officially come into effect in six months time. An estimated 2 million same-sex and opposite-sex couples who are thought to be living together in Chile will be able to benefit from this new law.



Radio Habana Cuba