

# *New Chilean President Vows to Enhance Ties with Latin American and Asia-Pacific Nations*

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Santiago, March 12 (RHC) -- Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, who was sworn in Tuesday for a second four-year term, vowed to strengthen relations with Latin American and Asia Pacific countries.

Chile needs to "restore understanding and cooperation with Brazil and Argentina" and improve relations with neighboring Peru and Bolivia, Bachelet said in an outline of foreign policy issues.

"Chile must value the diversity that characterizes Latin America and effectively tackle the challenges presented by our relations with neighbors," said Bachelet, who was president from 2006 to 2010.

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) should serve "as a meeting point for South American integration initiatives", and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) should serve as mechanism for political coordination, she said.

Bachelet also sought to reinforce political, economic and cultural ties with Asia Pacific countries such as China.

The Chilean president voiced the hope that the Pacific Alliance, a regional trade bloc founded in 2012 by Chile, Peru, Colombia and Mexico, could serve as a platform for bolstering ties with Asia Pacific nations.

Bachelet, who heads the center-left New Majority coalition, takes the helm of the country again after a spell with the United Nations. Her campaign pledge of major reforms in education, health care and tax has held strong appeal among voters.

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