

Chilean President Announces New Cabinet Ministers



Santiago de Chile, May 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has announced her new cabinet Monday, days after she made a surprise announcement asking all previous minister to resign as part of a “re-evaluation” of her government's agenda.

Among the key ministries to be replaced are finance, education, and energy – three areas where the government is seeking to implement key reforms, including moving toward free university education, a corporate tax increase from 20 percent to 27 percent, and plans to improve energy security through investment and greater diversification.

According to a poll by research firm Cadem, Minister of Education Nicolas Eyzaguirre and Minister of the Interior Rodrigo Peñailillo are the least popular of Bachelet’s previous cabinet. Peñailillo was initially in charge of overseeing the investigation into a major corruption scandal, known as, ‘Caval case’, which involves a \$10 million bank loan implicating Bachelet’s son and daughter-in-law.

The former Interior Minister is now implicated in a massive campaign finance scandal, which centers on allegations of irregular campaign financing involving a local investment bank. In efforts to curb future acts of corruption, several reforms are underway, including a bill that establishes that public officials who violate electoral transparency and financing laws will be removed from their posts.

The Bachelet administration has also set a May 21st deadline for Congress to approve legislation which will attempt to better regulate the financing of political parties by ensuring that political parties are publicly financed while also banning the so-called practice of "reserved donations" to politicians from anonymous donors.

On April 21st, Bachelet first mentioned the possibility of a cabinet reshuffle due to the series of corruption scandals that have hit Chile's political and business elites.

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