

## Summary

*Known for its long coastline and rich cultural, historical, and natural heritage, Chile was the first American nation to establish diplomatic relations with Türkiye in 1926, maintaining strong diplomatic and cultural ties that are seek to deepen.*

*In that regard, Chile intends to move forward with a comprehensive agenda that includes increasing the number of bilateral mechanisms with Türkiye, further developing relations, modernizing the existing Free Trade Agreement, and mutual cultural promotion.*

*The "100th Anniversary of Chile-Türkiye Diplomatic Relations" will be celebrated in January 2026, a date that has great potential for the development of political, economic, defense-security, and cultural ties between Chile and Türkiye within the framework of a mutual partnership. It is hoped that this old friendship continues to intensify by increasing activities in these matters.*

## Chile Overview & Foreign Policy.

**Rodrigo ARCOS** - Chile's Ambassador to Ankara

Chile, located in southwestern South America, is one of the world's longest countries, stretching about 4,200 km from north to south, with over 6,000 km of coastline. It borders Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru. Although located in South America, is considered a "tri-continental" nation due to its territories in Oceania (Easter Island) and Antarctica (due to the location of the cities of Punta Arenas and Puerto Williams) and its strong presence in the white continent.

Geographically isolated from the world and plants and animals deseases thanks to the Atacama Desert, Andes Mountains, Pacific Ocean, and Antarctica, Chile resembles an "island." Isolation has helped it become a major exporter of pest-free agricultural products like fruits, seafood, nuts, and vegetables.

Human settlement in Chile dates back over 18,000 years. In 1520, Ferdinand Magellan was the first European to set foot on the Chilean coast. It gained independence from Spain in 1818 and has remained a republic for more than 200 years.

As of May 2025, Chile ranks 45th on the UN Human Development Index, reflecting strong social indicators such as a life expectancy above 80 years and an average of over 11 years of schooling. With a population of around 20 million, Chile reported a 2023 GDP of \$280 billion, a per capita income exceeding \$17,000 (or \$28,000 when adjusted for purchasing power parity), 4% inflation, 8.4% unemployment, and over \$11 billion in foreign investment. These figures place Chile among the top performers in the region.

Foreign policy and diplomacy are closely linked but different. Foreign policy is set by political leaders and outlines a country's goals and strategies; diplomacy is the main tool used by diplomats to achieve these goals through negotiation, communication, and relationship-building. While foreign policy is public, diplomacy often happens behind closed doors, with only outcomes shared.

Terms like "public diplomacy" are better seen as public relations or foreign policy outreach, aimed at shaping foreign public opinion. Chile's foreign policy is rooted in international law, democracy, human rights, and cooperation. As an export-driven nation deeply integrated into the global economy, Chile ranks among the world leaders in free trade agreements, with 80% of its exports covered by Free Trade Agreements.

Devised by the President and executed through the Foreign Ministry, Chile's foreign policy prioritizes forging alliances, advancing dialogue, promoting economic growth, and tackling global challenges like climate change, ocean conservation, and the protection of Antarctica. Regional partnership—especially within Latin America—remains a cornerstone, even amid political differences.

Chile is also deeply committed to marine conservation and has vast protected ocean areas. Indeed, Valparaíso has been proposed as candidate as Secretariat for the Agreement for the Protection of Maritime Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), supporting international efforts to protect high seas and promote collective stewardship beyond national waters.

The BBNJ Treaty aims to ensure the protection of the high seas and considers the seabed as a common heritage. The Treaty compels each country that signs it to protect its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) up to 200 nautical miles. However, areas beyond this limit must also be

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protected through collective responsibility, a duty that Chile declares it is ready to assume.

### **Chile - Türkiye Relations**

Chile was the first Latin American country to officially recognize the Republic of Türkiye in January 1926 via a Friendship Treaty in Paris. Türkiye reciprocated by opening its embassy in Santiago in 1930—the first in the region—while Chile inaugurated its legation in Ankara in 1941, becoming the first Latin American nation with a diplomatic mission in the new Turkish capital.

Symbols of this enduring friendship are visible in both capitals: Santiago hosts a Republic of Türkiye Square, an Atatürk School, and an Atatürk monument; Ankara features Chile Square with a bust of national hero Bernardo O'Higgins (inaugurated September 1970), a Republic of Chile school and a Pablo Neruda Park.

Following the signing of a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement in July 2009 (enforced in March 2011), Chile became the first American country to secure such a deal with Türkiye. Nowadays, the visa-free access for Turkish passport holders (up to 90 days) reflects solid mutual trust. Moreover, Turkish Airlines launched its direct Istanbul–Santiago flights on December 18, 2024, via São Paulo, operating four weekly rotations, a milestone that enhanced connectivity and strengthened trade, cultural, and diplomatic ties.

### **Closing remarks**

There is great potential for the development of political, economic, defense-security, and cultural ties within the framework of a mutual partnership. Chile's fundamental approach is to foster dialogue and support an agenda with Türkiye that benefits both countries; therefore, significant steps have been taken in recent years to revitalize and strengthen it.

Furthermore, Chilean Foreign Minister Alberto van Klaveren visited Türkiye and held meetings in Ankara and Istanbul on April 8-10, 2025, and the II Meeting of the Bilateral Cooperation Committee, which had not been held in years, was conducted at its highest level. It is hoped that the 100-year friendship will be further enhanced by the increasing mutual political, economic, defense-security, and cultural activities between the two countries.

### **About the Author**

#### ***Rodrigo ARCOS - Chile's Ambassador to Ankara***

Ambassador Rodrigo Arcos received a BA from the University of Chile (History and Geography, 1985), a MA in International Relations from the University of Chile (1988) and a Post Degree Diploma in Economics and Political Relations in Southeast Asia from the University of Tsukuba (1989-1990); he was also granted a Japanese Government Scholarship. He completed a Diploma in International Business (University of the Pacific (2000); he had Post-Degree studies in History, Foreign Policy of Asia, and International Relations Studies from Georgetown University (2008-2009, Washington, DC); and a Diploma in Public Administration (High-Level Diploma for Chilean Diplomats) from the Catholic University of Chile.

He served as Third Secretary at the Embassy of Chile to Australia (1995-1999); Second Secretary at the Chilean Embassy in Japan (2001-2004); First Secretary and Political Affairs Advisor at the Chilean Embassy in the United States (2007-2012); Consul General in Shanghai, People's Republic of China (2014-2015); and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Chilean Embassy in Brazil (2016-2019).

He has held important positions at the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Desk Officer for Japan and Pacific Affairs in the Asia-Pacific Division; Diplomatic Assistant in the Office of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Diplomatic Assistant in the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs; Chief of Staff to the Director General of Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2005-2007); Deputy Director for North American, Central American, and Caribbean Affairs (2012-2014); and Deputy and Acting Director for South American Affairs (2019-2021). Ambassador Rodrigo Arcos speaks English (Fluent), Japanese (JLPT, Level 2); Chinese-Mandarin (HKS Level 2); and Portuguese (conversational).

Ambassador Rodrigo Arcos is married to Margarita Suárez and has three children: Constanza, Maria Consuelo, and Santiago.

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Throughout history, shaping the perceptions of societies has been one of the most fundamental elements of domestic and foreign policy. As the nation-state structure became widespread and nation-states emerged as the main actors in international relations, public diplomacy along with traditional diplomacy began to play a crucial role in shaping these relations.

Diplomatic relations between states are conducted by diplomats, including ambassadors and consuls. These diplomats also engage in public diplomacy, which serves a vital function in interstate relations. Public diplomacy activities have a significant impact not only on the citizens of a state but also on its leaders. Public diplomacy plays a pivotal role in shaping the relations between states alongside other diplomatic activities.

The aim of the project Public Diplomacy in Foreign Policy conducted in collaboration with Cappadocia University and Ankara Center for Crisis and Political Studies (ANKASAM) is to discuss the principles for implementing public diplomacy, identify key activities and highlight public diplomacy efforts undertaken by foreign diplomats in Türkiye. The ultimate goal is to contribute to shaping Turkish Foreign Policy and influencing decision-making processes.

For detailed information about the project;  
<https://commonhorizon.kapadokya.edu.tr/> You can reach us from the address.

**Prof. Dr. Şafak OĞUZ**

Prof. Dr. Şafak OĞUZ became an Associate Professor in 2019 and a full Professor in 2024. He retired in 2021 after 23 years of service in the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF). During his time there, he also worked for the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). His expertise lies in Weapons of Mass Destruction, Terrorism (WMD), International Security, International Organizations and Peace and Conflict Studies. Prof. Dr. Şafak OĞUZ currently serves as the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences at Cappadocia University. He is fluent in English and German.

**Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin EROL**

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin EROL graduated from the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Boğaziçi University (BU) in 1993. After completing his Master's Degree at BU in 1995, he was accepted to the PhD program at BU in the same year. After completing his PhD at Ankara University in 2005, Prof. Erol became an Associate Professor in 2009 in the field of "International Relations" and a full Professor in 2014. His areas of expertise are "Geopolitics", "Crisis Management", "Security", "Turkish Foreign Policy" and "Central Asia".

Prof. Erol has published numerous scientific articles and books on these subjects. He is the author and editor of various journals such as Eurasia File, Black Sea Studies, Gazi Akademik Overview, Journal of Regional Studies, International Crisis and Political Studies and contributor for national radio-television programs such as TRT, A HABER, TV NET, CNN TÜRK and HABERTÜRK.

Prof. Erol, whose opinions have been published in Turkey's leading magazines and newspapers has been deemed worthy of many awards, including Writers and Artists Foundation of the Turkic World (TÜRKSAY) in 2007, "Turkish World Service Award" in 2015 and Writers' Union of Turkey (TYB) "Press-Intellectual Award".

Prof. Erol has lectured at Ufuk, Ankara and Gazi Universities. As a faculty member in the Department of Relations at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, he served as an expert, coordinator and founder president in Türkiye's leading think tanks (ASAM, SDE, GSAM, USGAM). He has been the founding chairman of Ankara Crisis and Politics Research Center (ANKASAM) since 2016.