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Joint Statement: Further Progress during Fifth Negotiating Round between the United States and Chile

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George Mason University:

Free trade negotiations between the U.S. and Chile advanced in the fifth round of talks, which will conclude today in Washington, D.C. Ambassador Osvaldo Rosales, lead negotiator for the Chilean delegation, and U.S. lead negotiator, Regina Vargo, agreed over five days of meetings, that both parties made substantial progress in consolidating their respective text proposals into joint working documents that will form the basis of future rounds of talks. In preparation for the next round, the negotiators established the means by which they plan to put forward their initial offers for tariff reductions in July.

Additionally, each of the 17 negotiating groups held substantive discussions that continued to reflect the U.S. and Chile's shared commitment to free trade and economic integration. Also, a negotiating group was established to discuss the larger institutional issues which will define the agreement. The parties reaffirmed their goal that the U.S.-Chile FTA be a state of the art agreement, setting high standards for such agreements in the Western Hemisphere and throughout the world.

The parties agreed to meet again for a sixth round of talks in Santiago, Chile, from July 23 - 27 to be followed by monthly meetings planned from September through the end of the year. This meeting schedule reflects both parties' intentions to conclude the agreement as rapidly as possible. The negotiations were launched on December 2000 in Washington, D.C. The second round of negotiations took place January 8-11, 2001 in Santiago, Chile, the third in Miami March 26-30, and the fourth round was held in Santiago, May 10-17.

The delegations expressed their appreciation to George Mason University, which provided the facilities for the negotiations.

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