

Washington, D.C., March 2, 2010

**Statement by H.E. José Goñi, Ambassador of Chile to the United States,
Regarding Earthquake Relief Efforts**

The Chilean government would like to extend its gratitude to the US government and the people of the United States that have generously offered their aid and support through this Embassy and Chilean Consulates in the US.

An intense and devastating earthquake destroyed vast areas of Chile at 3:34 am, last Saturday, February 27th, with its epicenter in Concepción, Chile's second most important and densely populated city. As a result of it, more than seven hundred victims are so far accounted and it may take some time until the final number of casualties is established. However, it is highly possible that this figure will keep increasing in the coming days.

After a detailed assessment of the situation, the Chilean government has requested aid from the US government consisting essentially of field hospitals, power generators, water-purification plants, rescue teams, medical crews, tents, satellite telephones, temporary infrastructure for people in need, and dialysis autonomous systems.

A Bank of America account in the US will be open tonight. The number of this account will be released and it will be also in our web site www.chile-usa.org

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will visit Chile to express –on behalf of the US Government- her solidarity and concern for the difficult situation that is affecting our country. During her stay in Santiago, she will meet with President Michelle Bachelet, and President-Elect Sebastián Piñera.

A number of private initiatives to assist Chile are being coordinated throughout the United States. This Embassy will timely inform about them on its web site www.chile-usa.org, as soon as they enter into force.

EMBASSY OF CHILE
1732 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

Currently, land line services have been affected and are intermittent and mobile phone numbers sometimes are difficult to reach, but this situation is progressively being restored.

The Department of State has informed that there have been no reports of American citizen fatalities or injuries. While telephone and email communications become operative, it may be easier to contact family and friends in Chile using SMS (cell text message) or other forms of social media such as Twitter or Facebook.

If you are concerned about a U.S. citizen, the State Department has a special link in its homepage to deal with this kind of situation.

José Goñi
Ambassador of Chile to the United States