

**Remarks by
U.S. Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans
Chilean-American Chamber of Commerce
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[As prepared for delivery]

Thank you. I am delighted to be here. I look forward to your questions, but first let me introduce some of the people with me today.

Hector Barreto -- Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration

Ross Connelly-- Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the U.S. Overseas Investment Corporation.

Maria Cino - Director General of the Department of Commerce Foreign Commercial Service.

Their agenda is your agenda, and they are here to work for you.

And I've brought along a very enthusiastic group of American business executives.

Like you, they represent America's finest. They represent one of our greatest exports: entrepreneurs -- people with good ideas, people willing to take a risk.

And they represent some of our most dynamic sectors: energy, services, machinery and equipment, information and communications technologies.

They are here because they know what I know:

Chile is a great market!

Chile stands out in Latin America for its stability, values, economic policies, ethics and respect for the rules of the game.

Chile consistently comes out on top in regional economic surveys and rankings of favorable business climates.

Chile cares, as much as the United States, that transparency is rewarded and corruption is stamped out.

Chile is one of the U.S.'s top 50 trading partners. Americans are the largest single group of investors in Chile. We like to do business together.

President Bush supports this trade mission.

He supports it because he realizes that six billion people live on this planet, and three billion of them live on less than two dollars a day. That's not right. That's not good. And we have the power to do something about it.

President Bush understands that free markets and free enterprise are the keys unlocking social, political and economic potential around the world.

That's why the President is working hard to complete negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas by January 2005--a free trade area encompassing 34 countries and 800 million people--the largest in the world.

That's why the President fought so hard to win Trade Promotion Authority from the Congress and wasted no time in using this authority to open trade talks.

That's why the President notified Congress October 1 of his intention to begin free trade talks with all Central America.

That's why the Administration proposes to eliminate tariffs on all industrial and consumer goods by 2015.

And, finally, that's why we are optimistic about current free trade agreement talks with Chile.

Right now our nations are engaged in tough trade negotiations in Washington.

As much as I would like to-I cannot yet announce success.

However, you can feel the excitement in Washington, an excitement for a Free Trade Agreement with Chile that will usher in a Free Trade Area for the Americas, and a new era of hemispheric prosperity and growth.

The United States wants a free trade pact with Chile. We are democracies with similar codes of ethics. Both of us have goods to sell each other. That's a win-win partnership.

And such an expanded trade partnership would make the lives our people all the better.

For trade is ultimately about freedom.

In an environment of free-enterprise, a spirit of competition takes hold, leading to more innovation, which leads to greater productivity, which leads to more economic growth, which leads to a better quality of life, which leads to a world that lives in peace and prosperity.

That is not a miracle-this is the gospel of capitalism, open markets and free enterprise.

You, in this room, know the truth of this message. You are the people who make it work. You build the businesses. You manufacture the products. You deliver the services. You create the jobs. And you meet the payrolls.

You, not government, are the engine driving our growth, our prosperity and our opportunity.

And in doing so, you unlock prosperity and hope for the people of the Americas.

Everywhere I go I highlight U.S. companies that invest abroad and understand the importance of giving back to society-the duty to serve a call greater than self.

I'm proud of how American companies integrate themselves into the Chilean community and how you contribute to Chile's well-being.

Esso Chile's (Exxon Mobil) 22-year support of medical assistance to burned children, is an excellent example of Corporate Stewardship.

More than 65,000 Chilean children have been fully rehabilitated at the burn center Esso helps fund.

Esso is working to build another center in the north. And Esso involves the community, as well, collecting funds with Esso dealers throughout Chile.

Everyone benefits when American companies practice American values of service, of volunteerism and of social responsibilities.

Corporate Stewardship enriches communities and improves the quality of life for both the provider of the service and the recipient.

Let me close by saying, the prosperity of millions depends upon the success of our Chilean-American partnership.

Today we are at the dawn of the legendary 21st Century we dreamed of, in our youth.

Let us together use trade to shape it.

Together, we can improve the lives of those in our two great nations -enhance the prosperity of our countries, strengthen the soul of our hemisphere, and lead the way to a better tomorrow.

That's a tall order. It is also the chance of a lifetime.

Thank you.