

Saturday, 4 November 2017

**Subject:** A letter from Chile

Dear All:

Upon crossing the vast deserts of central Argentina, the Andes announce Chile and the west coast of the Pacific. Approaching the airport of Santiago is spectacular, and worth the long flights from the other part of the globe. Invited by the Heidelberg Centre of Latin American studies and Dr Andrea Lucas Garin, I spent a week, giving lectures on PPMs, climate change and common concern. Andrea, who visited WTI twice in completing her PhD on climate change and regional trade agreements (Cambio Climático y acuerdos comerciales regionales, ediciones Universidad Finis Terrae, Santiago de Chile 2017) was an excellent and charming host working hard in research at terra finis University and coordinating the Heidelberg Master programme. I also met Alicia Froh Frohmann on a panel who visited WTI twice and produced a study for CEPAL on defining environmental standards in international trade law. It was nice to hear that both had enjoyed their time in Berne; but we still can learn from them in terms of hospitality. I know that Rodrigo was involved in planning the trip, and I very much would like to thank him for all the contacts. He must miss his city!

It might be interesting for WTI to increase cooperation beyond the Institute of International Studies and extend it to the Heidelberg Centre, the more so that the MPI Heidelberg and Anne Peters have lost interest and international economic law no longer is strongly represented. The part time students of the programme made an excellent impression.

Returning to Santiago after many years was exciting. A vibrant city, with new and modern business areas and impressive modern architecture, in particular le Golf, emerged since I was here in the 1990s. I wish we would have the courage in Switzerland to do similar projects. On the other time scale of history, visiting the Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino was a special and impressive experience, and as much as listening to a street orchestra of young violinists, violas and celli intoning familiar operas and symphonies with a smile on their face, just enjoying the play and life. Chile today ranks third in terms of HDI in the Americas, and hardly any longer is a developing country as long as you stay downtown. Traveling to Valparaiso at the coast showed stark discrepancy with the country side, except for the Casa Blanca Valley with its vast vineyards producing Cabernet Sauvignon (Reminded me the important role of Chile in negotiating GIs in the TRIPs negotiations). The country faces a divide which may amount to an incurring time-bomb.

Valparaiso was an experience on its own. It hardly could be further away from Europe, but it has essentially remained European. The fire engines are still called Feuerwehr. The houses with all their murals, the narrow streets up and down the hill are part of the UNCESCO world heritage with all their murals, and beautiful roses splendidly blooming in ocean winds. Catholic, Anglican, protestant churches next to each other, a cosmopolitan melting pot in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. What can we learn from it for today's challenges in migration? I leave that with you.

Have a good week-end,

Thomas

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