Embassy of India
Santiago
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Speech for Ambassador Abhilasha Joshi on the occasion of the signing of the MoU for the establishment of an ICCR Chair of Indian Studies at the University of Chile on 29 October 2026

Mr. Ricardo Gamboa Valenzuela, Director, Institute of International Studies, University of Chile,

Distinguished faculty members,

Representatives of the University of Chile,

My colleagues from the Embassy,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Buenas Tardes!

It gives me immense pleasure to be here today for the signing of the **Memorandum of Understanding** between the **Indian Council for Cultural Relations** (ICCR) and the **University of Chile** for the establishment of an **ICCR Chair of Indian Studies**. Today's occasion marks an **important milestone in the growing educational and cultural cooperation between India and Chile**. It reflects our shared commitment to strengthening **academic engagement**, promoting mutual understanding and **bringing our people closer through education and knowledge**.

The journey towards this important initiative began in **early 2025**, when discussions were initiated between the Embassy of India and the University of Chile to explore opportunities for deeper academic collaboration. Over the past several months, these discussions have

progressed through **sustained engagement and a shared vision** for expanding cooperation in Indian Studies.

I am particularly pleased that these efforts have culminated in the signing of this MoU today. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the leadership and faculty of the University of Chile, particularly the **Institute of International Studies**, for their enthusiasm, cooperation and commitment in taking this initiative forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India and Chile enjoy **warm and friendly relations**, built on **shared democratic values**, mutual respect and growing cooperation across diverse sectors. While our bilateral engagement has expanded significantly in areas such as trade, investment, science and technology, education and culture remain equally important pillars of our partnership.

India is home to one of the **world's oldest living civilizations**, with a rich intellectual heritage encompassing philosophy, literature, languages, mathematics, science and diverse cultural traditions. At the same time, **modern India is a dynamic centre of innovation**, technology and higher education. The establishment of the ICCR Chair will provide an **important platform for Chilean students, scholars and researchers to engage more closely with India's rich intellectual traditions, contemporary developments and evolving role in the world**.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations has played a significant role in promoting cultural and academic exchanges between India and countries across the world. Through its academic chairs in foreign universities, **ICCR seeks to encourage a deeper understanding of India while fostering meaningful dialogue between academic communities**.

I am confident that the Chair at the University of Chile will contribute to this objective by facilitating teaching, academic discussions, research and greater interaction between scholars from our two countries. The **University of Chile**, with its **distinguished academic legacy** and **longstanding contribution to higher education and research**, provides an excellent institutional setting for this initiative. I believe this partnership will open new avenues for collaboration and encourage greater interest in Indian Studies among Chilean students and academics.

Beyond academic engagement, initiatives such as these also serve a larger purpose. They help build **lasting connections between societies**, **promote appreciation of different perspectives** and **strengthen the foundations of friendship between nations**. As India and Chile continue to deepen their bilateral partnership, I see considerable potential for expanding cooperation between our universities, research institutions, faculty members and students. Today's agreement is an encouraging step in that direction.

Before concluding, I would once again like to thank Mr. Ricardo Gamboa Valenzuela and the entire team at the University of Chile for their valuable support and collaboration. I also acknowledge the efforts of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and all those who have contributed to bringing this initiative to fruition.

I am confident that this Chair will become a meaningful and enduring bridge of knowledge, culture and friendship between India and Chile.

Muchas gracias.