

September 21, 2022

The Honorable Juan Gabriel Valdes
Ambassador
Embassy of Chile in the United States
1732 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Ambassador Valdes:

The United States-Chile relationship has been a crucial alliance that promotes our common interests and shared democratic values in the Western Hemisphere. I appreciate the Chilean government's past actions to decisively stamp out the ancient poison of antisemitism from our region. It is for this reason that I am deeply disappointed that President Boric declined to accept the credentials of Israel's newly appointed ambassador. This decision will certainly have negative consequences for Chile, Chile's Jewish community, and supporters of the United States and Israel in the Americas.

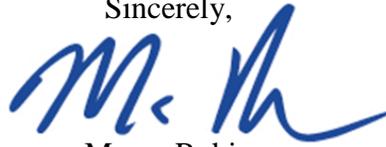
While President Boric has defended his decision to refuse Ambassador Gil Artzyeli's credentials due to his desire to supposedly stand in solidarity with Palestinians, his decision ignores the history of relations between Chile's Palestinian community, the largest outside of the Middle East, and its thriving Jewish community. For decades, these two communities have lived side by side in Chile without major confrontation. Unfortunately, in recent years, Chile has seen a concerning rise in anti-Israel and antisemitic incidents, as has the United States and other nations around the world.

These incidents have become even more prevalent after statements by your president in support of deceptive and unsubstantiated claims regarding Israel's policies in the West Bank. This includes the increase of anti-Semitic language online and even violent attacks against Jewish individuals. This wave of anti-Semitism includes the misguided Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, which seeks to unfairly target Israel and limit its access to the investment and funding it needs in order to provide for the wellbeing of its Jewish and Arab citizens. The fact that Hamas, a foreign terrorist organization whose rockets have killed countless Jewish and Arab Israeli civilians, praised President Boric's decision to reject Ambassador Artzyeli's credentials further emboldens those that plan antisemitic attacks.

I understand that your government has issued an apology to Ambassador Artzyeli and has rescheduled the ceremony to accept his credentials on September 30, 2022. In order to reverse the trend of rising antisemitism in Chile, I urge you to convey to your government that President Boric should accept Ambassador Artzyeli's credentials without delay, issue an apology to Chile's Jewish community, and commit to opposing antisemitism in all of its forms.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator