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A CONSTRUCTIVE REFLECTION ON CHILE'S SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

AGENDA

Formal statements in support of rigorous dialogue, institutional coordination, and national development

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A GENERAL REVIEW

The Minister of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation, Dr. Ximena Lincolao Gates, represents an important public figure at a demanding moment for Chile. Her professional path reflects perseverance, intellectual capacity, international experience, and a notable commitment to science, technology, innovation, and human capital development. These qualities deserve recognition, especially in a country that urgently needs to strengthen the bridge between scientific knowledge, productive transformation, and social progress. Nevertheless, the design and implementation of new public policies in science and innovation inevitably generate tensions. Some groups may feel that the new priorities, language, or institutional methods depart from frameworks to which they have long been accustomed. Such concerns should not be dismissed. In a democratic and intellectually mature society, disagreement is not a weakness; rather, it is an opportunity to examine assumptions, correct deficiencies, and build a broader national consensus. Chile faces structural constraints that cannot be ignored. It is a country with limited resources, moderate levels of innovation and technology transfer, and a patenting culture that has not yet become one of its

strongest institutional assets. These limitations affect universities, research centres, technology-based companies, public agencies, and the productive sector. Therefore, the challenge is not merely administrative; it is strategic, cultural, and developmental. At the same time, Chile has highly qualified people who are fully capable of addressing these challenges with seriousness, technical competence, and a sense of national responsibility. The country has researchers, engineers, entrepreneurs, public servants, and academic leaders with the knowledge needed to strengthen the connection between scientific production and economic, environmental, and social needs. The key task is to align these capacities around a coherent long-term vision. For this reason, the current debate should not be reduced to personal criticism or ideological simplification. What is required is a rigorous and comprehensive study of the strengths and weaknesses of the national science, technology, knowledge, and innovation ecosystem. Such a study should identify bottlenecks in financing, governance, technology transfer, intellectual property, patenting, regional development, internationalisation, and collaboration between universities and industry.

Relevant Issues for a Serious National Discussion

Policy axis	Purpose of the analysis
Resource allocation	Define priorities that balance excellence, territorial development, basic science, applied research, and measurable social value.
Innovation and technology transfer	Strengthen the path from scientific discovery to productive implementation, including university-industry collaboration.
Patenting and intellectual property	Build a more robust culture of protection, licensing, commercialisation, and international projection of Chilean knowledge.
Institutional coordination	Improve coordination among ministries, ANID, CORFO, universities, regional governments, and the private sector.
Human capital and talent	Recognise and mobilise qualified people capable of leading complex scientific, technological, and industrial challenges.

FINAL CONSIDERATION

Chile needs a science and innovation policy that is ambitious, realistic, and institutionally responsible. The Ministry can play a decisive role by promoting dialogue, reducing unnecessary fragmentation, and articulating the contributions of universities, research centres, industry, and civil society. The central issue is not whether change is comfortable. The central issue is whether Chile is prepared to transform its scientific capacity into innovation, patents, technological development, and better opportunities for its citizens. That task requires leadership, prudence, evidence, and the willingness to listen to all serious voices in the national ecosystem. In this spirit, any evaluation of the current policy direction should be conducted with balance and intellectual honesty. Recognition of the Minister's merits is

compatible with a demanding analysis of public policy. Respectful criticism, when properly grounded, can strengthen institutions and contribute to a more modern, innovative, and inclusive Chile.

Keywords: Science and innovation policy; Technology transfer; Intellectual property; University-industry collaboration.

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