

Country-Specific Questions: Chile, Pinochet

QUESTION

Isn't it affront to democracy in the region that Augusto Pinochet can assume a seat for life in the Senate? What is Canada's position?

SUGGESTED REPLY

- The retirement of General Augusto Pinochet as Head of the Chilean Army and his move to the Chilean Senate is an important historical and symbolic moment for Chile.
- General Pinochet's retirement from the Army and his decision to become a lifetime member of the Chilean Senate have long been expected. Indeed, they are provided for in the Chilean Constitution. The Chilean Government has accepted General Pinochet's decision to become a Senator.
- In the years since Chile's return to democracy, Canada has developed a strong political and economic relationship with Chile. Chile has become a strongly democratic country, with a good human rights record. General Pinochet's move to the Senate does nothing to change that.
- The Chilean Government has recently appointed a new generation of military officers to replace the former military commanders, including General Pinochet. The new commanders were selected, in part, because they had no involvement in past human rights abuses.