

~ Think Together about the Relocation of the National Diet and Related Organizations ~

Separately located Capital Functions in the Republic of Chile

(As of March 2006)

Santiago has been the capital of the Republic of Chile since the 16th Century, and the Presidential Palace, other government offices, and the Supreme Court are located in Santiago. The National Congress, however, has been located in Valparaíso since 1990.

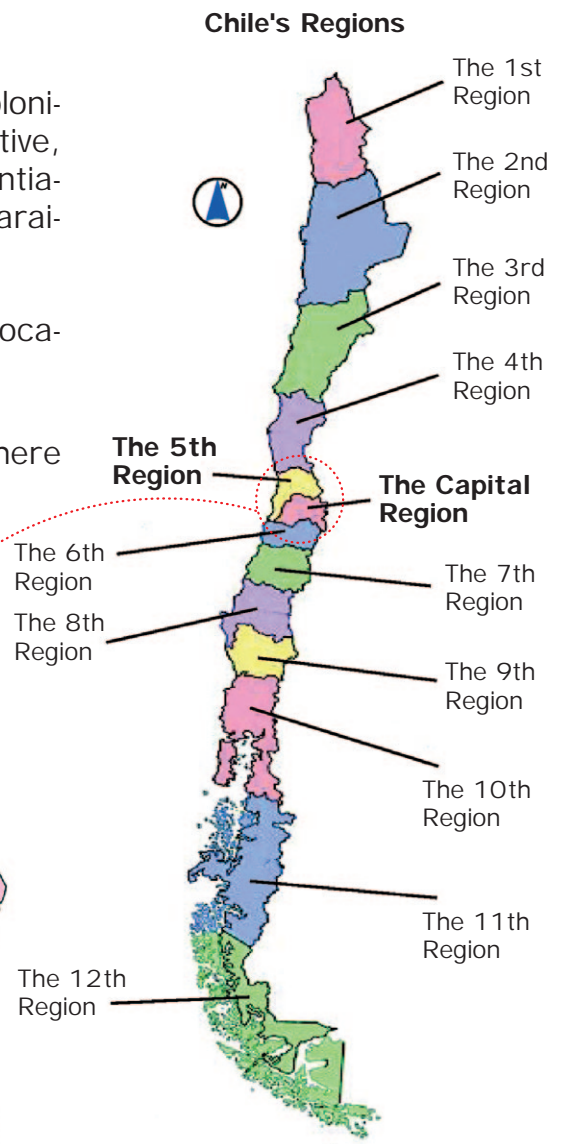
Valparaíso, where Congress is located, is Chile's second largest city. Valparaíso is a port city on the Pacific Ocean, 120 kilometers north-west of Santiago. The highway is the main means of transportation between Santiago and Valparaíso, taking approximately 90 minutes by car from one city to the other. We would like to introduce Chile as an overseas example of separately located capital functions.

1. The History of Decentralization

Santiago has been the capital of Chile from Spanish colonization and independence to today. Historically, the legislative, administrative, and judicial branches were all located in Santiago; however, the legislative branch was relocated to Valparaíso in 1990 and has been there since then.

There are three major explanations concerning the relocation of the National Congress. They are as follows:

1. In order to decentralize capital functions
2. In order to stimulate the economy of the region where Congress was relocated to
3. As a symbol of the major administrative reform carried out by the government at the time



2. Political System

(1) Legislative Branch

Chile has the bicameral National Congress, composed of the Senate with 38 Senators and the Chamber of Deputies with 120 Deputies. The construction of the present National Congress building started on October 20, 1988, and was completed in 1990.

(2) Administrative Branch

The President is the head of the government. The Cabinet members of the central government, intendentes who govern regions, and governors who govern provinces (regions are divided into provinces) are all appointed by the President. The President serves a four-year term and cannot be reelected for a second term.

Provinces are divided into municipalities. Mayors who govern municipalities are elected by direct election.

(3) Judicial Branch

The highest Court is the Supreme Court. The Constitutional Court, however, judges issues concerning the Constitution. The Constitutional Court has the power to revoke a law if it declares the law unconstitutional.

3. Liaison and Coordination and Transfer of People Between the National Congress and the Capital

(1) Liaison and Coordination Between the National Congress and the Capital

The Congress Secretariat has their Santiago branch office in the old Congress building in Santiago. There are, however, no facilities for Congress members, such as a congressional office building, in Santiago. Concerning the executive branch, many ministries station their legislative-related teams in the Congress building in Valparaiso.

(2) Transfer of People between Santiago and Valparaiso during the Congress Sessions

The National Congress opens on March 1 and closes on January 31. During Congress sessions, the plenary sessions and committees are held in Valparaiso from Tuesdays to Thursdays every week. Most Congress members go home on the necessary days alone, coming back on the same day. The Congress Secretariat pays the transportation costs for Congress members between the two cities as part of their annual salary. During the four years from 2002, ministers made 436 return trips in total, and other government staff members made 8,000 return trips in total to and from Valparaiso.

Every Monday, Congress members work in Santiago, and many of them have their private offices in Santiago. Political parties' head offices are also located in Santiago, providing bases for Congress members' activities.



The present Congress building in Valparaiso



The former Congress building in Santiago



Presidential Palace (La Moneda Palace)



Supreme Court

On-Line Lecture Meetings Being Held

On-line lecture meetings are being held on MLIT's Web page for the Relocation of the National Diet and Related Organizations. Lecture meetings have been held with intellectuals in disciplines including academics and business. The following lectures have been newly added from September, 2006. Please visit the Web page at <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/iten/onlinelecture/index.html> for more information.

Prof. Kojiro Irikura (Visiting Professor at Aichi Institute of Technology, Visiting Researcher at the National Research Institute of Earth Science and Disaster Prevention)



Theme: Considerations for building a safe and secure nation
Summary

- The probability that a magnitude 7 earthquake will occur in Tokyo within 30 years is over 70 percent. We must strengthen our measures against such earthquakes, assuming that they shall occur someday.
- It is very important to prepare a system that will temporarily accommodate capital functions when a massive earthquake occurs. We must conceive of a capital as a dual system.
- Such a dual system should function on a daily basis. In order to achieve this, the system needs to have the minimum required human resources, as well as functions. We must consider such a dual system in order to build a safe and secure nation. This is a key point in the issue of capital function relocation.

★ T o p i c s

Children's Kasumigaseki Tour Days were Held

On Wednesday, August 23, and Thursday, August 24, Children's Kasumigaseki Tour Days for elementary and junior high school students were held. The tour programs included "Let's Enjoy the Virtual Experience of the New Capital Function City!". The program introduced the image of the new capital function city through virtual experience in a PC game. Children also saw a video introducing the environment-friendly and energy-saving new city, and enjoyed a quiz game on the relocation of the National Diet and related organizations.



Also, pamphlets and other materials were distributed. Despite the hot weather on both days, more children participated in the tour than last year. Children energetically and enthusiastically participated in the PC game and quiz, enjoying themselves.

Learning on the Relocation is Taking Place around Japan

On Tuesday, September 5, a third year student from Fujimigaoka Junior High School of Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, visited the Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT) for a workplace visit. After touring the MLIT facilities, MLIT staff briefly explained about the relocation of the National Diet and related organizations, using pamphlets and other materials. Then, the student enthusiastically asked questions, such as "What does your job involve specifically?" and "When do you feel your work is worthwhile and rewarding?"



Recent Major Activities Related to Relocating the National Diet and Related Organizations in Each Region

- For four days from August 28, the Fukushima Prefectural Government distributed pamphlets and promotion gifts, promoting the relocation of capital functions, at the Fukushima Furusato Information Center, which opened in the Furusato Kurashi Information Center in Ginza, Tokyo. The Fukushima Furusato Information Center provides consultation services for people who are considering moving to or having second homes in Fukushima Prefecture.
- From late July, the Tochigi Prefectural Residents' Council for the Relocation of the National Diet and Related Organizations started to display Nasu Area Route Maps at fourteen Road Stations (michinoeki) in the prefecture and three rest areas on the Tohoku Expressway, providing tourists with information on the candidate site for relocation, as well as serving as sightseeing maps.
- The Gifu Prefectural Government promoted capital function relocation at Omoshiro Kagakukan (Fascinating Science Hall) 2006 in Mizunami, held at Mizunami City Gymnasium from August 25 to 27, and at Forum Tono of Tokyo University's Research Center of Advanced Science and Technology, held at Ceramic Park Mino on September 1. Panels were exhibited and pamphlets were distributed to visitors to promote the significance and necessity of relocating the capital functions.

Accessing Various Information

Various information concerning the capital functions relocation has been provided on the MLIT Homepage on the Internet. Please visit this web-site.

Also if you are interested in items in this leaflet and others, please let us know. We are pleased to send related documents to you. We are awaiting your contact.

We are Waiting for Your Opinion

Address : Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division, National and Regional Planning Bureau, MLIT

1-2, Kasumigaseki 2-Chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8918 Japan

Homepage : <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/iten/index.html>

E-Mail : itenka@mlit.go.jp

Telephone : +81-3-5253-8366 FAX : +81-3-5253-1573