

Chile May Renew Relations With Bolivia

The New York Times
September 2, 2006

SANTIAGO, [Chile](#), Sept. 1 (Reuters) — Before the year is out, Chile could re-establish diplomatic ties severed nearly 30 years ago with its Andean neighbor [Bolivia](#), Chile's foreign minister said in an interview published Friday.

“Relations with Bolivia are on a strong footing,” Foreign Minister Alejandro Foxley told the newspaper La Segunda.

Asked if that meant full diplomacy could be resumed between the two countries this year, Mr. Foxley responded, “It’s possible.”

That was the most committed statement so far by the government of President Michelle Bachelet, who came to power in March and extended friendship to Bolivia.

Relations between the neighbors have been rocky for more than a century, since they clashed in a war that extended Chilean territory and took away mineral-rich Pacific coastal territory from Bolivia.

The two countries withdrew their ambassadors in 1978 during heated discussions over Bolivia's claims to ocean access and have not held official talks on resuming diplomatic relations since 1987, when the foreign ministers of both nations met and failed to reach an agreement.