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John Neagle

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## **Chilean Junta Approves Constitutional Reforms**

*by John Neagle*

*Category/Department: General*

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On June 14, Chile's military junta approved a series of reforms to the 1980 constitution, the product of a recent agreement between the government and opposition political groups. The reforms are to be ratified in a referendum to be announced by President Augusto Pinochet on June 15. Unidentified officials cited by AP said the referendum will occur in late July or early August. Junta member Air Force commander Gen. Fernando Matthei said the reforms "ensure a soft, controlled landing in the transition back to democracy." The reforms include replacement of a clause that prohibited marxism to one which does not ban ideologies. The government refused to eliminate a clause providing for its appointment of nine senators. In a compromise with the opposition, a new clause increases the membership of the Senate from 36 to 48. General elections are scheduled for Dec. 14. Pinochet was obligated to schedule the voting when he lost a referendum in October last year on extending his mandate to 1997. The president and congresspersons elected in December are to take office on March 11, 1990. (Basic data from AP, Xinhua, 06/14/89)

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