

Chile: Students Protest to Demand Universal Education

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The Confederation of Chilean Students, also known as Confech, is holding a march on Wednesday to reject and oppose the proposed reforms to higher education offered by the government, continuing the movement for universal higher education in Chile.

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The students are marching under the slogan: “advancing toward free public education, without debt.”

“We hope that all students, workers, officials, and those who believe that there must be deep changes in the education system can participate,” the President of the Federation of Students of the Catholic University, Sofia Barahona said.

The leaders of the Confech of Santiago have called the protests because they believe it is necessary to pressure the government from the streets in order to implement improvements to higher education.

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The fight for universal education access has become a swelling social movement in Chile, as many condemn President Michelle Bachelet's rolling back of many promised reforms.

In many protests in the past, state police have responded forcefully to demonstrators, using tear gas and water cannons to subdue the students.

“We call all Chileans to protest and express themselves, because this is the opportunity we have to rectify and dispute education in Chile,” Daniel Andrade, President of the Federation of Students of University of Chile said.

The protesters will march at 11 a.m. on Wednesday in Santiago and Valparaiso, as well as towns and cities.