



Rapa Nui, June 4th, 2026

To: His Excellency Mr. José Antonio Kast Rist
President of the Republic of Chile
Palacio de La Moneda, Santiago, Chile

Re: Request for the withdrawal of the proposed reform to Indigenous Law No. 19.253, which threatens the ancestral land, sacred sites, and self-determination of the Rapa Nui Nation

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Rapa Nui Nation, I respectfully address Your Excellency to express our deep concern and our firm rejection of the reform to Indigenous Law No. 19.253 announced on 1 June 2026 before the National Congress, which would allow ancestral land to be leased and mortgaged on the same terms as ordinary property and would thereby open the door to its permanent loss.

Under the law as it stands, indigenous land may be leased or mortgaged only within the same indigenous group, and subsistence land may not be charged at all. Removing that protection would mean that ancestral land could be mortgaged to banks and leased to parties outside the community; foreclosure or long-term lease would become a lawful route to dispossessing the Rapa Nui Nation of its territory. For us, the land is not a tradable asset: it holds more than 25,000 archaeological and sacred sites —over 1,000 *moai* and 703 *ahu*— and is, in the words of Law No. 19.253 itself, “the principal foundation of the existence and culture” of our Nation.

The relationship between the Kingdom of Rapa Nui and Chile rests on the act of 1888, which exists in two materially different versions. In the Rapanui understanding, King Atamu Tekena ceded only the administration of the island —reserving his investiture and the territorial integrity of Rapa Nui, in exchange for protection— and ceded neither sovereignty nor land. Chile’s own Commission for Historical Truth and New Deal with Indigenous Peoples (2003) acknowledged that the Rapanui text does not speak of ceding land or its property. The Rapa Nui Nation has never consented to the alienation of its territory. The 2026 reform would impose precisely what we have refused for over a century.

Chile is a State party to ILO Convention No. 169 and has endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, in its 2013 concluding observations on Chile (CERD/C/CHL/CO/19-21), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged the State to guarantee the full restitution of ancestral property and effective control over indigenous lands, territories and resources, and to carry out free, prior and informed consultation before any measure affecting them. The announced reform runs directly against those commitments.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that Your Excellency:

- Withdraw the proposed reform to Law No. 19.253 and refrain from advancing any measure that would permit the mortgage, lease, or alienation of ancestral indigenous land to parties outside the community;
- Carry out free, prior and informed consultation with the Rapa Nui Nation, in accordance with ILO Convention No. 169, before any decision affecting our territory;

- Comply with the 2013 CERD concluding observations (CERD/C/CHL/CO/19-21) and, in particular, carry out the full restitution of ancestral property and guarantee effective control over the lands, territories and resources of the Rapa Nui Nation;
- Honor the historical truth of 1888 and respect the self-determination of the Rapa Nui Nation.

We bring to Your Excellency's attention that the Rapa Nui Nation has raised this situation before the international community, including the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (Petition P-172-15), and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

We reaffirm our willingness to engage in good-faith dialogue, on the basis of respect for our territorial rights and our dignity as a Nation, and we look forward to a favorable response.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Respectfully,



Erity Teave Hey

Vice President

Parlamento Rapa Nui