

# Antofagasta to Host ENVIS 2026, Chile's Leading Social Engagement Event

The announcement was made within the framework of ENVIS 2025, developed in La Higuera, Coquimbo Region.

**El Mercurio de Calama**  
**Sunday, January 5**

Antofagasta has been announced as the next host city for the National Social Engagement Meeting (ENVIS) 2026, Chile's premier platform for dialogue and collaboration. Organized by Balloon Latam and the 3xi Corporation, ENVIS annually brings together various stakeholders from the social, business, academic, and government sectors, along with representatives of local communities, to collectively reflect on key issues for the country's development.

The announcement was made during ENVIS 2025, held on January 4 in La Higuera, Coquimbo Region. The event gathered approximately 1,500 participants from 14 regions across the country.

Sebastián Salinas, Executive Director of Balloon Latam, noted, "In the various dialogues that took place, even when opposing opinions emerged, there was a prevailing willingness to listen and understand the risks of division in the face of one of our greatest challenges: water scarcity and the urgent need to define a fair and sustainable management model."

At the conclusion of the event, Antofagasta was officially named the host city for the next meeting. The announcement was received by a delegation led by Mayor Sacha Razmilic and included Fernando Cortez, General Manager of the Antofagasta Industrial Association (AIA), Alicia Chaile, representative of the indigenous community of Peine, and René Muga, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at BHP Latin America, among other executives and guests.

"We are extremely proud to have been selected as the next host city for ENVIS 2026. We see this as a tremendous opportunity for Antofagasta to become the epicenter of social engagement," Mayor Razmilic stated following the announcement of the city's selection.

*Standing 3.5 Meters Tall, Amal Kicked Off the Teatro a Mil Festival on Friday:*

## **Amal, The Giant Puppet Strolled Through Estación Central**

She mimicked stepping off a train and interacted with dozens of children who watched her blink and move her mouth. Operated by three puppeteers simultaneously.

**Las Últimas Noticias**  
**Saturday, January 4**

There was great anticipation this Friday at Estación Central as Amal—a 3.5-meter-tall puppet whose name means "hope" in Arabic—made her debut to launch the activities of the Teatro a Mil Festival. Amal represents a young Syrian refugee and marked the start of the festival's free and paid events scheduled throughout January (you can check the program here: <https://acortar.link/ICNIV2>). The event was presented by Carmen Romero, director of Teatro a Mil; Carolina Arredondo, Minister of Cultures, Arts, and Heritage; Eric Martin, president of the State Railways Company (EFE); and René Muga, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at BHP.

Dozens of children, accompanied by their parents, waited eagerly for Amal outside the iconic train station. They watched as the massive puppet stepped out of a train car alongside smaller puppets. Once raised upright, Amal moved toward the center of the station, where a crowd awaited her.

Amal was an instant sensation, captivating children as she approached and gently touched them with her hands. The audience marveled at her ability to blink, move her lips, and even take small hops and dance. After walking through the station, Amal exited to the Alameda sidewalk and reached the corner of Exposición Street, where she was loaded onto a truck. She was constantly surrounded by children at every moment.

Later in the day, Amal's itinerary included a visit to the Gabriela Mistral Cultural Center and an appearance at 8:00 PM in Plaza de la Constitución, where she was welcomed by a children's choir.

Amal was built by the South African Handspring Puppet Company and produced by The Walk Productions. Since 2021, she has traveled through 17 countries, raising awareness and funds for the NGO Choose Love, which supports refugee children worldwide.

Nicolás Eyzaguirre, the artistic coordinator for Amal in Chile, commented, "EFE, the State Railways Company, showed incredible willingness to make this event happen here. The desire to see Amal was immense, which is very rewarding for us. Organizing the logistics was challenging; for example, when Amal stepped onto the platform, all the electric circuits powering the trains were temporarily cut off to eliminate any risk. This required careful planning to find the right moment between one train's arrival and the next one's departure."

Regarding Amal's setup, Eyzaguirre explained, "The team is very professional and experienced. They are precise with timing and capable of assembling Amal discreetly, whether on the street or at a station, ensuring the magic is preserved."

The puppet requires 11 team members, including five puppeteers. "One person stands inside Amal, using stilts and hand controls to operate her eyes and mouth, while two others handle her arms. Given the physical demands of operating the puppet, the team rotates to prevent injuries, especially on days with multiple performances."

On Friday, Amal demonstrated her impressive abilities, such as crouching down to three meters to touch children with her arms and being swiftly laid flat and lifted again to avoid her head hitting a station overhang.

"That was her star move. Her arms are fully articulated," noted Eyzaguirre, who estimated the puppet weighs several dozen kilos. To keep her as lightweight as possible, she is made with materials like bent canes, plywood sheets, strings, and translucent fabric, similar to other Handspring Puppet Company creations.

*General Vote Expected Tomorrow*

## **Against the Clock: Grau Aims to Finalize Permit Reform in January**

The Economy Minister is committed to completing the review of the bill this month and ensuring its implementation within the year.

**El Mercurio de Santiago**  
**EYN**

The Senate's Economy Commission has signed a protocol agreement with the government to advance the reform aimed at addressing "permisología" (excessive bureaucracy). As part of this agreement, a vote on the proposal to legislate the bill is scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday.

In this context, Economy Minister Nicolás Grau expressed his hope that the review of amendments and the vote in the Senate chamber will be resolved within the remaining weeks of Congress's current session. "It's quite ambitious to think that we can complete the third review (in the Chamber of Deputies) by January, but I will do my best to make it happen. If not, we should expect to address that third review in March. In other words, between January and March, this bill will be approved," Grau stated in an interview with Chilevisión Noticias.

Grau also emphasized that with this timeline, the government aims for the reform's full implementation during its current term. Preparations for complementary regulations are already underway. "Currently, all these authorizations are disorganized and uncoordinated. The bill organizes them into categories and types of permits, each with associated procedures and maximum timelines," he explained.

He added that a key regulation, which allocates existing authorizations into these categories, has already been completed following consultations with sector-specific services in 2023.

However, Grau acknowledged that one outstanding issue is defining the thresholds that will determine when certain authorizations can be replaced by sworn statements. "This will be a task for 2025, but our goal is to fully implement this law during our administration," he affirmed.

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Minister Grau aims to finalize the "permisología" bill by March.

*Máximo Pacheco, chairman of Codelco's board:*

## **“We Are 70% to 80% of the Way to Fulfilling the Requirements for the Codelco-SQM Contract to Be Approved”**

The executive highlights Codelco's 2024 figures and predicts production will return to 1.7 million tons of copper by the end of the decade.

**Diario Financiero – January 6, 2025**

**By Valeria Ibarra**

For Codelco, 2024 marked the beginning of its journey to recover its historical production of 1.7 million metric tons of copper. The company increased its EBITDA by 35% compared to the previous year, reaching \$5.5 billion in cash generation. Contributions to the treasury rose 13% to \$1.5 billion, and it overcame losses of \$591 million from 2023, returning to profitability. In 2024, Codelco also doubled its exploration investments and achieved a historic Capex, positioning itself as the global leader in copper mining investment.

This is how Máximo Pacheco, chairman of Codelco's board, described the company's achievements in an interview where he reflected on 2024 milestones and outlined plans for 2025, which will include the formalization of its partnership with SQM to develop lithium in the Salar de Atacama.

The executive joked about the company's potential new name: “It should already be called ‘Codelcol’” due to the leadership it will assume in global lithium production when the alliance with the Chilean private miner is finalized. Under the original plan, the Codelco-SQM partnership was to begin on January 1, 2025. The partnership involves a joint venture to exploit lithium in the Salar de Atacama until 2060, with the state holding 50% plus one share. While significant progress has been made—such as approvals from Belgium, Italy, Japan (with no conditions), Brazil, and Japan for free competition; restructuring within SQM; and compliance with regulatory procedures—several authorizations remain pending.

- The new Codelco-SQM partnership was supposed to start on January 1, 2025, but it hasn't. Why?

“This is a highly complex legal, financial, commercial, and labor partnership. Each element needs to be fulfilled to make it operational. One critical requirement is for Chilean authorities to certify that the partnership has no issues from a competition perspective.”

- When do you expect a decision from Chile's National Economic Prosecutor's Office (FNE)?

“We have submitted all the required information. They've requested additional details, which we've provided. I am optimistic that with everything we've submitted and the discussions held, we are close to securing approval from the FNE.”

- Will the partnership be operational in the first quarter of 2025?

“What matters is that the partnership is designed to start from January 1, 2025. If we can't begin in the first few months, all associated benefits will retroactively apply from the start date. While we aim to finalize this as soon as possible, the benefits are secured regardless of a short delay.”

- What are the most critical pending requirements?

“There's the FNE's approval in Chile, and international competition authorities also play a role. Additionally, the ongoing indigenous consultation process in the Salar de Atacama is fundamental. Once these are completed, we can finalize the contract between Corfo and our subsidiary, Tarar, and submit it to the Comptroller General for approval.”

- How much progress has been made on fulfilling the requirements?

“We are 70% to 80% of the way there. The indigenous consultation is crucial for formalizing the partnership.”

- What happens if the indigenous consultation fails?

“I don't consider that scenario. We've held numerous meetings and discussions. Just last week, the President hosted 21 Atacameño community leaders at La Moneda. There's a strong animus societatis.”

- Can you estimate the contract's value?

"Between 2025 and 2030, 70% or more of lithium's operational margin will go to the Chilean state. This is a multi-billion-dollar business."

- Could the investigative commission in the Chamber of Deputies reverse the agreement?

"The decision lies with Codelco's board of directors."

## **More Copper Production**

- Did copper production increase in 2024?

"Yes, 2024 was crucial as we addressed long-standing issues that caused a 300,000-ton production loss in 2022 and 2023. Production in 2024 was slightly higher year-over-year, but if we compare August-December 2024 with the same period in 2023, we produced 70,000 more tons, a 12% increase. December 2024 saw the highest production since December 2019, exceeding 160,000 tons."

- What are the financial implications?

"Our 2024 EBITDA grew by 35% to \$5.5 billion. Contributions to the treasury rose by 12%-13% to approximately \$1.5 billion. We also returned to profitability. This is, by far, Chile's best business."

## **Investments**

- 2024 was a year of acquisitions, including Quebrada Blanca and LPI. How do these investments align with Codelco's goals?

"2024 was a record year for projects and investments, surpassing \$4.6 billion in Capex. This positions us as a global leader in copper mining investment. Additional investments included 10% of Quebrada Blanca (\$520 million) and LPI (\$244 million)."

- Will this pace continue in 2025?

"Yes. We have six projects planned for the decade, valued at \$33.1 billion. Exploration investments will also nearly double, from an average of \$83 million annually in 2023-2024 to \$150 million annually between 2025 and 2029, including our partnership with Rio Tinto on Nuevo Cobre."

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"In 2024, we crossed the productive valley in copper and are ready to climb back to 1.7 million tons by the decade's end."

"Codelco is positioning itself as the global leader in copper mining investment."

"For the Codelco-SQM contract, 70% or more of the operational margin will go to the Chilean state between 2025 and 2030, amounting to several billion dollars."