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FROM THE MID-
ATLANTIC REGION

EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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(From left to right) Victoria Villarruel, Javier Milei and Martín Menem during the presidential inauguration (photo: HCD Press).

PRESIDENT JAVIER MILEI TOOK OFFICE

On December 10, the new President of Argentina, Mr. Javier Gerardo Milei, took office for a four-year term. The presidential inauguration was held at the National Congress in the presence of Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other foreign authorities, former presidents and national and foreign authorities, entrepreneurs, family members and other guests.

After taking the oath of office before the Legislative Assembly, the President gave his inaugural address on the Congress esplanade. He predicted “a new era of peace, prosperity, growth and development, freedom and progress” for the Argentine Republic.

After painting a very somber diagnosis of the inherited economic and social situation and the multiple challenges the country will have to face to regain its fiscal solvency, President Milei outlined the path he foresees to ensure a brighter future.

Quoting President Julio Argentino Roca, who governed our country on two occasions -at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century- President Javier Milei said, “Nothing great, nothing stable or lasting is achieved in the world, regarding the freedom of men and the enhancement of people, without undertaking supreme efforts and painful sacrifices.”

Along these lines, the President emphasized that “the only way out of poverty is with more freedom.”

After his inaugural address, President Milei went to the Casa Rosada, where he received Heads of State and foreign delegations, delivered a speech from the balcony of the Casa Rosada in front of the citizens who went to greet him at the Plaza de Mayo, then took the oath of office of his cabinet ministers.

That afternoon, President Javier Milei participated in an

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interreligious ceremony in the Buenos Aires Cathedral and in the evening attended a gala at the prestigious Teatro Colón. ■

President Javier Milei speaks to Argentines from the balcony of the Casa Rosada (Photo: Office of President Javier Milei).



MINISTER LUIS CAPUTO ANNOUNCED A PACKAGE OF MEASURES AIMED AT ACHIEVING A FISCAL BALANCE

On Tuesday, December 12, the Minister of Economy, Luis Caputo, announced ten measures he described as focused on addressing the genesis of the current severe economic and social crisis, which is in his view the same root cause of the past crises in the country's economic history: a persistent fiscal deficit.

In his message to the nation, Caputo identified ten measures:

1. State labor contracts that are less than one year old will not be renewed.
2. The national government's advertising in the media will be suspended for one year.
3. The number of government ministries will be cut from

18 to 9, and secretariats from 106 to 54. This downsizing of the national government's structure represents a cut of 50% in the number of top senior officials and 34% of political positions.

4. Discretionary transfers from the State to the provinces will be reduced to a minimum.

5. The State will not tender new public works and will cancel those tenders that have yet to be started.

6. Energy and transportation subsidies will be significantly reduced.

7. The "Potenciar Trabajo" plans will be maintained in accordance with the 2023 budget guidelines, and social programs without intermediaries will be strengthen.

Minister of Economy Luis Caputo.



THESE MEASURES REPRESENT
“THE BACKDROP OF THE
STRUCTURAL REFORMS THAT
WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE
COMING WEEKS”.

Georgieva, in a post on the X social network, welcomed the “decisive measures” announced by President Milei and his economic team as “an important step toward restoring stability and rebuilding the country’s economic potential”. ■

8. The official exchange rate will increase to 800 pesos per dollar. In parallel, the “Impuesto País” tax on imports and duties on non-agricultural exports will be temporarily increased.

9. The SIRA import system will be replaced by a transparent statistical and information system on imports that does not require the approval of previous licenses.

10. The amount of the “Universal Child Allowance” will be doubled, and the “Alimentar Food Card” will increase by 50%.

On Wednesday, December 13, presidential spokesperson Manuel Adorni provided more details and emphasized that the reported fiscal measures aim to achieve zero deficit. Along these lines, Adorni mentioned that the national government’s estimate is that 2023 will close with a deficit, after interest payments of 5.2% of GDP. In this regard, the measures announced by Minister Caputo have generated an expectation that this deficit will be eliminated in 2024, with a cut on the spending side of more than 3 points of the product and an increase on the Treasury resources side estimated at 2 percentage points.

These are measures focused on the fiscal front but which represent, according to Adorni, “the backdrop of the structural reforms that will be announced in the coming weeks”.

Following the announcement by Minister Caputo of these measures, the Managing Director of the IMF, Kristalina



Argentina's stand at the "State of the Ports & Embassy Wine Tasting" event in Baltimore.

PROMOTING WINES TO 200 ENTREPRENEURS FROM THE MID-ATLANTIC REGION

The Embassy of Argentina in the United States participated, through a trade promotion strategy for the Argentine wine industry, in the "State of the Ports & Embassy Wine Tasting" event. This meeting brought together business leaders to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by Maryland's ports and the Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI).

Organized by the World Trade Center Institute (WTCI), a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, expanding and coordinating global connections in the private sector around sustainability and innovation, it was held at the World Trade Center in Baltimore, one of the city's emblematic corporate and financial buildings. The Secretary of Transportation of Maryland, Paul Wiedefeld, also participated in the event, and gave an overview of the

current situation of the ports in Maryland.

Argentina was one of the countries chosen – along with Japan, the Netherlands, Ukraine and Georgia – to promote

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its products. By tasting different strains, attendees were able to deepen their knowledge regarding the diversity of wines offered by the Argentine market, as well as the viticulture tourism ventures that are being developed in the country's wine regions.

It should be noted that the United States is the top and largest destination for Argentine wine exports, which from January to September of this year generated approximately US\$ 144 million. Argentina ranks 6th among the wine producing countries that export to the United States. ■