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THE FULL
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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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The president-elect, Raúl R. Alfonsín (left), takes office on December 10, 1983.

## OUR IRREVOCABLE COMMITMENT TO THE FULL ENFORCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

December 10 is International Human Rights Day, in commemoration of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948. In Argentina, we also celebrate the Restoration of Democracy Day, in observance of the return of democracy and the rule of law after the last civic-military dictatorship (1976-1983), one of the darkest periods in our history.

After the recovery of democracy, Argentina included the promotion and protection of Human Rights as a key axis of its foreign policy, reflecting a consolidated state policy. The promotion and protection of human rights is a cross-cutting issue in all public policies and includes the main concerns of Argentine society.

At a regional and international level, our country's



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article in commemoration of Human Rights Day and the anniversary of the return to democracy in Argentina, in 1983.

This edition also includes an article about the visit at the Embassy of representative Michael McCaul (R-TX), ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Finally, an article on the participation of the Argentine Energy Secretary, Darío Martínez, at the webinar "The development of Argentina's energy sector - What's Next? "

Jorge Argüello

Ambassador to the United State:

#### AFTER THE RECOVERY OF DEMOCRACY, ARGENTINA INCLUDED THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS A KEY AXIS OF ITS FORFIGN POLICY

leadership is displayed in diverse initiatives, with far-reaching contributions to the progressive development of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, such as the Right to the Truth; the protection of people against enforced disappearances; the use of forensic genetics for human rights violations cases; expansion of the rights of different groups in vulnerable situations; protection of the rights of refugees and migrants; prevention of genocide and other massive atrocities; protection of schools and educational installations during armed conflicts; and the enforcement of economic, social and cultural rights, among other issues.

This sizeable human rights agenda has been possible thanks to the process of eradicating impunity for the crimes against humanity perpetrated during State terrorism; this has given our country a renewed legitimacy and leadership, positioning it at the forefront of important initiatives.

Regarding the universal system, Argentina is a member of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations Organization and works through its agencies and procedures to achieve more just, inclusive, diverse societies that can fully enjoy human rights. With this commitment as a guide, Argentina recently presented its candidacy to renew its mandate for the 2022-2024.

At a regional level, our country supports the Inter-American Human Rights System, which has played a key role for the victims of State terrorism and their families in the search for justice. Argentina considers the Inter-American Human Rights System an early warning mechanism that operates

Plaza de Mayo, December 10, 1983, the day of the return to democracy.



AT A REGIONAL LEVEL, OUR COUNTRY SUPPORTS THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM, WHICH HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE FOR THE VICTIMS OF STATE TERRORISM AND THEIR FAMILIES.

within the State make institutional to improvements, as well as legislative and jurisprudential developments, fostering the friendly settlement mechanism as a preferential tool to resolve cases and petitions.

In all the fora in which it participates, Argentina's human rights agenda includes fighting against all types of discrimination by promoting and protecting the human rights of people and groups in situations of vulnerability and/or are historically discriminated against, such as boys and girls, LGBTIQ people, people of African descent, indigenous peoples, the elderly, people with disabilities, migrants and refugees, among others. Likewise, social inclusion policies focused on respecting economic, social, and cultural rights have a prominent place on the agenda.

The creation of the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversities in December 2019 demonstrates our country's commitment to make progress on pending issues in the agenda of equality and equity between genders, through expanding rights for women and LGTBIQ people, and the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the design and implementation of national public policies.

As regards the recognition of the human rights of women, genders and diversities, Argentina has made great progress. In terms of legislation, the following laws can be highlighted: humanized birth surgical (2004),contraception (2006),comprehensive sexual education (2006),comprehensive protection to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women (2009), equal marriage (2010), gender identity (2012), gender parity in areas of political representation (2017) and the Micaela law (2018).

December 10th represents an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of human rights and to continue working towards more equitable, just, inclusive, and diverse societies.

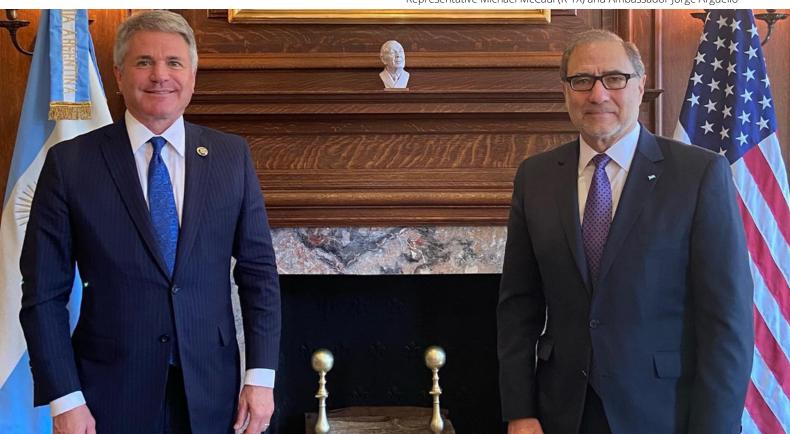
### CONGRESSMAN MICHAEL MCCAUL (R-TX) AND THE FUTURE TIES BETWEEN THE CONGRESSES OF BOTH COUNTRIES

Last Wednesday, December 2, 2020, as part of the project to relaunch the Argentine Caucus for the next Congress and an effort to deepen relations with the United States Congress, Ambassador Jorge Arguello welcomed Representative Michael McCaul (R-TX), ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, to the Embassy.

Michael McCaul was elected Representative in 2004 and has been the ranking member of the above mentioned Committee since legislative elections in late 2018 and will continue in that position during the next parliamentary term. McCaul had previously served as chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security, and as first co-chair of the Argentine Caucus, until he was replaced in 2019 by Jeff Duncan. McCaul continues to be a member of our Caucus.

The Argentina Caucus is a parliamentary group of bilateral friendship, similar to the one at the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. It was launched on January 9, 2018 by Representatives Eliot Engel from New York and Michael McCaul. The official launch event took place at the Rayburn Building of the House of Representatives, and guests from the local political, academic, and business sectors were present, as well as several US legislators from both parties that are members of the group, including the two co-chairs, and a delegation of Argentine legislators and officials from the Embassy to the United States.

The creation of this friendship group with Argentina in the House of Representatives of the US Congress, is a clear symbol of the existing good bilateral relationship, and



Representative Michael McCaul (R-TX) and Ambassador Jorge Argüello

DURING THE MEETING AT THE EMBASSY, THE DISCUSSIONS INCLUDED THE RENEWAL OF THE ARGENTINE CAUCUS AND POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT NEXT YEAR, IN PARTICULAR BRINGING BOTH CONGRESSES CLOSER

represents valuable ties between Argentine and US legislators.

Indeed, the Argentine Caucus serves as a link that allows legislators with an interest in improving the bilateral relationship, as well as to hold meetings to inform Congress members and advisers on the events in Argentina and promote ideas to strengthen bilateral cooperation the current cochairs of the Caucus are Representative Jim Himes (D-CT) and Representative Jeff Duncan (R-SC).

During the meeting at the embassy, the discussions included the renewal of the Argentine Caucus and possible activities to be carried out next year, in particular bringing both Congresses closer together through the Parliamentary Friendship Group with the United States in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies, thereby fostering the relationship between its members and the members of the Caucus.

Congressman McCaul and Ambassador Argüello also discussed the Argentine situation and growth prospects for the coming year, as well as issues related to bilateral trade and the United States' relations with Latin America.

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President Alberto Fernández and Secretary of Energy Darío Martínez

# ARGENTINE ENERGY SECRETARY AT VIRTUAL EVENT: "THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARGENTINA'S ENERGY SECTOR WHAT'S NEXT?"

In early December, the Embassy, together with the Argentine Institute of Oil and Gas of Houston, held a virtual seminar focused on the energy sector: "The development of Argentina's energy sector - What's Next?"

This webinar included the participation of the Argentine Ambassador to the United States, Jorge Arguello and IAPG members. Darío Martínez, the Argentine Energy Secretary, made a presentation on the present and future of this sector. The Secretary was accompanied by the Undersecretary of Hydrocarbons, Maggie Luz Videla Oporto, and the Vice President of Cammesa, Ariel Kogan. This event was mainly aimed at companies in the sector that are part of

the ecosystem in the United States to inform them of the current status of the ecosystem and future growth prospects. More than 280 people participated in the event, demonstrating the great interest in the opportunities our country has to offer in the energy sector.

In his presentation, the Energy Secretary outlined some of the announcements made last October at the launch of the Gas 4 Plan, and reaffirmed that "thanks to the Gas.Ar Plan, we hope to obtain 30,800 million cubic meters over four years". He also anticipated other complementary initiatives to encourage investment and boost production growth (for more information on the Plan, please see issue No. 20 of the Newsletter).

THE AUCTIONED PROJECTS

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PRODUCERS IN THE SECTOR.

Regarding the start of the Plan for the Promotion of Argentine Gas Production 2020-2024, Secretary Martínez stated: "Our Secretariat's objective with the Gas.Ar Plan is to go hand in hand with the general guidelines that the President proposed for the development of Argentina; in this case, to produce more gas, generating fiscal savings and increased tax collection."

The Secretary presented the timeline for the award process, marked by transparency and competitiveness. On December 3rd, Neuquénbased producers offered 49.35 MMm3/day of gas, and in the southern region of the country, proposals totaled 18.5 million, which meant that the initiative reached an offer equivalent to 67,850 MMm3/day of gas.

The auctioned projects will be awarded on December 15, which reinforces the idea that this new mechanism seeks to guarantee transparency and competitiveness among producers in the sector.

The Secretary also referred to two bills that are being evaluated at present and, which he explained were complementary to the Gas Plan. He mentioned the Bill for the Promotion of Investments in the Energy Sector, which he said "will provide support in terms of setting out clear rules for the oil sector, so that the industry enjoys predictability and medium and long-term objectives. We hope to present it before the end of this year." He also mentioned that they hope to finalize the development of investment projects in energy infrastructure in the coming months, in order to enhance the transportation capacity of Vaca Muerta's increasing production.

The other complementary bill, "Minimum Budget Law for Environmental Protection", was outlined by the Undersecretary of Hydrocarbons Maggie Videla, who described the current interconsultation process with the Argentine provinces and the Ministry of the Environment. It is meant as a guide for the environmentally responsible management of oil and gas activities, an effort to which Argentina is firmly committed.

Regarding the promotion of investments in the sector and the search for new partners in the United States, Argentine Ambassador Jorge Argüello highlighted "the unique potential of investment opportunities in Argentina, such as Vaca Muerta, the only place outside the United States where unconventional production is currently taking place." Along these lines, he mentioned that "the major North American companies are already investing in Argentina, now we need many more, to further develop shale in our country."

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