

A photograph of President Alberto Fernández of Argentina and John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the U.S., walking down a set of stairs. Both are wearing dark blue suits and face masks. President Fernández is on the left, wearing a dark grey mask. John Kerry is on the right, wearing a blue mask with the U.S. seal, and is giving a thumbs-up gesture.

G20

PRESIDENT ALBERTO
FERNÁNDEZ AT THE
GLOBAL HEALTH
SUMMIT

Agriculture

BUILDING A
COMMON AGENDA
FOR THE NEXT
UNITED NATIONS
FOOD SYSTEMS
SUMMIT

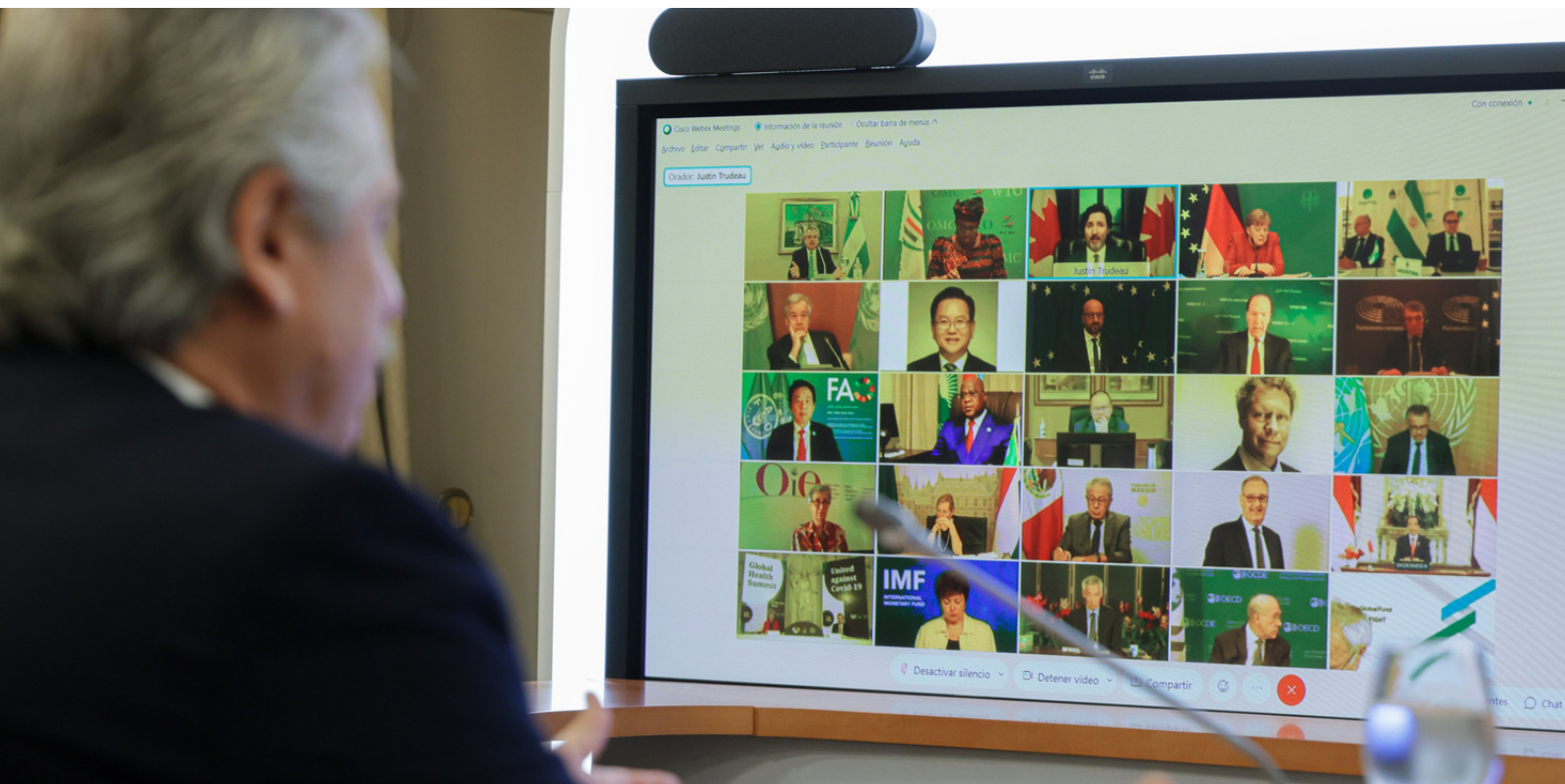
Business & Investments

COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES AND
ARGENTINA TO
DEVELOP LITHIUM
MINING

EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

MAY 2021 // NEWSLETTER



President Alberto Fernández spoke at the virtual G20 Global Health Summit on May 21.

PRESIDENT ALBERTO FERNÁNDEZ AT THE GLOBAL HEALTH SUMMIT

As the world doubles down on its efforts to fight COVID-19 and is still suffering from its social and economic impacts, Italy -which holds the Presidency of the G20- and the European Union convened the Global Health Summit on May 21st, in which President Alberto Fernández took part.

This virtual gathering enabled the 26 heads of state and government, together with heads of international and regional organizations and representatives of world health organizations, to once again address the urgency of the current health situation.

It was also an opportunity to share the lessons learned from the pandemic, with a view to strengthening the international health system for preparedness, prevention, detection and response, and to consider new actions to start the path towards the post-pandemic economic recovery.

The Summit reaffirmed the concept of health as a global public good, something that President Fernández emphasized at all G20 meetings throughout the past year, since the Coronavirus virus stunned the world.



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition, in addition to the usual articles related to the bilateral relationship, we share with you on the front page the photo of the meeting of President Alberto Fernández with John Kerry, the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the Joe Biden administration, a reflection of the coincidences of our countries on the importance of strengthening climate action.

The private meeting between the Argentine President and the Special Envoy took place in Rome on May 14 as part of the presidential tour of several European countries during which the Argentine President met with his peers from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy and the Vatican, His Holiness Pope Francis.

Jorge Argüello
Ambassador to the United States

THE SERIOUS INEQUALITY IN
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The pandemic exacerbated preexisting inequalities. It is beyond doubt that developing countries, especially the most vulnerable populations (women, children, the elderly and informal workers), were the most affected and have paid an extremely high price as regards their standard of living.

The onslaught of the coronavirus and the unusual speed of its spread also exposed the vulnerabilities and inadequacies of the social protection systems, as well as the international financial system as a whole, showing that health should not be conceived as an expense, but rather as an investment.

President Fernández referred in particular to the situation in Latin America, which is currently facing one of the most critical moments of the pandemic due to the onslaught of a new wave that is harshly punishing the region. An alarming situation that other parts of the world are also going through.

And in this context, he pointed out that "the serious inequality in access to medicines and vaccines represents an injustice, one that is extremely immoral and contrary to the interests of the entire international community." For this reason, the scientific achievements obtained in record time must now be available to all countries, without exclusions.

Later he added: "It is essential to promote the transfer of technology and to ensure greater flexibility of intellectual property rights, in order to scale up global vaccine production."

The pandemic collapsed health systems and revealed weaknesses in preparedness and response worldwide. Now it is necessary to deal with the challenge to ensure a global immunization against COVID-19, learn from what did not work, and boost preparedness to avoid future crises.

This has all shown us the need for a more robust and sufficiently funded global health governance system. Tools that facilitate knowledge-sharing are required, ones that are adequate to mobilize the financial resources necessary to strengthen critical health infrastructures, especially in developing countries, both in the long-term and regarding surge capacity, so that we can react swiftly to unforeseen situations.

The 16 Principles adopted in the Rome Declaration will be a guide to promote greater multilateral cooperation, prevent future global health crises and make a joint commitment to build a healthier, safer, fairer and more sustainable world. They will also be used to redesign more supportive health systems that guarantee the effective realization of the right to high quality health and is equitable in all countries.

In his closing remarks, President Fernández pointed out that the Rome Declaration is a step forward in our collective work, to ensure an equitable access to critical inputs for the fight against COVID-19. It is, in short, the G20's contribution so that health is indeed conceived as a true global public good.■

BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Luis Bastera, and the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States (USDA), Tom Vilsack, held a virtual meeting on May 17, in which the Argentine ambassador in the U.S., Jorge Argüello, also participated. The purpose of the meeting was to analyze the bilateral agricultural relationship, deepen cooperation and consolidate a common agenda for the next United Nations Food Systems Summit to be held in September.

During the meeting, Minister Bastera and Secretary Vilsack agreed that both administrations share a perspective on the issues on the international agricultural agenda as well as have the same objectives, such as strengthening of multilateralism, international trade free of unjustified barriers, a balance between production and sustainable development, and promotion of new technologies, especially those

associated with the fight against climate change. The meeting also allowed them to exchange ideas on the circular economy. In this regard, Minister Luis Bastera highlighted that the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries has a "Argentine Bioproduct" program, which promotes the use and development of bio-based products, a central element in the new sustainable production paradigm, modelled on the Department of Agriculture's "Biopreferred" program in the United States.

"We have a very dynamic and positive agenda with the United States, and despite the pandemic, we worked together in the AG5 group to promote innovation and the adoption of new technologies, sustainability in agricultural production, and the use of scientific evidence in international trade decisions," highlighted Bastera.

Minister of Agriculture, Luis Bastera, and the Secretary of Agriculture of the U. S., Tom Vilsack, held a virtual meeting on May 17.



WE SHARE WITH THE UNITED STATES THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS AND EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO RESPECT THE BALANCE BETWEEN THESE THREE PILLARS: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC.

It is worth noting that Argentina is part of the AG5 group, together with the United States, Canada, Mexico and Brazil. This group was formed to work together to defend world food security, agricultural trade based on sound scientific principles, and the importance of innovation for sustainable agriculture.

With a view to the next United Nations Food Security Summit to be held next September, Minister Basterra stated: "We share with the United States the importance of sustainable food systems and emphasize the need to respect the balance between these three pillars: environmental, social and economic.

Together with the countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) we adopted a declaration that highlights these values and which could be an excellent starting point to work with other countries of the continent." The ministers agreed that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for strengthening global food systems and that agriculture is part of the solution, and not part of the problem. ■



Lithium resources in the Provinces of Catamarca, Salta and Jujuy.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ARGENTINA TO DEVELOP LITHIUM MINING

By Alberto V. Hensel, Secretary of Mining

More than a year ago, prior to the global pandemic, we had the opportunity to make a presentation in Washington DC, about the "Lithium Triangle Initiative", and our intention to create, together with the United States, an investment climate to promote regional lithium production and its development in Argentina.

At the Ministry of Mining our work is guided by the decision made by President Alberto Fernández to develop the mining industry in our country. To achieve this, we have worked together with vast sectors of our society to create a shared vision of mining that led to a Strategic Plan for Mining Development in Argentina for the next 30 years.

This has motivated us to propose strategies for long-term policies, and the webinar "Argentina's Lithium Industry and its role in the global

renewable energy transformation", organized a few weeks ago by the Wilson Center with the support of our Ambassador Jorge Argüello, was a very important step to advance agreements in this regard.

Global demand for lithium in the next decade will be driven by electromobility, and this represents a great challenge for countries that possess this resource. Therefore, considering the enormous geological potential of Argentina, the Argentine Mining Geological Service (SEGEMAR) and the U.S. Geological Survey are doing research to anticipate that demand.

We believe that with our identified resources potential in the Provinces of Catamarca, Salta and Jujuy, within the framework of strategic agreements, we can become a major supplier of

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battery-grade lithium carbonate at a regional and global level and explore opportunities to convert this resource into technological development for our country.

Argentina's lithium project portfolio has two producing mining operations (Olaroz and Fénix), one under construction (Cauchari-Olaroz), eleven in preliminary economic evaluation (PEA), and six in advanced exploration, which require a capital expenditure of \$6.4 billion, with a production potential of 305,000 tons/year. This is undoubtedly an important portfolio that represents barely a small part of the geological potential estimated at 350 million tons of lithium.

Argentina needs to continue exploring its territory and to do this we need agreements with whom we consider strategic partners. In this regard, in a joint effort between the geological services of both countries, we prepared an inventory of regional lithium resources and we signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which we include as a priority area of cooperation and technical assistance the governance of lithium-brine projects.

The Ministry of Mining played a coordinating role, together with the mining authorities of the provinces of Catamarca, Salta and Jujuy, and contributed to the drafting and approval of the

"Work Plan for the development and sustainable exploration of lithium brine in Argentina", a plan prepared in accordance with the energy management and capacity initiative at the Bureau of Energy Resources of the Department of State. Both countries agreed to design and include hydrological, hydrometeorological, geological, hydrogeological and lithium resource data in a Geographic Information System for the Argentine Puna.

The first phase of the plan consists of preparing an inventory of regional lithium resources, with a simple hydrogeological database and models for a basin in each of the three above-mentioned provinces, and the second phase involves organizing trainings and workshops to enable an exchange of work experiences between both countries and to continue increasing the capacity for sustainable control and management of the brines in the salt flats.

In accordance with this Work Plan, from November 2020 to date, actions were taken to be able to use the data to develop hydrogeological and hydrological models and in the coming months we will be starting the second phase.

The Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in lithium mining signed between the Ministry of Mining and the Bureau of Energy Resources of the Department of State, represents social and economic benefits in the development of our lithium industries, the deepening of a dialogue, consensus, and mutual respect, which also translates into concrete benefits for the provinces with these resources.

These bilateral cooperation efforts respond to our government's mandate to develop our mining industry with added value; along with the Minister of Productive Development, Matías Kulfas, we are

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on this path. Hence the fundamental importance of the global cooperation agreement between Argentina and the United States for mining that is environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, productively integrated, economically competitive and within an institutional framework. This allows to set clear rules of the game that, in the particular case of lithium mining, open a window of opportunity for those of us capable of designing an effective governance of natural resources. ■

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