

A close-up photograph of a snake's head, likely a boa, with a butterfly perched on its nose. The snake's scales are brown and yellow, and the butterfly has white wings with black and red markings. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Bilateral Relations

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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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(From Left to Right) Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García and Ambassador Jorge Argüello

WORKING MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE (D) JESÚS "CHUY" GARCÍA FOCUSED ON COOPERATION DURING THE PANDEMIC

Last Friday, June 25th, Ambassador Argüello welcomed Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García to the Embassy. He is a Democratic Representative from Illinois and a member of the Financial Services Committee, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the Hispanic Caucus,

the Progressive Caucus, the Equality Caucus, and the New Americans Caucus at the House of Representatives of the United States Congress.

During the meeting, the Congressman and the Ambassador accompanied by their respective



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article about the productive visit of Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García to the Embassy.

In this edition we also include an article By YPF CEO, Sergio Affronti on the deep transformation that the energy industry needs to undergo to reduce its carbon footprint and become more efficient and sustainable, while guaranteeing safe and affordable access to energy sources with increasingly lower emissions.

Finally, an article on Maryta de Humahuaca's presentation at the Embassy with her concert "Puentes" (Bridges).

Jorge Argüello
Ambassador to the United States

THE POSSIBILITY OF JOINING EFFORTS TO PROMOTE COOPERATION BETWEEN ARGENTINA, THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE REGION, WAS ASSESSED AS A TOOL TO IMPROVE THE WORKERS' LIVING CONDITIONS.

teams discussed a wide variety of topics, such as those related to the fight against climate change, efforts to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the area of health, including efforts to achieve greater access to vaccines. Likewise, they talked about the importance of generating job opportunities throughout the Hemisphere, seeking effective responses, albeit with a delayed impact, as well as the cross-border movements of workers seeking better living conditions for their families. In this regard, the possibility of joining efforts to promote a triangular cooperation between Argentina and the United States with other countries of the region was assessed as a possible tool to improve the workers' living conditions, particularly in the field of family farming.

Ambassador Argüello and Representative García also discussed the efforts needed to address the economic and social consequences of the current pandemic, mainly regarding the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

Representative Jesús García is one of the co-authors of a bill introduced in Congress entitled "Robust International Response to Pandemic Act", that encourages actions that should be taken by the international financial institutions to improve their response capability to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ultimate objective of this initiative is to provide the

most vulnerable countries, or those most affected by the health crisis, a fiscal space to be able to respond to the challenges posed by COVID-19.

As regards the area of vaccine cooperation, Ambassador Argüello conveyed to Congressman Jesús García the importance, as well as the entire region's appreciation, of the Biden-Harris Administration's decision to donate 80 million vaccine doses in the coming weeks to the countries hardest-hit by a rapid spread of the virus, including Argentina, and also their acknowledgement that the Administration having promoted a larger-scale effort in the G7 and other forums, together with other developed countries, to accelerate an increased access to vaccines in developing countries.

Likewise, the Ambassador conveyed to Congressman García that the Argentine Government greatly values the work carried out by the White House COVID-19 Response Team, as well as that of other administration agencies, in coordination with the health authorities of the countries that will receive the vaccines, and the pharmaceutical companies. The aim is to solve the complex regulatory and logistical challenges inherent in an operation of this magnitude as quickly as possible.

Congressman García and Ambassador Argüello also discussed the Argentine situation and its potential for expanding trade and investment with the United States, as well as issues related to the bilateral relationship, and the United States' relations with Latin America. ■

A REGIONAL LOOK AT ENERGY TRANSITION

By Sergio Affronti, YPF CEO

The pressing issue of climate change demands that the energy industry, in particular, undergo a deep transformation to reduce its carbon footprint and become more efficient and sustainable, while guaranteeing safe and affordable access to energy sources with increasingly lower emissions. The pandemic and its social and economic consequences, as well as Argentina's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2050, place these challenges towards a path of just energy transitions, without leaving anyone behind.

The goal of decarbonizing economies is redefining not only energy production but also the entire associated value chain and consumption patterns. For these reasons, contributing to the debate at the highest level worldwide, and being able to provide a view from Argentina and the region is a very valuable opportunity for our country. That is

the role we play within the Energy and Resource Efficiency Task Force under Business 20 (the business dialogue forum of the G20), part of the G20 Italian Presidency 2021, and to which YPF was invited as Co-Chair, the only Latin American company and only oil and gas company at the leadership table. The work that is being developed, which will be submitted to the G20 Summit in Rome in October 2021, has three main pillars: how to accelerate energy transitions to have a carbon-neutral system in place by 2050; how to promote policies for a sustainable and inclusive transition; and how to promote the preservation of the environment.

At YPF we are actively participating in the debate to include certain points of view or visions about the realities of emerging economies, which in general have a lower impact of total carbon emissions than developed countries (Argentina represents 0.5%

Photo credit: YPF



THE GOAL OF DECARBONIZING ECONOMIES IS REDEFINING NOT ONLY ENERGY PRODUCTION, BUT ALSO THE ENTIRE ASSOCIATED VALUE CHAIN AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS.

and Latin America 5%), or that already have comparatively cleaner energy matrices (the Argentine matrix is based on more than 50% natural gas). To move forward with a vision of the future and based on reality, we are aware that we must pay attention to the diverse realities of each country, their starting points, available resources and development priorities and, consequently, draw up different strategies and transition speeds.

It is important, of course, to promote new energies such as renewables and other even more innovative energy solutions. However, it is also necessary to make oil and gas production more efficient in terms of emissions and use of resources, and to incorporate compensation mechanisms since, according to all global energy scenarios, hydrocarbons will continue to accompany us for several decades, not only due to their role as fuels, but also as inputs in other production processes. It is important to remember that in the case of Argentina, especially in Vaca Muerta, they represent one of the most important engines for the country's development. In this regard, the window of opportunity is narrow, so we must take advantage of it here and now, accelerating production in a competitive, efficient and sustainable way, to contribute to the country's reconstruction and the well-being of all Argentines.

Therefore, we would like to highlight the role of natural gas as transition energy. Its use generates lower emissions compared to other fossil fuels, it

has great potential to decarbonize sectors that are difficult to electrify; it is affordable and contributes to reducing energy poverty, while at the same time, it is a "flexible partner" for the intermittency of renewables and lack of large-scale electric storage. We also raised a number of important issues related to access to financing, improvement of interconnection infrastructure, in order to achieve more resilient systems and training for new jobs focused on gender equality and diversity.

Finally, we believe that all these debates have to be framed within the primary objective of access to energy. Today, 770 million people worldwide lack electricity and 2.6 billion do not have safe sources of energy for cooking. We cannot ignore the importance of reducing this gap, and to achieve that, policies that make energy not only cleaner, but also universally accessible are important. Energy has to be an engine for development in emerging economies and a key element to improve the quality of life. There is an inescapable reference to these tasks in the *Laudato Si* encyclical, and its concept of integral ecology and individual and collective responsibility in caring for what is common to all.

The aforementioned tasks point to the center of the debate on energy. To move forward successfully, it is essential to focus on just transitions that contribute to the goals of the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account the specificities of each country. It is with this view that we focus our participation in the B20 in 2021. ■



ANCESTRAL SONGS BY MARYTA DE HUMAHUACA: A TERRITORY WITHOUT BORDERS

When Maryta de Humahuaca begins to sing, the smoke from the palo santo envelops the spectators who, as in a ritual, trace back to their ancestors and get even closer to the Pachamama. This word, which in Quechua means Mother Earth, refers to space and time in the Andean worldview of the original peoples.

With this invocation to the sacred, on Tuesday 24, Maryta de Humahuaca appeared at the Argentine Embassy, just as she did in 2019. This time her concert was entitled "Puentes" (Bridges), and it marked a milestone, as it was the first live cultural event that took place after the pandemic restrictions were lifted and we kicked off our cultural activities in 2021. At the same time, it was a way of celebrating life.

"We are timeless; our ancestors are fundamental,

because thanks to them, we are here. They are the key that allows us to be alive. I start singing by using aromatic smoke, honoring presences we cannot see. We feel accompanied by them, we are grateful for being alive, and in their presence," said the singer.

Besides the ancestral songs from Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, Peru, and the United States, rhythms typical from the Humahuaca Ravine, in Jujuy Province, where the singer was born, were also included.

"The ancestral song is a universal concept, it implies going back to the roots of the communities," she said. "These songs all have the same source, and start with percussion, which is the vibration that goes from the inside out; it is something completely visceral. These are mostly

CEREMONIAL SONGS REFER TO THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND NATURE. WE ARE INTERDEPENDENT AND NEED EACH OTHER TO SUBSIST.

ceremonial songs that refer to the connection between people and nature. We are interdependent and we need each other to subsist."

The artist, who visits the United States once a year invited by indigenous associations, was named Cultural Ambassador of Jujuy and obtained the Atahualpa "Nueva Hornada" Award in 2011. A year later, she was appointed Secretary of Culture of the Humahuaca Municipality. She made a documentary about the Jujuy Carnival for Chinese television, and with the National Symphony Orchestra, performed "Las Voces del Silencio", by Jerez Le Cam, at the Kirchner Cultural Center in Buenos Aires, and also created the shows "Madres Cantoras", "Inti Takin", "Cultura Viva" and "Nueva Copla", and starred in the film "My Masterpiece", by Gastón Duprat.

Ancestral singing courses, concerts, and presentations in different cities are part of how she disseminates Argentine music abroad. Beyond distances and languages, the people of the world have their own ceremony, but they converge on the same viewpoint and turns into honoring living beings and nature. "It is the same prayer and the same song in the United States, in Central America, or in South America," she said. "And this also happens with the ancestral communities in Europe".

In the 1960s in Argentina, the singer and musician Leda Valladares and others popularized ancestral songs among younger musicians; this enabled them to be "discovered" in large cities. Although they are sacred songs, their diffusion brings us closer to the original cultures.

This type of song arose with onomatopoeia, according to Maryta de Humahuaca. From there, the words began to appear and started being linked to the elements of nature as well as poetry and history. Later, what was preserved was the melody, which is part of the diverse ceremonies held by different peoples and is linked to the earth's cycle, always accompanied by percussion, using different types of drums.

From a very young age, Maryta de Humahuaca listened to her grandmother singing at home all day; she then began singing along with her, and also accompanied her at ceremonies and on stage. When she was 6 years old, she made her debut at the Tantanakuy Infantil, a famous music festival promoted by Jaime Torres, a charango player, and the poet Jaime Dávalos.

Maryta de Humahuaca has recorded three albums and is about to record her fourth in New York. She offers ancestral singing workshops and singing circles in which each person can create their own song. During this trip to the US, she will have a workshop for children and young people in Central Park. She stated that the goal was "for them to find their own voice and expand without limits".■

More about Maryta de Humahuaca and her music on her IG account: @marytadehumahuaca

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