

Bilateral Relations

PRODUCTIVE
MEETING BETWEEN
THE MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FELIPE SOLÁ AND
SECRETARY ANTONY
BLINKEN IN MATERA,
ITALY.

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FOLLOW UP
MEETING WITH JUAN
GONZÁLEZ AND
JULIE CHUNG AT THE
EMBASSY

G20

THE MATERA
DECLARATION: A
CALL TO ACTION

EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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(From Left to Right) Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, Ambassador Jorge Argüello and Foreign Minister Felipe Solá.

PRODUCTIVE MEETING BETWEEN THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELIPE SOLÁ AND SECRETARY ANTONY BLINKEN IN MATERA, ITALY.

On Tuesday, June 29, in the framework of the Meetings of the G20 Foreign Affairs Ministers in Matera, Italy, Foreign Minister Felipe Solá met with his United States counterpart, Antony Blinken.

Ambassador Jorge Argüello, who is also the G20 Sherpa of President Alberto Fernández, was present at the meeting between high-level officials of Argentina and the United States.



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article about the meeting between Foreign Affairs Minister Felipe Solá and his counterpart, Antony Blinken, during the G20 Foreign Ministers meeting in Matera, Italy.

In this edition we also include an article on the visit to the Embassy of Juan González, Special Assistant to the President and NSC Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere, and Julie Chung, Acting Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Finally, an article on the conclusions of the first and historic joint meeting in the G20 of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development.

Jorge Argüello
Ambassador to the United States

THE THIRD DIALOGUE BETWEEN BLINKEN AND SOLÁ WAS AN ADDITIONAL STEP IN STRENGTHENING A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP, BASED ON TRUST.

It was the third dialogue between Felipe Solá and Antony Blinken, but the first one that took place in person. The forty minutes conversation was held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere and on the basis of a mutual agreement: to maintain a sincere dialogue on all issues of mutual interest, even those in which there could be different viewpoints, in order to make progress on an effective response to the changing challenges of the regional and global agenda.

They talked about the climate change agenda, in which Blinken highlighted Argentina's commitment and leadership on this matter for the next United Nations Conference on Climate Change, COP26.

They also addressed the effects and global responses to the pandemic, including temporary restrictions imposed on flights, as a way to combat the spread of the more contagious new variants. The Argentine Foreign Affairs Minister appreciated President Biden's decision to make a significant donation of vaccines to tackle the global pandemic and for including Argentina among the countries that will receive them.

Both Foreign Affairs ministers also analyzed the situation in Nicaragua and shared their concerns about the latest events in that country.

Solá highlighted the content of President Biden's speech on the 100th day of his government,

especially his reference to providing incentives for economic recovery, employment, and the role of unionization, among other issues.

The difficulties in accessing the US market for Argentine biodiesel and the need for flexibility by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the ongoing negotiations to restore the sustainability of Argentina's debt were some of the other issues raised by the Foreign Affairs Minister Solá.

The meeting in Matera, Italy was a further important step in strengthening a cooperative relationship, based on trust and the existence of shared values and converging interests. ■

FOLLOW UP MEETING WITH JUAN GONZÁLEZ AND JULIE CHUNG AT THE EMBASSY

On Friday, July 2nd, Juan González, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere at the National Security Council, and Julie Chung, Acting Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the State Department, visited the Embassy. This was the closing to a very intense week in the bilateral relationship, with the high point being the productive meeting held between Felipe Solá and Antony Blinken in Matera, Italy.

In the meeting with Mr. González and Ms. Chung, reference was made to the issues discussed by the Foreign Ministers in Matera and the ways to make progress on the diverse paths of cooperation planned.

Ambassador Argüello told his guests that a press conference would be taking place that same afternoon in Buenos Aires announcing the signing

of a Presidential Decree on a new regulatory framework for the purchase of vaccines in Argentina. In this way, the route to broker agreements with North American pharmaceutical companies would be cleared, and the country would also be able to accept the donations generously offered by the Biden-Harris Administration and to carry out trade supply transactions with companies that have proven to be at the forefront of the development of COVID-19 vaccine technology on a global scale.

Another important issue raised during the working lunch focused on the current problem arising from the massive cross-border displacement of people on a regional and global scale. In this regard, the potential to work together in triangular regional cooperation schemes was evaluated, particularly in family farming, with the purpose of promoting economic activity and development in the same

(L to R) DCM, Adrián Nador, Acting Ass. Sec. in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affs. at the DOS, Julie Chung, Amb. Jorge Argüello, Special Ass. to the Pres. & Snr. Dir. for the Western Hemisphere at the National Security Council, Juan González and Head of Political Affs., Marcos Stancanelli.



AMONG OTHER ISSUES, THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING ON TRIANGULAR COOPERATION SCHEMES IN THE REGION WAS EVALUATED

neglected areas of the region that are the source of massive migratory flows.

Likewise, looking forward to the meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Banks Governors in Venice, Italy (July 9-10), Ambassador Argüello informed his guests about Argentina's position on the expected discussion on the IMF's policy of surcharges on loans, which in their current form are pro-cyclical in nature, are specifically negative in this pandemic era, and penalize middle-income countries in particular.

At the working lunch, they referred to the positive moment in the bilateral relationship, the alignment of values and interests on many levels, and essentially about the importance of continuing to deepen dialogue and cooperation using multiple paths. ■



Joint G20 Foreign and Development Ministerial Meeting

THE MATERA DECLARATION: A CALL TO ACTION

Seen from above, the ancient city of Matera, located in the region of Basilicata, Southern Italy, seems to belong to a world of fantasy anchored in the mountains. This city, carved in stone, and made up of a group of dwellings dug into caves that overlap one another, was the place chosen by the Italian Presidency to mark a milestone in the G20's history.

There, in that sort of labyrinth that resembles Bethlehem at night, where small lights illuminate the stones and the mountain as in a large manger, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development met together for the first time. Argentina, represented by Foreign Minister Felipe Solá and the Argentine Sherpa to the G20, Ambassador Jorge Argüello, joined this historic meeting whose objective was to place the sustainable development agenda at the top of its priorities.

Faced with the devastating prospects caused by the pandemic, the world is no longer on track to achieving Zero Hunger by 2030 as planned. And to face this exacerbated crisis after 2020, the ministers analyzed and adopted a series of actions reflected in the "Matera Declaration on Food Security, Nutrition and Food Systems".

Universal immunization against Covid-19 could represent the light at the end of the tunnel for the world. But for many of the most vulnerable countries, the crisis will have had severe and lasting effects on incomes, health, nutrition, and food security: the pandemic's hidden cost.

The number of people affected by hunger has increased since 2014. According to pre-COVID-19 projections from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), more

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK IN SOUTH AMERICA REPRESENT AN IRREPLACEABLE CONTRIBUTION NOT ONLY TO FOOD SECURITY BUT ALSO TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

than 840 million people are forecast to be hungry by 2030, and the current global crisis could add more than 100 million to the total number of undernourished people worldwide.

Ending world hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture are urgent tasks, and even more so when the COVID-19 crisis has diverted us from fulfilling those goals.

Based on these criteria, our country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Felipe Solá, referred to the continuous efforts made by Argentina to improve the agricultural and livestock production capacities in developing countries through South-South Cooperation.

Today, more than 40 projects are being developed in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia, in areas as diverse as post-harvest management, genetics, biotechnology, quality certification, organic agriculture, and rural development.

Sustainable agriculture and livestock in South America represent an irreplaceable contribution not only to food security but also to economic development and creating a sense of belonging.

"Argentina is an important supplier of healthy, nutritious, and good-quality food," said the minister at the June 29 meeting. "We increased our agricultural exports during the most uncertain months of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, to strengthen this, a multilateral trading system that is based on rule and predictable, as well as functioning global value chains, is also necessary."

To alleviate disruptions to global food and agricultural supply chains, the need to support regional and local logistics nodes was raised. On the second day of the meeting in Brindisi, at one of the hubs of the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot of the World Food Program, this issue was the subject of special attention.

The ministers agreed that strengthening international political and financial commitments regarding emergency preparedness and response mechanisms should be encouraged, especially those related to health, food and other crises, as well as initiatives that link national preparedness and response systems.

COVID-19 has left us with a world that has changed and is exposed to new challenges. However, new opportunities are opening up to rebuild better and transform cooperation and global governance. In turn, it paves the way for different and perhaps more effective approaches in our collective efforts to end hunger and leave no one behind. ■

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