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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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President Alberto Fernández and John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the U.S.

## ARGENTINA CO-ORGANIZES REGIONAL SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The first installment of the Sixth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was released less than two weeks ago. Its conclusions are alarming.

Scientists are observing changes in the Earth's climate in all regions and in the climate system as a whole. Many of the changes observed in the climate are unprecedented in thousands, if not

hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion—such as continued sea-level rise—are irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years.

However, also shows that human actions still have the potential to determine the future course of climate. Among other things, it estimates that unless there are immediate, rapid, and large-scale



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article on the organization of the upcoming High-Level Dialogue on Climate Action in the Americas, in preparation for the COP26 and as a follow-up to the Leaders' Summit convened by President Biden in April.

In this edition, we also include an article about my country's actions in multilateral forums expressing its concern regarding human rights in Afghanistan, with emphasis on the current situation of women and girls.

Finally, an article on the contribution of the White Helmets -the Argentine Foreign Ministry body dedicated to the design and implementation of humanitarian assistance- in contexts of catastrophe.

Jorge Argüello  
Ambassador to the United States

## THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE ACTION IN THE AMERICAS IS INTENDED TO THINK TOGETHER ABOUT CLIMATE AMBITION, INNOVATIVE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION, AND MEASURES TO IMPROVE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to around 1.5 ° C or even 2 ° C will be an unattainable goal.

On August 17, the new Report on the State of the Climate in Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 of the World Meteorological Organization was also released. In our region, the future has already arrived. It is one of the world's most affected areas by climate change and external meteorological phenomena, which are causing serious damage to health, life, food, water, energy, and socio-economic development. Projections predict greater regional intensity in heat waves, declining crop yields, forest fires, depletion of coral reefs, and extreme sea-level events.

Unfortunately, we have ignored the call to action too many times before. In response to this, on September 8, Argentina will organize, together with Barbados, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, the High-Level Dialogue on Climate Action in the Americas, in order to think together about Climate ambition, innovative means of implementation and measures to improve adaptation and resilience, towards COP26 and as a follow-up to the Leaders' Summit convened by President Biden in April, in which President Alberto Fernández was one of the 40 leaders invited.

The event, which will bring together government officials along with representatives from the private, financial, and academic sectors, multilateral credit organizations, and civil society organizations, aims to promote an exchange to present a message of high political relevance in the Americas, which allows climate action effective on the continent, promoting ambition and a post-pandemic economic recovery in a resilient and sustainable way.

We share with the United States the urgent concern about the need to act quickly and to place the fight against climate change at the top of our foreign policy agenda. Not only by setting more ambitious national goals, but also through regional impulse, Argentina responsibly seeks to contribute to the joint effort to solve this existential challenge. ■

## GRAVE CONCERNS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN

Following the recent events in Afghanistan, the Argentine Foreign Ministry has ordered a series of actions in multilateral forums expressing its concern regarding human rights in that country, with emphasis on the current situation of women and girls.

First and foremost, Argentina has supported - along with 29 other countries- the convening of a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council on "Serious Concerns and the Human Rights Situation in Afghanistan." This session will take place on Tuesday, August 24th. It will be the first time a meeting of this nature is held at the Human Rights Council on the topic of Afghanistan.

Furthermore, our country has also signed a joint statement expressing serious concern about the current and future situation of women and girls in

the Asian country, together with Albania, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, European Union, Honduras, Guatemala, North Macedonia, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Senegal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

*The countries that signed the declaration "are deeply concerned for Afghan women and girls, their right to education, work and freedom of movement. We call on all those in positions of authority throughout Afghanistan to ensure their protection.*

*Afghan women and girls, like all Afghan people, deserve to live safely, and with dignity. Any form of discrimination and abuse must be prevented. We as part of the community are prepared to provide humanitarian aid and support to ensure that their voices are heard.*

The Argentine Government expressed its concern about the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan



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We will closely monitor that all future government guarantees the rights and freedoms that have become an integral part of the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan in the last 20 years. "

The Argentine state is part of the main International Treaties on Human Rights of Women, in particular the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW) and the "Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women" (Belem do Pará Convention).

In this context, we are specifically concerned about the situation of Afghan women and girls, their right to education, work, and freedom of movement. As a precedent, it is worth mentioning that in the regions that have remained under the control of the Taliban or have returned to it during the last decades, the group has continued to impose strict rules, albeit to various degrees depending on the regions.

Argentina is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women as well as supporting their political empowerment and economic autonomy. Moreover, we are engaged in fighting against all types of violence towards them, and promoting their participation in relevant decision-making instances in parity with males. ■





Minister Felipe Solá and the President of the White Helmets Commission, Marina Cardelli with volunteers at San Martín Palace. Photo Credit: Twitter @felipe\_sola

## HUMANITARIAN AID: WHITE HELMETS' CONTRIBUTION

White Helmets is the Argentine Foreign Ministry body dedicated to the design and implementation of humanitarian assistance, emergency care, comprehensive disaster risk management and contribution to the sustainable development of Argentina at an international level. It acts in contexts of catastrophe at the request of an affected State or within the framework of an international appeal.

The White Helmets volunteering model reflects the mission of the Argentine State to internationally promote solidarity and commitment from the civil society. This institution specializes in the formation of multiple bodies of volunteers, both at local and international levels.

Integration is voluntary and brings together specialists from different areas who carry out their work in public and private spheres.

The volunteers of White Helmets must meet the specific profile that the mission requires; they must have taken part in specific training and be willing to travel within 72 hours to be part of a rapid response team. The volunteer corps performs comprehensive tasks but specializes in logistics, such as the management of supplies, warehouses, shelters, and evacuees centers.

Since its creation in 1993, White Helmets have carried out more than 700 missions across 5 continents reaching 73 different countries. The

## THE WHITE HELMETS VOLUNTEERING MODEL REFLECTS THE MISSION OF THE ARGENTINE STATE TO INTERNATIONALLY PROMOTE SOLIDARITY AND COMMITMENT FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY.

White Helmets volunteers are committed to the humanitarian principles established in United Nations Resolutions A / RES / 46/182 and A / RES / 58/114: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence.

One of the 700 aid missions of the White Helmets Commission was sent to the United States in August 2005, during the disastrous events of Hurricane Katrina, which left a death toll of 1833. At the time, Argentina sent specialists from various fields to contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction stages.

Furthermore, in 2020 it became clear that the humanitarian experience of the White Helmets could contribute to the response strategies to the pandemic. Starting in March, multiple calls were launched for volunteers to receive Argentine men and women at the Ezeiza and Palomar airports or to participate in actions for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in popular neighborhoods.

During 2020, 17 humanitarian assistance missions were carried out in which 1,445 volunteers

participated. In addition, 12 shipments of humanitarian supplies were sent to different countries of the world and 82 international donations were handled.

Nowadays, White Helmets is in full development of its Environmental Volunteering team with the aim of focusing on the promotion of strategies for disaster risk reduction, fundamentally both the identification and successful adaptation to the ongoing consequences of climate change.

Finally, in the light of the recent earthquake that happened in Haití, on Saturday, August 21st, a humanitarian mission of 25 paediatricians, nurses and general practitioners arrived in Haiti carrying medicines, water purification pills and other supplies to counteract the emergency. ■

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