



JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

IX Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the Bilateral Agreement on Science and Technology between the European Union and Argentina

March, 27th 2017

The 9th Joint Steering Committee meeting was hosted by the European Commission in Brussels on the 27th of March, 2017. The positive results of the preparatory meetings and exchanges paved the way to a constructive meeting.

The Argentinian delegation was led by **Mr Lino Baraño, Minister of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCyT)**. It included Mr Alejandro Ceccatto, President of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), Mr Mariano Jordan, Director for Cooperation and Institutional Integration of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation, and representatives of the Mission of Argentina to the European Union.

The European delegation was led by **Mr. Wolfgang Burtscher, Deputy General Director** and Ms Maria Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, **Directorate General of Research and Innovation**, and included representatives of Directorate Generals for Research and Innovation; Education and Culture; Digital Economy and Society; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs and the Joint Research Centre.

Both parties reaffirmed the importance of Science, Technology and Innovation cooperation in addressing shared economic, environmental and societal challenges within the context of the overall EU-Argentina relations. In this context, they recognized the importance of reinforcing the links between relevant stakeholders and fostering the innovation process to stimulate job creation, economic growth and social welfare.

Both parties agreed to continue developing common principles and adequate framework conditions needed to create a level playing field for Argentina and the European Union to cooperate in Research and Innovation on the basis of trust.

In this framework, both parties acknowledged the need to promote gender equality in Research and Innovation activities, relating to male and female researchers careers and to the gender dimension in Research and Innovation content.

Both delegations agreed to step up cooperation in the following key areas:

1. On **Bio-economy**, MINCyT confirmed its interest in becoming a member of the International Bio-economy Forum (IBF). Argentina participated in the informal first preparatory meeting of the IBF in Brussels on 15 June 2016 and confirmed its participation at the plenary meeting tentatively scheduled in October 2017 (date still to be defined).

2. Concerning **Marine research**, the EC and MINCYT have launched discussions in view of exploring possibilities for developing a strategic bilateral cooperation in Marine research involving the Argentinian Public Research Centers System and extending it to other research entities in Argentina. Both parties agreed in a series of events should be organized to allow European and Argentinean stakeholders to start jointly identifying common priorities for possible future cooperation. A first workshop is planned before July 2017, involving European and Argentinian stakeholders. The workshop will start connecting the research communities as well as leverage on bilateral activities of some of the EU Member States. It should aim at agreeing on joint priorities for future cooperation as the basis for a bilateral Joint Marine Research Declaration to be signed by Minister Barañao and Commissioner Moedas later this year.
3. In **Health research**, Argentina confirmed its full commitment to the activities of the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases notably by hosting the next annual meeting that will take place in Buenos Aires in October and for the Global research Collaboration for Infectious Diseases Preparedness. Argentina expressed its intention to join the International Rare Disease Research Consortium in order to maximize the output of rare diseases research at a global level. Both parties highlighted the importance of stepping up cooperation on health research including in the framework of the consolidation of the EU-CELAC Common Research Area. The parties acknowledged the role that MINCYT is having in coordinating the set-up of an international flagship topic with CELAC countries on non-communicable diseases under Societal challenge 'Health, demographic change and well-being'.
4. On **Climate action and resource efficiency**, both parties highlighted the opportunities that the Belmont Forum would offer to developing research in several areas of common interest, related to global environmental change.
5. MINCYT also expressed its interest to becoming a member of **Mission Innovation** which will be a key umbrella for the EC in international clean energy-research cooperation in the coming years. The EC welcomed the excellent collaboration the EU and Argentina have had so far in the field of energy R&I, and encouraged Argentina to continue participating in the EU Research Framework Programme Horizon 2020, particularly in the upcoming H2020 calls on renewable energy. In this context, a technical workshop will be organised in April 2017 by the Alcue-Net project in Buenos Aires.
6. Both parties acknowledged the relevance of international collaboration in developing and accessing **Research Infrastructures** of global nature and the leading role that Argentina has in the Research Infrastructure Working Group set up within the EU-CELAC Common Research Area initiative. The European Commission invited Argentina to be involved in the Group of Senior Officials' work related to the underground lab dimension.
7. The importance of strengthening cooperation on **Information and Cooperation technologies** (ICT) was highlighted, in particular in the Fireware Platform.
8. The parties acknowledge the cooperation between the European Commission's **Joint Research Centre** (JRC) and the Argentinian institutions in several areas, among which are on: nuclear energy, food security and sustainable agriculture, smart specialization and water management. The JRC together with MINCYT and CONICET have launched discussions in view of exploring possibilities for developing a more strategic and structured approach to their cooperation to other thematic areas, including smart specialization.

9. In addition, both parties renewed their disposition to undertake follow-up activities in the framework of the Agreement for cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (PUNE) between the **European Atomic Energy Community** (Euratom) and the Government of the Argentine Republic (97/738/Euratom). In this context, they agreed to organize a series of video-conferences with the Undersecretary of Nuclear Energy.
10. Finally, the parties highlighted the existing good co-operation on **sustainable mining** taking place in the frame of regional dialogues with Latin American countries. More broadly, it is worth mentioning the successful cooperation between both parties in the context of the ERA-NETs on raw materials "ERA-MIN" and "ERA-MIN 2", where MINCyT was/is member.
11. To better use the existing tools and strengthen the areas of cooperation, both parties agreed to better tap on the possibilities offered by the Implementing Arrangement between MINCyT and the **European Research Council** (ERC).
12. The very good results of Argentina within the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie** program were highlighted and it was agreed that Argentina should present them as an example of best practice in the next EU-CELAC Research and Innovation Senior Officials meeting.

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation will to host the next 10th Joint Steering Committee Meeting next year in Buenos Aires.