

CHINA-ARGENTINA AGENDA AFTER G20 IN BUENOS AIRES

JANUARY 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These last decades, the People's Republic of China (PRC), implemented the policy of "going out" to the world, searching markets for its products, labour and raw materials to maintain its national economy. In this framework, funds were destined to finance economies, like those of Latin America, regarding infrastructure, mining, telecommunications, tourism, agriculture, energy, etc. Thus, the **RPC became one of the main commercial and political partners of Argentina**, and today China is a **crucial strategic partner for the national economic growth**.

In spite of the passing of time and several structural changes in Argentina, **the relationship continues and is expected to grow**. As a result, Argentina hosted the G20's Leaders Summit in Buenos Aires in December 2018. More than **30 agreements were signed by Argentina and China**, aimed at strengthening the bilateral relationship and involving areas like transport, telecommunications, energy, infrastructure, culture, tourism, environment, and mining, among others.

Pre-agreed, agreed or estimated investments amount to approximately USD21,953 million and cover seven provinces of Argentina. One of the agreements supplements the swap in USD9,000 million, to backup the reserves of the Central Bank of Argentina (recommended as well by the Stand-By Agreement with the International Monetary Fund) and USD1,000 million to create a fund to finance the "labour capital".

However, **the agreements deepen Argentina's role in international trade with agricultural and mineral raw materials**, like lithium, with a low value-added level. This maintains the difficulties regarding the deficit of the trade balance with China.

This process comes with a weakening of the safeguards from traditional financial institutions and the emergence of national development banks in the international financing area, with little commitments over the national regulatory framework. On the one hand, this clearly shows a generalized trend in the region to step back regarding environmental and social protection standards, on the other, but not so far away, it also demands a close monitoring of the evolution between Argentina and China, especially given the latter importance for our economy.

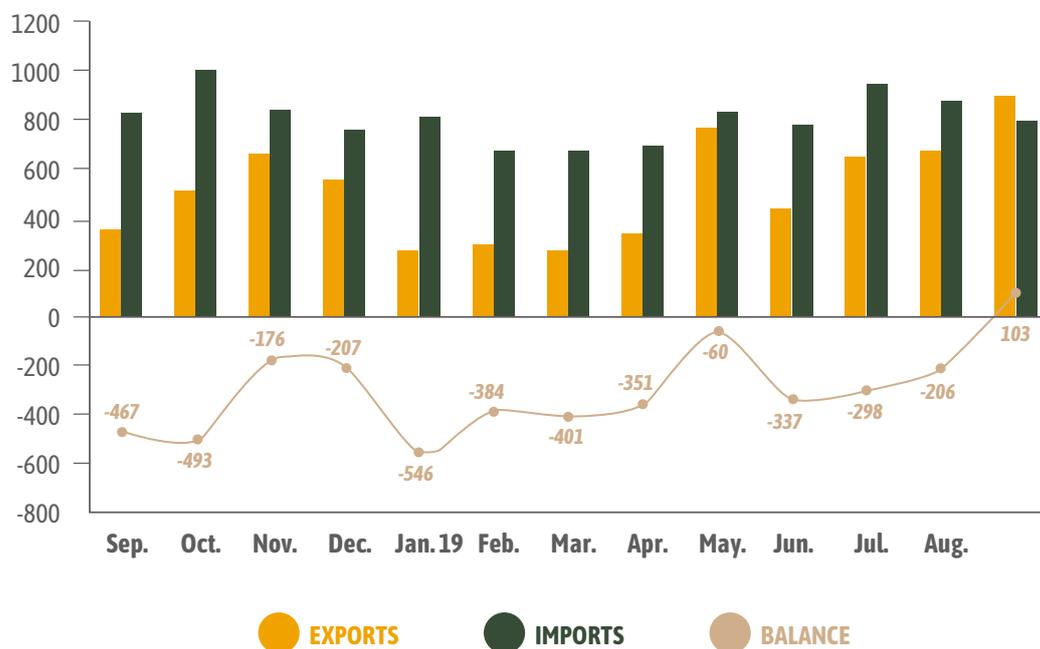
In the bilateral relationship Argentina-China, the economic needs are at the core, while environmental and social issues are but a decorative element.

INTRODUCTION

These last decades, the People's Republic of China (PRC), implemented the "going out" to the world policy -whereas before all the efforts were devoted to its internal growth based on the previous policy of "going in"- searching markets for its products, labour and raw materials to maintain its national economy. For this purpose, funds were destined by RPC to finance economies, like those of Latin America, regarding infrastructure, mining, telecommunications, tourism, agriculture, energy, etc.

In this context, the RPC became one of the main commercial and political partners of Argentina, and today China is a crucial strategic partner for the national economic growth. This situation results from complementing demands: China requires natural resources to modernize and Argentina needs financing to sustain its economy. However, and as can be seen in Chart 1, there is a deficit of Argentina's trade balance with China, except during September 2019 (CERA, 2019). This grows in importance since China is the second most important commercial partner, after Brazil, and with USA in the third place.

CHART 1: TRADE RELATIONS ARGENTINA-CHINA (SEPTEMBER 2018-SEPTEMBER 2019, IN USDM)



Source: CERA, 2019.

Until 2017, China was the recipient of 89% of the soy bean exported by Argentina, but currently it is difficult to know the exact percentage, as there are some constraints to access information, limiting the ability to analyze the trade balance composition. In March 2018, the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC) claimed that, due to the statistical confidentiality regime, only those tariff headings with 2 or more operators will be informed. So, it is not easy to know the details of those tariff headings related to the agriculture area. As a result, in March 2019, only 25% of exports was informed in detail. This indicates that exports from the soy bean sector are in hands of less than 3 operators, and given the statistical confidentiality, there is no official data on the soy bean exports to China.

Regarding political ties, in July 2014, after the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, visited Argentina, the Framework Agreement for Economic and Investment Cooperation between the Government of Argentina and the Government of the People’s Republic of China was signed, updating the bilateral relation to one of “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership”. This situation happened in a special economic context in Argentina, as the conflict with the holdouts complicated the access to credits, highly impacting the Central Bank reserves and placing the country at risk of default.

In spite of the passing of time and several structural changes in Argentina, the relationship continues and is expected to grow. As a result, our country hosted the G20’s Leaders Summit in Buenos Aires in December 2018, where China and Argentina signed more than 30 agreements aimed at deepening the bilateral relationship and covering transport, telecommunications, energy, infrastructure, culture, tourism, environment and, mining, among others.

Pre-agreed, agreed or estimated investments amount to approximately USD21,953 million (See Annex 1) **and cover seven provinces of Argentina.** One of the agreements complements the swap in USD9,000 million, to backup the reserves of the Central Bank of Argentina (recommended as

well by the Stand-By Agreement with the International Monetary Fund) and USD1,000 million to create a fund to finance the “labour capital” (Villafañe, 2018 y Terrile, 2018). As a result of the established relationship, negotiations started to build the Portezuelo del Viento dam in the province of Mendoza, with an estimated investment of USD500-800 million.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) includes promoting bilateral relations to get a deeper integration of world markets (including the Latin American market) with Chinese markets, extending the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that frames current bilateral relationships. Argentina is the only country with such a relationship in the Latin America region (CERA, op. cit.). As such, at the second Belt and Road forum in April 2019, both countries tried to develop joint actions to create investment conditions. China also committed to review the debt sustainability from low income countries, and to strengthen anti-corruption mechanisms, especially for governmental companies working in countries with low credit rating.

JOINT ACTION PLAN (2019-2023)

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) was the main agreement signed in 2018 between Argentina and China during the G20 Summit in Buenos Aires. This programme is a continuation of the Joint Action Plan (2014-2018) signed in 2014, aimed to strategically and completely guide the development of the relations and the bilateral cooperation between both countries.

The Plan 2019-2023 promotes joint actions for cooperation regarding commerce and agriculture, as well as partnering under transparency, free access, economic-financial and environmental sustainability of projects, and cooperation between companies from both countries to develop projects in third-party markets.

This plan also establishes that both parties must prioritize their relationship in foreign politics to exchange opinions about the bilateral agenda, and international and regional affairs of common interest, as global governing, reform of the Security Council of the United Nations, climate change, and the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. Thus, they commit to strengthening coordination within the United Nations, G20 Summit, International Trade Organization (ITO), G77, and other international organizations and multilateral mechanisms.

Also, Argentina and China reinforce their bilateral economic relationships through the Mechanism of Strategic Dialogue for Economic Co-operation and Coordination, and promote exchanges on macroeconomic policies and synergy between their development strategies. **In this context, the parties agree to promote bilateral trade and encourage the equilibrium of the trade balance, respecting domestic legislations, and facilitating economic and commercial data exchange.**

Besides, the Joint Action Plan signed in 2018 states both countries companies must “look for harmonious coexistence and mutual benefit with the local communities during development of infrastructural projects”. In this sense, during the G20 in Buenos Aires, there was a reinforcement of the communications **regarding transitions towards cleaner energies, like energy efficiency and access.** Among the measurements taken, one of the most important is the **promotion of environmentally friendly vehicles**, personal as well as commercial, using second and third generation biofuels, **emphasizing electric and hydrogen types** (liquid fuel and/or gas-electricity).

Cooperation is established to **research, explore and extract mineral products like lithium, copper and salts of potassium.** The negotiation of the terms of reference governing the possible **construction of a nuclear power plant with HPR1000 technology is also stated.**

In the plan, Argentina and China express their commitment to **deepen the use of the deep space station of China in the province of Neuquén**, to further the bilateral and international cooperation in deep space and moon exploration.

MEMORANDUMS

During the G20 Summit 2018 twelve Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) were signed. One of the most significant is an agreement on extending the validity of the Memorandum of Understanding on the creation of a Mechanism of Strategic Dialogue for Economic Cooperation and Coordination between Argentina and China. This memorandum was originally signed in 2013 by both countries, resulting in four rounds of dialogues. The Understanding is extended five more years in the new agreement.

On 27 November 2018, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Argentina signed, jointly with the National Supervision Committee of China, a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at intensifying the cooperation regarding **prevention and fight against corruption**, asset recovery and transnational bribery, according to the principles and objectives of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The Memorandum is particularly appropriate given the participation of the national Chinese company Gezhouba Group Corporation (CGGC) with Represas Patagonia. This is a Temporary Business Association (UTE) in charge of building the dams in Santa Cruz river, and made up of the Argentine companies Hidrocuyo S.A. and Electroingeniería S.A., involved in allegations of corruption since the allocation of the project.

On the other hand, in December 2018, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed, between the then Ministry of Production and Labour of Argentina and the Ministry of Commerce of China on Promotion of Commercial Cooperation and Investments. The aim is to encourage dialogue on trade and investment between the two countries to increase, promote and develop commerce and investments for economic growth, establishing that “this dialogue is designed to facilitate the exchange of information, promote bilateral cooperation and debates covering how the participants can: (...) Promote collaboration and partnership between businesses”.

However, memorandums lack clear references to the role communities and the environment will have in these new commercial and investment opportunities for economic growth.

ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA IN THE BILATERAL RELATION

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) states, in the forestry area, that China and Argentina will work jointly to protect and recover the wetlands; to prevent and treat desertification, and to prevent and treat forest pests and diseases. Also, the parties will co-operate in tree planting and forestry, sustainable forest management, ecological restoration, protection of natural resources from woods, creation of natural reserve areas, prevention and monitoring of forest fires, exchange of tree species and trade of forest products. All these advances are presented in general, without establishing particular collaborations.

This collaboration is closely related to the Argentine Plan Forestar 2030, whose main objective is to enhance the forest industry development and promote a larger planted area of exotic species. So, the Plan Forestar 2030 is a low-cost contribution to the fight against climate change and shows preference for the productive systems instead of the preservation and sustainable use of forest resources.

Besides this, the Joint Action Plan covers maritime-related issues establishing an expanded cooperation in marine protected areas, prevention and relief during maritime disasters; maritime science and technology, and sustainable use of maritime resources. But, this item does not specify either how the co-operation will be carried out, particularly as the majority of the fishing vessels seized due to illegally fishing in Argentine waters were under Chinese flags. This is analyzed in detail in the “Fishing” section.

Another of the signed agreements during the G20 Summit 2018 was the Memorandum of Understanding for co-operation on Environmental Protection and Preservation and Sustainable Development between the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China and the then Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina. The objective is to promote co-operation between both parties regarding environmental protection and preservation, with a 5-year duration. Article 2 establishes common interest areas, like preserving biodiversity, promoting environmental technologies, maritime environment management, solid waste management, sustainable development and production, environmental policies, sustainable cities, and approaches to climate change.

Article 3 establishes procedures to implement co-operation, like exchange of relevant environmental information and documentation, experts, scholars and delegation visits, capacity building, seminars, workshops and meetings, promotion of activities aimed at encouraging private-public associations, exchange of experiences and technologies on environmental protection and approaches to climate change.

Article 4 determines the creation of national level coordinators to outline action plans. Related to that, in July 2019, FARN submitted a demand of access to information, requesting to know who was the designated general director by Argentina to implement that memorandum, what work plan was agreed on for continuous collaboration and to be informed if measurements will be taken on the environmental impacts of the ongoing projects, with special mention to the Santa Cruz river dams¹. The National Environmental Assessment Directory answered that they do not have the requested information.

ENERGY SECTOR

Energy efficiency

As presented in the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023), the countries will work jointly to develop environmentally friendly vehicles, with second and third generation biofuels, focusing on electric and hydrogen ones. Also, energy saving and environmental protection co-operation and exchange are encouraged. It is interesting to emphasize that the Plan also establishes Argentina and China “are willing to strengthen communications on transition topics towards cleaner energies, like energy efficiency and energy access within the G20 Summit and other multilateral schemes, promoting jointly the development of the Leading Programme of Energy Efficiency (EELP)”.

There are some concerns about the vehicle development impact, since there is no description of the technologies to be used (e. g., batteries and the lithium needed for them) or the fuels, simply called “renewables” in the Plan.

1. The request and the answer.

Renewable energies

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) establishes the parties will co-operate actively in hydropower, wind and solar energy sectors, and biofuels, among other renewable energies within the bilateral relation framework.

Before signing the Plan, in May 2017, both countries signed the Commitment Protocol to Build the Renewable Energy Plant Cauchari Solar in the province of Jujuy. This is a solar farm with three photovoltaic plants of 300 MW, the biggest in Latin America. The investment in Cauchari Solar is of USD390 million, with USD60 million for operational expenses and civil works, and USD92 million in taxes in building materials, and has a working life of 25 years, producing more than 215 GWh of clean energy annually, equal to approximately the use of 100,000 households². This is one of the few renewable energy projects allocated to a provincial Government, and the only one with a transformer substation in the hands of the National Government.

The solar farm was scheduled to produce solar energy in March 2018. But although it was launched in October 2019, the farm is still in testing phase and not operational. It is estimated it will start producing energy at the beginning of 2020 (Bellato, 2019; Sánchez Molina, 2020).

Powerchina is in charge of building the farm Cauchari Solar as a turnkey project, and the Chinese bank Eximbank finances 85% of the total with a 3% annual rate to 15 years, with a 5-year grace period. In dollars, the interests amount to USD5.4 million annually (total of USD54 million), and the yearly capital means payments for USD33.1 million. Also, the Government of Jujuy issued a Green Voucher for 15% of the work, with USD210 million in debt to 5 years with an annual rate of 8.625%, to complete the farm financing. Thus, USD10.6 million are paid in interests (Remy, 2019).

Although the provincial government expects an annual income from the revenues from the park, the debt repayment period is 22 years, while the photovoltaic panels lifespan is 20 years (Remy, op. cit.).

During the building of the plant, the Government of Jujuy planned 600 new jobs, but, certain work conditions were relaxed to encourage hiring. To do that, the law was modified by an agreement signed by the union and the building company, stating that during 9 months no extra hours will be paid to the employees. When some of the workers tried to file a claim, the company considered that action as a “service abandonment” (Jujuy al Momento, 2018) and terminated them.

Also, and before the start of the construction process, the Jujuy legislature passed Law 5915, Servidumbres Administrativas (Administrative Easements), authorizing land occupation in a productive way without expropriating them. As a result, projects can be developed acknowledging the indigenous communities’ property and awarding them a percentage of the revenues, but they can’t claim the works on the lands. However, indigenous communities claim that law was illegally passed (Jujuy al Momento, op. cit.), as they did not have the necessary information during the meetings, had after the beginning of the works.

There were problems regarding environmental information and the consultation process, and FARN presented a request of access to information on those, but it was never answered³. There were very few details about the project at the beginning, especially on the stages and compliance of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and H. R. There was no information

2. Commitment Protocol to Build the Renewable Energy Plant Cauchari Solar in the province of Jujuy in Argentina. Available in: <https://tratados.cancilleria.gob.ar/busqueda.php?consulta=si&modo=c>

3. Request of access to information available at: <https://farn.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/secretaria-de-pueblos-Indigenas-JUJUY.pdf>

about the consultation and free, prior and informed consent with the indigenous communities. International and national laws were not met by not submitting timely the complete EIA. In line with the commitments made within the framework of the ILO Convention 169, it is required to do the consultation with local communities before the environmental feasibility of the projects. But, FARN records that the meetings with the communities (February and August 2017) were made after the environmental feasibility declaration (2016) of the project (Garzón y Lucci, 2019).

Gas and oil

The section on co-operation regarding renewable energies in the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023), also provides for joint work on exploration and development of unconventional gas and oil, engineering equipment and services in the gas and oil industry, as well as liquefied natural gas marketing, infrastructure and operation. It would seem that co-operation in renewable energies is associated with co-operation regarding dirty energies, complicating the desired energy transition.

Also, some Chinese oil companies are interested in investing in Argentina, main one is the Government owned Sinopec. In 2015, this company signed an agreement with YPF to develop conventional and unconventional gas and oil projects (Gaceta Mercantil, 2015; Turner, 2015). Also, in 2010 this company bought gas and oil assets from Occidental Petroleum in Argentina for USD2,450 million. This company had interests in 23 concessions in Santa Cruz, Chubut and Mendoza (Bossarelli, 2013; Argemi y Luchetti, 2012). However, Vista Oil & Gas, company owned by Miguel Galuccio, president of YPF during the last years of the presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner bought Sinopec assets for USD600 million (Yáñez Martínez, 2018).

Regarding offshore exploitation, in 2010 the Chinese state-owned National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) bought 50% of Bidas for USD3,100 million (Argemi y Luchetti, op. cit.). In 2012, Bidas purchased ExxonMobil's assets in Argentina and other countries in South America, under the new name Axion Energy. Also, in September 2017, Bidas and British Petroleum (BP) announced the merger of their companies Pan American Energy and Axion Energy, resulting in a new company called Pan American Energy Group (PAEG) (PAE, 2017), one of the main actors in the unconventional hydrocarbon basin at Vaca Muerta.

Another company involved in the gas and oil industry is Petro AP, in charge of exploiting El Caimancito area in Jujuy, situated in Calilegua National Park. In 2017, the Government of Jujuy reported that exploitation did not comply with the technical quality nor the environmental standards required by local law. As a result, the Chinese company abandoned the area, without resolving the issues nor closing it, and the provincial government had to take responsibility of a natural oil basin, which presents challenges to the conservation objectives of the National Park. The provincial government is involved in an administrative and legal process against the company, while closing the wells and cleaning up the park (Government of Jujuy, 2018).

In the petrochemical industry, the company Shaanxi Coal and Chemical Industry Group Co. Ltd. created in 2012 the company Tierra del Fuego Energía y Química, and signed an agreement with Tierra del Fuego with the purpose of installing an agrochemical plant, a commercial port and a combined cycle power plant in Río Grande, with an investment of USD1,370 million, together with Jinduicheng Molybdenum Group Mining Co. and Shaanxi Xinyida Investment Co. Ltd. companies. (Argemi y Luchetti, op. cit.; Zhongguo, 2017; Carrizo Gorgni, 2017). But, in 2018, the Legal and Technical Secretariat of the government overruled the agreement between the province and the Chinese company, given the latter violations (Sur 54, 2018).

There are also Chinese companies involved in the construction of oil pipelines. In 2016, one of them, China Communications Construction Company Ltd. Argentina (CCCC), invested USD1,800 million in main oil pipelines in Córdoba (Simonit, 2017). While China Petroleum Pipeline Bureau, subsidiary of China National Petroleum Company, invested USD195 million in those same oil pipelines (Simonit, op. cit.), and in 2017, assisted the owners with USD820 million in financing. Also, in 2016, this company was allotted the North and South sectors of the oil pipeline together with Grupo Eling S.A. and works in association with Argentine Electroingeniería, involved in the construction of Santa Cruz river dams. The owners of this company are processed in corruption cases (Dobry, 2017; Origlia, 2016; Comisión Nacional de Valores, 2018).

It is important to mention the companies interested in the bid for the Vaca Muerta gas pipeline, from Tratayén to Salliqueló (basic for oil companies which will export gas from this basin), estimated to take place during March 2020. The companies are: China Gezhouba Group Corporation, China National Petroleum Company and China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering Co. Ltd. (Spaltro, 2019).

Another crucial part for the exploitation of Vaca Muerta basin and its presence in the international market is the liquefaction plant in Bahía Blanca, one of the export ports for this product. According to several media, Chinese capitals are interested in being part of this plan, with an estimated investment cost of USD5,000 million.

Nuclear energy

On this topic, the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) states Argentina and China will deepen the exchange and co-operation of nuclear energy peaceful use, including power nuclear plants and their fuel, research reactors, nuclear technology applications and human resources development. There are also advances in the reference terms that will govern the possible construction of a power nuclear plant in Argentina.

During the G20 Summit 2018, no agreement was signed to build the nuclear plant Atucha III due to an internal conflict between the then Ministry of Finance and the Secretariat of Energy, as the Ministry considered Argentina was not in the right socioeconomic position to take an external credit for USD8,000 million. One of the reasons presented is the cost of producing nuclear energy, set in USD170/MW, while the cost of one MW of renewable energy is USD70/MW (Dinatale, 2018). This notwithstanding, in March 2019 Argentina welcomed a new Chinese delegation in order to resume negotiations for the building of a Chinese technology-based plant, explained in detail below.

Given the lack of official data, FARN presented requests of information, in Annex II. To summarize, according to Government-provided data, the Atucha III project is important to have a continuous energy source, reducing gas imports in USD400 millions and encouraging the creation of 700 new jobs. The cost of the construction is estimated in USD7,900 million with an execution period of 99 months, and the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) and China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation would participate.

In 2019, the Chief of Cabinet decided the Sub secretariat of Nuclear Energy and the company Nucleoeléctrica Argentina S. A. (NASA) would work optimizing the technical and marketing conditions in the agreement to build the plant. The agreement will be “turnkey”, supplying and building a plant of approximately 1200 MW.

Also, there are hopes of entering into an agreement with China of technology transfer, so that fuel needed by the plant is made in the country once the initial warranty period is over, when the provider fuel will be used. So, during the first years of operation, the plant will be powered by

enriched uranium imported from China. This technology transfer agreement would aim at having Argentine specialized personnel in charge of operations and maintenance.

According to NASA estimates, at the highest labour peak, there will be 4500/5000 Argentine workers hired, although as it is a turnkey agreement, the contractor is responsible for this. To have concessional financing, the local content cannot be over 40% (Energía y Negocios, 2019).

The works will be 85% financed by Chinese credits to 20 years, with an 8-year grace period, allowing repayments with nuclear electricity, and an interest rate of 5.5%⁴; the National Treasury is in charge of the remaining 15% (Naishtat, 2017). CNNC and NASA have agreed on a plan to build projects financed through the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC).

The quoted amount of USD7,900 million for the nuclear plant contrast the USD7,000 million already invested and/or expected to be invested in 144 renewable energy projects (of a total 244 allocated projects) for a total of 4,869 MW (Gubinelli, 2019). Based on this, it is possible to infer that the investment required for a nuclear project of 1,200 MW approximately, and 8 years of construction, would suffice for 144 renewable energy projects finished in less than 5 years, quadrupling the generated power.

The technology related to Atucha III construction is a pressurized water reactor (PWR), model Hualong One or Hualong Pressurized Reactor 1000 (HPR1000), developed by the joint venture China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) and China General Nuclear (CGN). This is the main reactor produced and exported by China (World Nuclear Association, 2019a), using enriched uranium as fuel and light water as coolant (Roca, 2018). This kind of reactor has a triple coolant circuit, double contention systems, active security systems with some passive elements, and a design lifespan of 60 years. Besides, the thermal efficiency is 36% (World Nuclear Association, 2019b).

The first two reactors of this kind were built in the Fuqing plant, China, one of them with a scheduled operation date in 2019 (in spite of this, at the beginning of 2020 the plant is not operating), and the other for 2020. Another one is being built in Fangchenggang, China, and two more units are being installed in the Karachi plant, Pakistan. There are plans to build another reactor in Bradwell, UK (World Nuclear News, 2019). Argentina would be the second country China would market this technology in, besides Pakistan.

In April 2019, the reactor systems were operated and tested for the first time together with the ancillary cooling systems, (World Nuclear Association, 2019a), meaning this kind of technology does not have yet a meaningful operating history. Also, in 2015 CGN presented the HPR1000 to certify compliance with the European Utility Requirements (EUR), but it has not been granted yet.

Although this enriched uranium technology uses less fuel and so the cost and final waste disposal could be reduced, historically there have been more political technological barriers to enriched uranium than to natural uranium, as the former is considered highly proliferating and could be used as nuclear weapon. However, Argentina is already authorized for enriching it. Also, the uranium national reserves are estimated to last 16 years, indicating Argentina will need to import it⁵.

The first communications with China implied the possible creation of two nuclear plants here, one of them in the coasts of the province of Río Negro. But although the project was advanced and a plant location selected, there was an important resistance on the part of the citizenship and

4. The rate during the 2017 negotiation, including country risk, had been 4.8%. During negotiations it increased a percentual point, showing how risky Argentina is perceived by investors.

5. Argentine experts consider that it is not convenient to leave the CANDU technology used in the current plants, as it would imply an exclusive dependence on China. CANDU technology requires uranium lightly enriched and heavy water. In Argentina, Dioxitek is in charge of this process using natural uranium, mainly national, plus a 3% of imported enriched uranium.

consequently, no social license. Thus, the project was moved to the province of Buenos Aires, to the same region where Atucha I and Atucha II are operating. This implied the cancellation of the other CANDU technology project, with unknown location.

Hydropower

- Portezuelo del Viento

The G20 Summit in Argentina was a chance to find and contact interested investors, although not many hydropower projects were signed then. One project is the Portezuelo del Viento dam, in the province of Mendoza.

In October 2019, companies interested in the bidding visited the location of the plant. Six out of the 26 companies are Chinese: Power China Limited, Sinohydro Corp. Limited, China Gezhouba Group Corporation, Sumec Complete Equipment, China International Water & Electric Corporation (CWE) and Three Gorges Corporation (Alarcón, 2019; Los Andes, 2019a). The companies have until 4 March 2020 to present their offers (Los Andes, 2019b). International agencies and the Government, through the National Treasury, will provide financing (Serafini, 2018).

The total execution of the project is estimated to last 5-6 years, and the investment would be USD500-800 million. This dam could produce 210 MW, meaning it would provide energy to 130,000 families, and offer 3,500 direct jobs besides 8,000 indirect ones, per official sources.

But, the provinces sharing the Río Grande river (where the dam would be) have different opinions on this project. The Environmental report made by the National University of Cuyo (Mendoza) is not backed up by La Pampa, as it does not cover the whole Río Colorado basin (the Río Grande river is its affluent) and because the effects downriver are not assessed. Also, La Pampa claims the water reservoir in Portezuelo del Viento dam will change the quality of the water, generating inconveniences to use this resource from the Río Colorado river.

In November 2019, the President ordered the Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development to approve the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) about the dam to meet the commitments made with the provincial Government, but the agency technicians claimed there were difficulties to work due to missing documentation (EconoJournal, 2019).

On the other hand, the Three Gorges Corporation showed interest in two other dams in the province of Mendoza, El Baqueano y Uspallata, planned to be done after Portezuelo del Viento dam. Even though no feasibility studies were done, it is important to take into account these projects for the future (Los Andes, 2019a).

- Cóndor Cliff and La Barrancosa

The controversial Cóndor Cliff and La Barrancosa dams, on Santa Cruz river, are in progress. In spite of the lawsuits and actions to stop the works, the UTE made up by China Gezhouba Group Corporation and the Argentine Hidrocuyo y Electroingeniería continues working in land movements and other works to build the dams. The construction is financed by the ICBC, the China Development Bank and the Bank of China.

This hydropower project is known by its many irregularities, like the doubtful allocation of the works, the problems with the EIA, the environmental effects on biodiversity and the glacier Perito Moreno, the violation of the indigenous communities' rights, and the links between the businessmen involved and cases of corruption.

FARN continues its efforts to stop the works. During 2018 and 2019, several letters were sent to China, about corruption cases, highlighting the social and environmental impacts of the dams, and reporting violations to Human Rights⁶. Also, it is important to mention the political interest associated to the dams, as they are linked to a cross-default clause, establishing that in case of nonfulfillment, China would stop financing other infrastructure projects in the country, like the works in Belgrano Cargas railway.

According to some press reports, during the construction of the Cóndor Cliff dam there were errors that provoked a huge crack in one of the retaining walls in the Santa Cruz river, resulting in the re-location of the concrete structures to divert the river (Gandini, 2019; Arias, 2019). Even though the UTE claims in its press release⁷ that such situation was due to “the existence of an area comprising low resistance material with potential risk of land sliding (...) requiring the revision of the design to re-locate the concrete structures to divert the river and the Cóndor Cliff dump”, official information is ambiguous and scarce.

Also, the press release indicates changes will be made to the construction design, but within the same financing amount approved by the Chinese banks. Given this situation, FARN presented a request of reports to the Secretariat of Energy, to clarify the situation, with no answer within the time limits.

- El Tambolar

China is involved in another hydropower work, El Tambolar, in the province of San Juan, and the first part, involving water diversion, tunnel construction and camping localization, is already done. The second stage involves the dam construction, the spillway, the adduction tunnel, the machine room, etc. El Tambolar would add 70 MW to the National Interconnected System.

The work bidding was done in December 2018, and was awarded to a UTE comprised of Panedile S.A., SACDE, Sinohydro, Petersen, and Thiele y Cruz. The work will cost USD483 million (Vega, 2019). At the beginning, the financing plan also involved Chinese capitals, but later on it was done through a trust made up of the sale of energy from Los Caracoles and Punta Negra dams, also in the province of San Juan, to the State (Tiempo de San Juan, 2018). This work also has conflicts with the province of La Pampa, as it may affect the water supply of the Desaguadero-Salado basin. Regarding this, La Pampa demands a basin council and a regional EIA covering the whole basin, with the corresponding public hearings, since San Juan claims the EIA was done but denies the inter-jurisdiction (Vía Santa Rosa, 2018; Leiva, 2019).

TRANSPORT AND AGREEMENTS

China and Argentina agree in the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) to continue strengthening the capacity of the transport industry. Also, China will encourage and support its companies to participate in construction projects and infrastructure investment in the transport industry within the Argentine territory and the region.

During the G20 Summit 2018, the Argentine Ministry of Transport and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding on strengthening the co-operation in the infrastructure industries, so that both parties encourage their companies to help in the investment, construction and operation of infrastructure related to transport, according to national regulation.

6. To see the letters sent, visit: www.farn.org.ar

7. Available in: <http://www.represaspatagonia.com.ar/index.php/es/comunicacion/noticias/item/77-no-hubo-error-de-dise-no-ni-de-construccion-en-represa-condor-cliff>

The main transport industries benefited will be railways, highways, ports and airports. To do this, China and Argentina encourage their financing institutions to provide fast and appropriate services based on technical assessments and the best market practices, according to their national policies and laws. The parties also ask their companies to comply with local laws and regulations, fulfill their agreements, delivering timely, safe and quality works, respecting the local culture and complying with social responsibilities. They present the legal minimum schedule the investments must comply with in the territory of Argentina.

Also during the G20 Summit 2018 a commercial contract was signed between the Argentine Ministry of Transport and the Chinese company Railway Construction Corporation Limited (CRCC) to recover San Martín Cargas railway. The aim is to renovate and improve 1,020 kilometers of railways for USD1,089 million. The then Ministry of Finance of Argentina signed an agreement with the China Development Bank for USD236 million to buy 200 coaches for the electric Roca railway. Also, the mechanism of Public-Private Participation (PPP) aimed to get USD200 million to improve route 5 connecting Luján with Santa Rosa. This is one of the few projects in progress through the PPP mechanism due to the economic difficulties Argentina is living. (Rebossio, 2018).

AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FORESTRY AND FISHING

Sanitary protocols

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) establishes that regarding sanitary and phytosanitary issues, the parties will encourage the access of agro-industrial products in their markets in order to diversify the exports and favour the equilibrium of the trade balance, under conditions of food safety and quality.

Also, Argentina and China will implement a consultation mechanism on food safety, electronic certification, and phytosanitary and sanitary plan co-operation, reinforcing joint actions. Both countries agree to exchange information, strengthen technical consultations based on scientific evidence and trust between each country sanitary services and streamline the negotiation process and facility registry to put agricultural and food products on the market faster promoting and enlarging bilateral trade.

Phytosanitary protocols were signed to export fresh cherries, apples, pears and grapes. A protocol was also signed about quarantine and sanitary requisites to export horses, and another on supervision, quarantine and veterinary health to export ovine and caprine meat.

As an example, the cherry protocol establishes all registered orchards for exporting to China must apply Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), keep sanitary conditions and use integrated pest management (IPM), including pest control, chemical/biological control and agricultural management, etc. All orchards, packaging or treatment facilities wishing to export must be registered with the National Service of Agri-Food Health and Safety (SENASA) and approved by the Chinese General Administration of Customs (GACC) and SENASA. The apple, pears, and grape protocols are similar. But, the GAP guidelines, the IPM system and the implementation means are unknown.

In regards to the sanitary protocols of horses and ovine and caprine meat, SENASA is the responsible agency of the quarantine procedures and sanitary certificate issuance to export to China.

Agriculture and livestock

The Joint Action Plan signed in 2018 establishes that China and Argentina will promote joint research projects and develop agricultural biotechnologies between companies from both countries, exchange of regulatory experiences, quality control of seeds and seed market; prevention and control of animal illnesses and development of veterinary products; exchange on breeding techniques and creation of reproduction and breeding centres for improved meat animals; technical training and joint research for bioenergy production; information exchange on registry systems and agri-chemical products supervision; phytosanitary protection; exchange of experiences and technical training on climate change adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas effects in agriculture and livestock, among others.

The Plan states exchanges and co-operation will continue in the grain distribution area, and regular information mechanisms will be supported on the edible oil and grain market; exchange and co-operation will be reinforced on scientific storage techniques and oil products and grains processing, and standard alignment. Grain companies from both countries will exchange knowledge and co-operation.

The parties will strengthen exchanges and coordinate positions in multilateral forums involving agricultural meetings, like G20 Summit, World Trade Organization (WTO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), the Codex Alimentarius, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), including negotiations on climate change, biotechnology, fishing and environment.

On the other hand, in 2017, the then Secretariat of Agro-industry of Argentina and the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture signed the Strategic Action Plan on agricultural co-operation 2017-2022, with the aim of driving, coordinating and orientating the dialogue and the co-operation actions from the different technical areas: agricultural biotechnology, seeds, technical and scientific research, fishing and aquaculture, animal health, livestock, dairy, horse riding industry, bioenergy, agrochemicals, vegetable protection, and agricultural trade and investments.

Regarding biotechnology, the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) establishes the parties commit to deepen the co-operation regarding regulation, approval of new transgenic events, genome editing and new improvement technologies, cloning, research and development (R+D), technical training and public perception. Besides, research projects will be encouraged jointly or between companies (e. g., Bioceres/Indear from Argentina and Beijing Dabeinong Technology Group Co. Ltd. from China). But, the Plan does not state sanitary protocols or regulatory measures regarding work with this technology, and there are no special requirements about release to the environment and the impacts on health, focusing instead on the frameworks for trading.

As regards seeds, the parties are committed in the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) to:

- a) reinforce exchanges of experiences on regulations, registry and protection of breeders rights, and seed market control;**
- b) co-operate controlling seed quality, including certification mechanisms and molecular markers;**
- c) promote development of production projects of out-of-season seed varieties of interest; and**
- d) drive relationships between production and trading companies in both countries.**

Argentina and China have committed to exchange information on logging, supervision and market systems for agrochemical products of chemical synthesis.

No agreement related to food production mentions the possibility of developing sustainable production systems, like agro-ecology or organic production. There is no mention of assessment and monitoring mechanisms on environment and human, animal and ecosystem health. These co-operations need to be assessed, in order to implement production models that are cost-effective, socially fair, and environmentally sound.

Regarding livestock, the countries will promote demonstrative extension of good varieties for meat, and frozen semen and embryo specimens, and will strengthen exchanges of breeding technologies. Also, the parties will promote mutual exchanges of information on policies, production, processing, industrialization and marketing of dairy products; strategic investment and dairy companies' association from both countries, and engagement in fairs and other kinds of business meetings.

Fishing

By the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023), Argentina and China are committed to reinforce the bilateral fishing co-operation, especially within the framework of the China-Argentina Fishing Subcommittee, created in 2010 and dependent on the Joint China-Argentina Committee of agricultural co-operation. This co-operation aims to implement decisions taken during the meetings of the subcommittee, to improve communication mechanisms and exchange information between both countries fishing authorities, fight together illegal, undeclared and unregulated fishing, and co-operate and coordinate efforts to preserve resources in several areas next to the Exclusive Argentine Economic Area (200 miles).

It is important, however, to point out that since 1969, Prefecture has seized 76 ships without fishing authorization. 14 were Korean, 11 Taiwanese and 11 Chinese. Lately, most ships are under Chinese flag, and property of the Government only or with companies (Klipphan, 2019).

On the other hand, within the framework of the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023), Argentina and China will promote co-operation on aquaculture, exchanging information and technologies about aquaculture extension system construction, technical training for the staff, fish food processing and breeding in aquaculture farms.

Item 4 of the Strategic Action Plan states that, regarding aquaculture, Argentina and China are committed to deepen regulatory experiences and dialogue, to supervise catches, and deepen consultations on the issuance of fishing permits.

Both countries will also make efforts to establish co-operation and communication mechanisms to prevent incidents caused by illegal fishing in one country's waters by the other country's fishing vessels.

INVESTMENTS, COMMERCE, TAX AND FINANCE AREA

In the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023), the parties agree to define co-operatively the priority areas and projects, within the current Five-Year Integrated Plan China-Argentina for Infrastructure Co-operation (2017-2021). They will create favourable conditions to co-operate with investments between energy, mining, electricity, agriculture, livestock, fishing and infrastructure companies. Both countries agree **to assist the other country's companies on legal matters to promote investments.**

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) reinforces financial co-operation in infrastructure projects, productive capacity, investments and trading, and promotes projects under the Public-Private Participation (PPP) scheme. But, given the macroeconomic-financial crisis of Argentina in 2018, leading to the signing of an agreement by the Government with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (requiring cuts in public expending and fiscal deficit, among other measures), these PPP projects did not come into force. This was the result, as well, of an increase in the country risk above the levels for this kind of investments.

However, the parties encourage their companies to extend co-operation on infrastructure investment, construction and development. To that effect, the Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) establishes the parties demand their companies “seek harmonious coexistence and mutual benefit with local communities during development of infrastructural projects”, and encourage them to “value the environmental protection and work security, and adopt those measures needed to guarantee the safety of the personnel.”

On this last point there is a great deal of uncertainty on how it will be implemented, as there have been several violations to the national law on environmental and human rights. This is the case of C ndor Cliff and La Barrancosa dams in the Santa Cruz river, as the local indigenous communities' rights are not respected by non-compliance with the free, prior and informed consent process adopted by Argentina by ratifying the ILO Convention 169.

The most important point is the swap agreed between China and Argentina. On 2 December 2018, the Central Bank of Argentina and the People's Republic of China Bank signed a supplementary agreement to the swap agreement for 60,000 million yuan (USD9,000 million), in addition to what was agreed in 2017 for a total amount of 130,000 million yuan, equivalent to USD19,000 million, more than 40% of Argentina Central Bank reserves. This is an important agreement, based on an IMF recommendation to increase it, within the framework of the stand-by agreement signed with the IMF. In use since 2012, this tool lends stability to the reserves of the Central Bank of Argentina.

MINING - LITHIUM THE MAIN ATTRACTION

The Joint Action Plan (2019-2023) establishes Argentina and China will co-operate on mining matters and on training staff. It emphasizes co-operation for research, exploration and exploitation of lithium, copper, salts of potassium, geothermal resources and non-metallic mineral products. Also, **the countries will exchange experiences regarding sustainable and environmentally friendly exploitation of mineral resources.** But, there is no known case of exchange of experiences on this issue, nor the means to do such an exploitation.

On this topic, the Chinese mining company Jiangxi Ganfeng Lithium (GFL) foresees an investment of USD675 million in the next four years to exploit two salt mines and build two carbonate lithium plants (Calzada y Ramseyer, 2019). Thus, USD400 million will be used in Mariana project, in Salta, and the remaining USD275 million to Cauchari-Olaroz in Jujuy, also the location of the above mentioned solar energy farm.

The Chinese mining company Tibet Summit Resources (TSR) will invest USD180 million to extract lithium in the salt mine Los Diablillos, Salta. According to Quesada (2019), the company would have started building infrastructure in the Puna region and the administrative offices.

The Chinese mining company Shandong Gold owns 50% of the Veladero mine in San Juan. This is the main gold company in China and aims to be in the top ten largest gold mining companies in the world (Morales, 2018). It is important to mention the big environmental and social impacts related to this company: several cyanide solution spills (some known and others not covered by the media), resulting in important environmental and social damages, like water and soil pollution. And, the Veladero mine is located in a periglacial environment, meaning Law 26.639 on glaciers is not respected. Also, the Mining Code estates after three major violations, the establishment must be definitely closed (Par. 264, subp. C) (FARN, 2017; FARN, 2018), but although this is the case here, the company has not been penalized.

On October 10th, 2019, the National Sub secretariat of Mining Policies signed in China a co-operation agreement on geology and mining with the Ministry of Natural Resource of China. It is intended to deepen the relationship between the countries and support the projects of the Chinese companies working in San Juan, Salta and Jujuy in lithium, copper and gold mines (Chinese Embassy, 2019).

And the Chinese company Shanghai Potash in November 2019 expressed interest in establishing a pilot plant to industrialise 200,000 ton of potassium in Malargüe, Mendoza. This would be in the Potasio Río Colorado mine, owned by Brazilian Vale (previously financed by the Brazil Development Bank, and now not in charge due to a labour conflict). It is owned currently by the Government of Mendoza. Sanghai Potash also interested China Overseas Development Association (CODA) to finance the project, as it has a USD20,000 million budget to finance mining projects (Conte, 2019).

There are several cases of mining projects financed or operated by Chinese companies in Latin American known by their non-compliance with international and national laws on environment and local communities. More and more frequently there is a lack of proper environmental and social behaviour on the part of the Chinese agencies in Latin America engaged in extractive projects. Below, some projects as example: Mirador, San Carlos Panantza y Río Blanco in Ecuador; Toromocho, Mina Marcona, Las Bambas and Río Blanco in Peru, and those mentioned already in Argentina (CICDHA, 2018).

SPATIAL AREA

Within the framework of the Joint Action Plan signed at the end of 2018, the parties aim to deepen co-operation on development, production, telemetry and operation of spatial vehicles, as well as construction and operation of ground spatial infrastructure, use of communication satellites, navigation and Earth observation, spatial science and deep space exploration.

Before that, in 2012, two co-operation agreements were signed: one between the National Committee on Spatial Activities (CONAE) and the China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control General (CLTC) and another including the Government of Neuquén. These ones determined the spatial centre would be in Bajada del Agrio, Neuquén, and would support interplanetary exploration activities, astronomical observation, and satellite tracking and control. Also, the territory was temporarily transferred to CLTC for 50 years, in exchange for an annual 10% use of the antenna by CONAE.

In September 2016, the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed with its Chinese counterpart the Additional Protocol to the co-operation agreement between the Government of Argentina and the Government of the People's Republic of China on building, commissioning and operating a Chinese deep space station in Neuquén, within the framework of the Chinese Programme for Moon Exploration underwritten in 2014. This protocol reaffirms the pacific use of the Chinese spatial station in our territory⁸.

In the Joint Action Plan, the parties commit to deepen the use of the deep space station of China in the province of Neuquén to further the bilateral and international co-operation in deep space and moon exploration.

CONCLUDING WORDS

The process of weakening the safeguards of traditional financial institutions and the emergence of national development banks in the international financing arena seems to show a generalized tendency in the region to go back regarding social and environmental protection standards that call for closely monitoring of the evolution of relations especially with China, given its role in the national economy.

Some important points to take into account when analysing the signed agreements between Argentina and China:

The absence of environmental aspects in the agreements causes concerns in a context where the safeguards from Chinese financial institutions -like the China Development Bank- and the national environmental regulatory framework are debilitating.

The agreements foresee direct acquisition and preferential conditions for companies in order to increase investments. This cause concerns given the simplification of procedures and social licenses (like the Environmental Impact Assessment and citizen participation instances), while it is beneficial for Chinese investments against any other kind of investment.

Some agreements mention the importance of compliance with national legislation. But, there are doubts regarding the institutional preparedness of Argentina for these agreements, and if the law offers a proper regulatory framework, in environmental issues, transparency and access to information, another recurring problem in the different agreements and protocols.

In the different bilateral agreements signed with the provincial governments, the provincial institutional and administrative structure works as environmental police, but there are doubts regarding its capacity to do it.

The development of projects and initiatives must include the environmental requirements of the current regulation and allow civil society participation in the process. Many of them could provoke huge damages to the environment given their importance, and promote tension and social conflicts, as was the case with the Santa Cruz river dams.

The agreements deepen Argentina's role in international trade with agricultural and mineral raw materials, like lithium, with a low value-added level. This maintains the difficulties regarding the deficit of the trade balance with China.

8. Available in: <https://cancilleria.gob.ar/es/actualidad/comunicados/argentina-y-china-reafirman-el-uso-pacifico-de-la-estacion-espacial-de>

And finally, it is clear that the bilateral Argentina-China relationship is influenced by economic needs, leaving aside environmental and social matters, which are just a detail in the China-Argentina agreement.

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ANNEX I: AGREEMENTS SIGNED BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND CHINA SINCE 2018

Industry	Kind of Agreement	Objective	Chinese Party	Argentine Party	Amount (millions in dollars)
Renewable energies	Commitment Protocol	Construction of Renewable Energy Plant Cauchari, in province of Jujuy	President of Power China, Yan Zhiyong	Government of Jujuy	390
Hydropower	-	Construction of Portezuelo del Viento dam in Río Grande, Mendoza	Chinese companies have shown interest	Government of Mendoza	800
Hydropower	Allocation	Construction of El Tambolar dam, in San Juan	Sinhydro in UTE with Argentina companies	Government of San Juan	483
Transport	Commercial Contract	Recovery of San Martín Cargas Railway	China Railway Construction Corporation Limited	Ministry of Transport of Argentina	1,089
Transport	Commercial Contract	Purchase of 200 coaches for the Roca railway for passenger transport	China Development Bank	Ministry of Finance of Argentina	236
Transport	Commercial Contract of Public-Private Participation (PPP)	Completion of route 5 connecting Luján with Santa Rosa	China Development Bank	Ministry of Finance of Argentina	200
Mining	-	Two salt mine exploitation and construction of two plants of lithium carbonate: Project Mariana and Cauchari-Olaroz	Jiangxi Ganfeng Lithium	Government of Jujuy	675
Mining	-	Investment to exploit lithium in the salt mine Los Diablillos, Salta	Tibet Summit Resources (TSR)	Government of Salta	180
Nuclear	Negotiation contract	Loan to build Atucha III with Chinese technology	CNNC and ICBC	Secretariat of Energy of Argentina; NASA	7,900
Financing	Supplementary agreement	Swap	China Bank	Central Bank of Argentina	9,000
Financing	Agreement	Funds to finance the "working capital"	China Development Bank	Ministry of Finance of Argentina	1,000
TOTAL					21,953

ANNEX II: REQUESTS OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON NUCLEAR MATTERS

Based on the facts presented in this report, FARN submitted requests of access to information to Nucleoeléctrica Argentina, the National Atomic Energy Council (CNEA) and the Secretariat of Energy (SE) to deepen in the construction contract and commissioning of the Nuclear Plant Atucha III (Table 1).

TABLE 1: REQUESTS OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THEIR ANSWERS

Institution	Date of request	Request	Answer
SE*1	15 May 2019	Strategic evaluation on the consequences of this project, specifically on energetic, economic and environmental matters.	It states the building of a fourth nuclear plant is due to the national public policy of energy diversification matrix, nuclear energy is available almost continuously throughout the year, it is clean energy as it does not emit GGE, and it involves Argentine industries. Also, it states the electricity generation optimum matrix must take into account the system sustainability and safety, achieving a combination of energy sources, by building and operating nuclear plants that generate positive externalities in the technological improvement of national companies, as well as the associated technological scientific system, and in the training of highly qualified professionals and technicians. Also, the addition of more than 1,000 MW from the nuclear plant will reduce the natural gas imports in USD 400 million a year, or be exported. The construction will create more than 7,000 direct jobs; and more than 40% of the supplies will be national, strengthening the “technologic cluster” developed in the country. Regarding the environment, the assessment and classification process results in an Environmental Impact Assessment, required by the provincial law and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority (ARN) and the environmental general law.
		Send copy of agreement with Government of People's Republic of China. If the negotiation process is not finished, specify the point it is in.	The financing conditions are being negotiated. It will be done with a loan from Chinese banks at concessional rates according to Decree No 338/2017. The kind of credit and amount are still in negotiations.
		On the financing of the project, credit agencies involved, kind of credit and total cost of credit needed for the project.	Financing terms are being negotiated. It would be done with a loan from Chinese banks at concessional rates according to Decree No. 338/2017. The type of credit and its cost are sources of negotiation.
		Which will be the total cost of the project.	The cost will be around USD7,900 million.

NASA* ²	May 2th, 2019	Execution Programme of Project Atucha III.	It states the answer will refer only to certain general guidelines and the included information must be considered preliminary and subject to the end of negotiations and later authorizations.
		Information regarding all companies involved in preparation and execution of the project.	<p><u>Estimated execution time of the project:</u> 99 months.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> depends on modality, definite work scope and other contract details that are still in conversation.</p> <p><u>Fuel:</u> the contractor will provide the initial charge and the first recharge. Afterwards, it will be nationally sourced.</p> <p><u>Contractors:</u> China National Nuclear Corporation, China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation and China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation branch in Argentina. It is foreseen as well to hire local companies to provide an important part of the supplies and services.</p> <p><u>Financing:</u> origin, interest rates, agreement requirements and total cost are structured through Chinese financial institutions according to Decree No 338/2017*³ (concessional financing).</p>
CNEA* ⁴	20 May 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cadastral location and project schedule. 2. Environmental reports: Environmental Impact Assessment and study, indicating if these are cumulative or strategic. 3. Indicate when the citizenship was invited to participate. Otherwise, when it will be. 	They explain that power plants in general and Atucha III in particular are within the organizational scope of Nucleoeléctrica Argentina. Thus, the institution requested cannot offer that information.

Source: FARN.

*¹. The request and the answer.

*². The request and the answer.

*³. The decree states “concessional financing”, meaning one with a grace period equivalent to, at least, the period estimated for the execution of the project, an interest rate with a discount of, at least, 25% in relation to the rate of government bonds issued by Argentina and with jurisdiction in New York, USA, of similar period; a repayment period of, at least, 10 years from the expiration of the grace period. Available in: <http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/270000-274999/274741/norma.htm>

*⁴. The request and the answer.