



## Argentina-India Technical Cooperation: Agriculture and Science & Technology



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Argentina is a Federal Republic located in South America. Sharing the bulk of its Southern Cone with its neighbour Chile to the west, the country is bordered by Bolivia and Paraguay to the north, Brazil to the northeast, Uruguay and the South Atlantic Ocean to the east, and the Drake Passage to the south. Its capital and most important city is Buenos Aires, and its official language is Spanish.

At present, Argentina has the second largest economy in South America, and the third largest in Latin America. At the international scenario, it retains its historic status as a middle power in international affairs, and it is a prominent regional power in the Southern Cone and Latin America. In fact, Argentina has an active participation in different international organizations such as G15, G20, UN, WB, WTO, Mercosur, OAS, UNASUR, among others.

However, and despite maintaining political-diplomatic and economic-commercial bonds with a large part of the international community, its relations with traditional partners the ones prevailing are: Mercosur countries, Chile, Bolivia, United States and the European Union.

Taking into account the aforementioned, it is undeniable that the Asia-Pacific region, in general, and India, in particular, was traditionally of the secondary importance for Argentine foreign policy, a situation that began to reverse in 2003 with the arrival of Mr. Néstor Kirchner to the Presidency. This has been maintained in two Presidencies of Mrs Cristina Fernández and of the present President of the Argentine Republic, Mr. Mauricio Macri.

The redirection of Argentine foreign policy has occurred when it faced the need to reintegrate internationally after suffering a strong political and economic crisis in 2001. At the same time, and from the other side of the world, a highly attractive scenario

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emerged: the Asian boom in the world economy after the crisis of 1997-1998 and India initiating an internal process of economic reforms and an adjustment in its foreign policy resulting in its significant role on the international stage. It is important to indicate that this process was started in 1991 by Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao.

The redefinition of India's foreign policy and the model implemented after the arrival of Néstor Kirchner to power allowed intensification of the bilateral bond. Both countries prioritized, within their respective foreign policies, the diversification of relations with different countries of the international community; with Latin American and the Caribbean in the case of India and with the Asia-Pacific region by Argentina. Within this framework, the political-diplomatic and economic-commercial relations have become closer every year. At present, both countries are not only commercial partners but also strategic allies in different cooperation areas of the international policy. In this paper, we would focus on political-diplomatic relations.

Argentina and India in 1949 began to be officially linked, when the Asian country opened its Embassy in Buenos Aires. For its part, Argentina opened its Embassy in New Delhi in 1950. However, it is from the beginning of the twenty-first century that some progress was seen, after the signing of various areas agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). Following are the most relevant ones<sup>1</sup>

- Programme of Cooperation (POC) in Science and Technology between Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Argentine Republic and Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India (2004)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic in the field of agricultural research (2006)
- Framework Agreement on cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (2010)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Argentine Geological Survey Service (SEGEMAR) and Geological Survey of India (2010)
- Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in sports between the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Republic of India and the Secretariat of Sports of the Argentine Republic (2010)
- Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on foreign trade technology transfer between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Argentine Republic (2010)
- Memorandum of Understanding between the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI) and the National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) (2010)
- Memorandum of Understanding between ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and Energía Argentina SA (ENARSA) (2010)
- Cooperation Agreement between the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) (2010)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (2010)
- Visa Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Argentine Republic (2010)
- Agreement on information exchange and tax assistance (2011)
- Customs Agreement (2011)
- Memorandum of Understanding on Establishment of an "Academic Chair" in Ayurveda between Central Council on Research in Ayurvedic Sciences, Ministry of AYUSH and Fundacion de Salud Ayurveda Prema (2016)
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Research and Education in Homeopathic Medicine (2016)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL), National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic and Litoral Biológico of Argentina (2017)

The Programme of Cooperation (POC) in Science and Technology between Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Argentine Republic and Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India (2004) and two Memoranda of Understanding between the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic and Indian counterparts: Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India (2006) and Indian Immunologicals Limited (2017) have been explained in detail.

## Science and Technology Technical Cooperation

The Programme of Cooperation (PoC) in Science and Technology between Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Argentine Republic and Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of India (2004):

Bilateral scientific and technological cooperation agreement was signed in 1985, which was its foundation stone in the Basic Agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation between Argentinean and Indian Governments.

Within the framework of this, Programme of Cooperation (PoC) was signed in 2004 between the former Secretariat for Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Argentine Republic and the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. The main of PoC was to expand scientific and technological cooperation between the countries through the implementation of joint research projects, seminars and exploratory visits of scientists and experts from each side for establishing new contacts for the development of joint projects. The areas for cooperation were:

- Biotechnology
- Oceanography and Polar Research
- Medicine and health
- Agriculture and Food Technology

- Information technology and communication
- Renewable Energy Sources
- Manufacturing Technologies

Since the signing of the Programme, four calls were opened, 27 projects were approved and 127 people were trained in doctoral and post-doctoral exchanges. Next, there was a summary table with the selected projects for the 2014 call, the last one; some of them are being still developed.

It is worth noticing that the PoC is a clear example of the vision of the international cooperation Argentina has since 15 years through its Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation.

Since 2007, the Minister of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation, Mr. Lino Barañao, highlighted on several occasions importance of science and technology in a globalized world and need to advance in bilateral cooperation from an interdisciplinary perspective. He also indicated that the interaction with India was of a strategic value for Argentina, given the high symmetry that exists in terms of human resource but also the need of both countries to have quality research and, at the same time, solve social impact problems<sup>2</sup>

## Agricultural Technical Cooperation

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic in the field of agricultural research was signed in 2006.

In this, importance of science and technical cooperation was observed in the field of agriculture and agrifood. Through this MoU, both countries recognized the importance of scientific and technical cooperation in agriculture, agrifood and biotechnology as a contribution to their economic development.

MoU signatories were the Indian Council for Agricultural Research/Department of Agricultural Research and Education (ICAR/DARE) under the Ministry of Agriculture of the

Republic of India and the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic.

The specific objectives of this MoU were initiation of exchange programmes in the following areas:

- Joint cooperation and implementation of research projects :
- Visits or exchange of researchers
- Organization of study and learning visits and other forms of training
- Exchange of plant and animal genetic resources, equipment and testing material
- Exchange of publications and other scientific and technical documents.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL), National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Argentine Republic and Litoral Biológico of Argentina was signed in 2017.

This MoU is an agreement of Research, Development and Transfer of technologies from Argentina to India to deal with an animal health issue: sadness cow syndrome. It was signed by the National Institute of Agricultural Technology of Argentina (INTA), Litoral Biológico and its counterpart in India, Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL).

As a result, INTA developed a vaccine for the disease called Bio-Jajá; vaccine was elaborated by Litoral Biológico and bought by Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL). In fact, 100.000 units have already been exported from Argentina to India<sup>3</sup>,

The development of vaccine is a clear example of how technical cooperation has a positive impact on the economy of the involved countries. It must be taken into account that, with more than 300 million heads, the Republic of India stands out as the country with the largest cattle stock, besides being world's leading milk producer and exporter. In this sense, with the Bio-Jajá vaccine, India would not only control one of the most important health problems it has been facing, but

would also avoid great economic losses.

After this first stage of the Memorandum, an Agreement between Litoral Biológico and Indian Immunologicals Ltd. would be signed to manufacture the same vaccine in India. Later, Bio-Jajá would be exported to Far East and Africa from India, regions where IIL has a strong presence.

It is worth mentioning that the vaccine was developed entirely by the INTA, which undertook, through this MoU, to develop diagnostic methods for sadness cow syndrome, together with the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI).

## Conclusion

The rapprochement between the two countries at the level of technical cooperation was in the nascent stage during the past 15 years compared to different programmes that both Argentina and India were having with their traditional partners.

However, this trend has reversed lately. Concrete examples are the two MoUs and programme mentioned in detail in the paper, aiming to intensify technical cooperation between both the countries in agriculture, science and technology.

This shows that the South American and the Asian country are aware of the similarity of their challenges, complementarities of their economies and importance of South-South Cooperation in bilateral relations to achieve their greater development and to play a leading role in the international community.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Embassy of India in Argentina, official website [www.indembarg.in](http://www.indembarg.in), <http://www.indembarg.in/page/relations/>
- <sup>2</sup> Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of Argentine Republic, official website, <http://www.mincyt.gob.ar/noticias/baranao-fortalece-la-vinculacion-en-ciencia-y-tecnologia-con-la-republica-de-la-india-9724>
- <sup>3</sup> National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), official website [https://inta.gob.ar/inta-informa/exportan-a-la-india-100-mil-](https://inta.gob.ar/inta-informa/exportan-a-la-india-100-mil)