

Weekly Asado



Wilson Center

Argentina Project

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Do you know who you are?: Even Steven

In a much-needed win for the Macri government, the European Union last month withdrew its appeal to the European Court of Justice in a dispute over EU anti-dumping duties on Argentine biodiesel. The decision followed Argentine victories in the EU justice system and at the World Trade Organization.

News that the EU market was reopening to Argentine biodiesel came at just the right time, as Argentine producers grappled with prohibitively high anti-dumping duties imposed by the United States last year. Indeed, just as the Europeans were dismantling their tariffs, the U.S. International Trade Commission was issuing its findings that U.S. producers had been “materially injured” by subsidized Argentine biodiesel. The EU decision relieves pressure on President Mauricio Macri, who has threatened to challenge the U.S. restrictions at the WTO. For now, Argentina appears committed to a diplomatic approach; it received a potentially positive signal on February 1, when Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross showed up at a reception for Argentina’s new ambassador, Fernando Oris de Roa.

That said, Argentina should keep its trade lawyers on retainer. French biofuel producers have initiated a new EU investigation into Argentine biodiesel subsidies. And in “America First” Washington, the United States might very well retain its anti-dumping duties, prompting Argentina to follow through on its threat to file a WTO complaint.

Help!: For the sake of your namesake



Universities always struggle with town-gown relations. Corporate headquarters are called upon to support their local community. But sometimes, an institution faces pressure to support a worthwhile, but seemingly random cause. That is the case with Amazon, whose founder, Jeff Bezos, is under pressure from the Oakland-based NGO Amazon Watch to take a stand against the “destruction of the biome.” The group has asked for Mr. Bezos’s public support, and for his company to forswear crude oil imported from the Amazon. At first blush, the lobbying might seem like a long shot, and kinda arbitrary. But other companies have become deeply involved in their namesake geographies. Perhaps most famously, the former CEO of

Patagonia, Kristine McDivitt Tompkins, whose husband also founded North Face and Espirit, donated one million acres of private land to the Chilean government to create five Patagonian national parks. Across the Andes, the Tompkins have also made sizable acquisitions and donations, including 165,000 acres transferred to Argentina's National Parks Administration to create Monte León National Park, the country's first national park on its mainland coast.

Subtext: Maritime mystery weighs on Casa Rosada

Three months after its disappearance, the international community has largely lost interest in the ARA San Juan, the Argentine submarine that vanished, with 44 crew members on board, somewhere in the South Atlantic. In Argentina, however, the tragedy continues to haunt the Macri administration.

On February 6, Mr. Macri met with relatives of the missing crew, and later announced a *\$4.9 million reward* for help locating the sub. The reward is designed to attract private companies to join the search, as the 13 nations that initially pitched in, including the United States, are ramping down their efforts. The international search had been a reassuring element in the high seas drama. Mr. Oris de Roa, Argentina's new U.S. ambassador, in his first public remarks in Washington on February 1, thanked the United States for its help in the search, as did Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Faurie when he met Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Buenos Aires on February 4.

But with the submarine still missing, Argentines are running out of patience. A criminal investigation into the vessel's maintenance is underway, and police have raided three naval bases to hunt for evidence. For its part, the Argentine congress has set up a committee to investigate the submarine's disappearance, as criticism of Mr. Macri's handling of the issue intensifies. Already, the tragedy has sparked leadership changes in the armed forces, with the head of Argentina's navy fired in December, and prompted a national debate about the state of Argentina's poorly equipped military.

Smooth sailing: Calm before the storm



So far, so good. In the last year, Argentina has gracefully organized a host of high-profile international events. Last December, the World Trade Organization held its ministerial in Buenos Aires. The same month, the G-20 Sherpas gathered in Bariloche at the start of Argentina's G-20 presidency. Earlier, Argentina welcomed visits by Vice President Pence and the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

But as Argentina's preparations for the November G-20 leaders' summit ramp up, the country is displaying signs of overconfidence. After all, managing a massive event like the G-20 dwarfs head-of-state visits, and even a WTO conference. At the G-20 summit in Hamburg last year, for example, up to 50,000 peaceful protestors showed up, alongside a handful of violent groups that clashed with police and drew

tear gas, pepper spray and water cannons. Given the Argentine protest culture, and growing domestic unease over proposed labor reforms, there is a real possibility for upheaval in November in Buenos Aires. Attendance by controversial global figures such as President Trump and President Vladimir Putin could cause further disruptions in the Argentine capital, as Argentina manages their convoys and security requirements while accommodating demonstrators.

Imperio de la ley: Check yo self

Latin America & Caribbean

Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank	Change in Overall Score*
Uruguay	1/30	0.71	22/113	▼ 2	-0.01
Costa Rica	2/30	0.68	24/113	▲ 1	0.00
Chile	3/30	0.67	27/113	▼ 1	-0.02
St. Kitts & Nevis	4/30	0.66	28/113	▲ 2	0.00
Barbados	5/30	0.65	30/113	▼ 2	-0.02
St. Lucia	6/30	0.63	33/113	▲ 3	-0.01
Antigua & Barbuda	7/30	0.63	34/113	▼ 5	-0.04
Grenada	8/30	0.61	36/113	▼ 5	-0.05
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	9/30	0.61	37/113	-	0.00
Bahamas	10/30	0.60	40/113	▼ 2	-0.01
Dominica	11/30	0.60	41/113	▼ 1	-0.01
Argentina	12/30	0.58	46/113	▲ 5	0.03
Jamaica	13/30	0.58	47/113	-	0.00
Trinidad & Tobago	14/30	0.56	48/113	-	-0.01
Brazil	15/30	0.54	52/113	-	-0.02
Peru	16/30	0.52	60/113	▲ 5	0.01

As the crackdown on members of Argentina’s last government continues to provoke criticism about victor’s justice, the World Justice Project says the rule of law is actually improving in Argentina. In its latest report, *Argentina jumped five spots* in the global ranking, to 46th in the world. Its score now exceeds the global median. The report judges countries based on factors including constraints on government power, government transparency and public corruption. But Argentina has plenty of room for improvement. It ranked just 12th out of 30 countries in Latin America, behind Uruguay and Chile.

See you at the crossroads: Tantas encrucijadas quedan atrás



Still don’t believe Porteños, once known for their timid appetite, are craving Asian cuisine? On a recent Thursday evening, there was a 40-minute wait at Niño Gordo, a windowless parrilla asiática in Palermo Soho with a memorable neon wall and a forgettable menu. More traditional Asian offerings, including

Sunae Asian Cantina and Una Canción Coreana, are also popular. In Palermo, a Japanese restaurant that has not yet opened its doors already has 3,000 followers on Instagram.

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