

# COOPERATIVE SECURITY: CONFIDENCE- BUILDING MEASURES WITH BRAZIL IN TIMES OF ARGENTINIAN DEMOCRACY

Gisela Pereyra Doval<sup>1</sup>, Miguela Varela<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Introduction

The overcome of the bipolar dynamics between the Soviet and the American bloc has led to an increasing concern about the study of security in regional geopolitical environment. Thus, the Copenhagen School<sup>3</sup> proposed new tools to analyze and understand the relations between states within the framework of European security itself, which distinguishes it from the traditional theories of international relations, most of them from North America. The Copenhagen School believes that the phenomena produced by the end of the Cold War and the globalization process are not included or covered by the dominant models on security and there is a need to redefine some of the concepts used so far.

Several contributions to research on security have been made by this school. First, the definition of it as a multidimensional concept, invoking different objects related to security that vary according to context, being in certain circumstances the State, or individuals or social groups in others. Second, the Theory of Regional Security Complexes, which evaluates the very approach to the constituted unit of analysis: a complex refers to a group of

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<sup>1</sup> Phd in International Relations, Universidad Nacional de Rosario (UNR). Professor of International Relations at the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, UNR. Researcher of the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET). Director of the *Programa de Estudios Argentina-Brasil*. E-mail: gpdoval@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Graduated in International Relations (UNR). E-mail: miguela.varela@hotmail.com.

<sup>3</sup> The term "Copenhagen School" was used for the first time by Bill McSweeney in an essay that began an interchange in form of debate between this author and many researches.

states whose perceptions of safety are common and whose list of friends and enemies are shared. Neorealism studied the international system and its dynamics as a basic unit of analysis, but this has been criticized by the Copenhagen School, which put emphasis on the study of the subsystems that were cajoled by the bipolar system for a long time. It also defines the subsystems as complexes of states with certain independence of the overall system due to the intensity of their interactions.

In this sense, this school recognizes the importance of analyzing the dynamics of states not only under systemic actors, but primarily regional, considering that the interdependence of states comprising a region is so profound that one cannot study the security of just one state while ignoring the security of a neighbor (Buzan 1992). The idea of security complexes refers to a set of states that not only form a natural block and a distinct historical and cultural circle, but also have higher security challenges externally than internally. Hence, their security perspectives tend to converge.

As our area of interest comprises the bilateral relationship between Argentina and Brazil, we approach a limited regional subsystem and, in this sense, we believe that the alternative approach of Cooperative Security is the most appropriate since it postulates the progressive integration and development of mutual trust measures<sup>4</sup> as elements that generate mechanisms for long-term cooperation. Thus, the aim of this article is to review the nuclear cooperation between Argentina and Brazil since the restoration of democracy and to analyze whether it can be considered a process of Cooperative Security. Consequently, the hypothesis guiding this work is based on the generation of a process of Cooperative Security between Argentina and Brazil by the hands of Confidence-Building Measures held between these two countries from the restoration of democracy in Argentina until 2011.

According to Hardy Videla (2003, 3), "Cooperative Security seeks to achieve security through institutionalized consent among international actors

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<sup>4</sup> We understand Mutual Trust Measures not only as bilateral and multilateral measures that intend to prevent crisis and conflicts situations, but also actions that help the communication between actors, generating a comprehensive framework that aims the perception of immediate threats and avoids risks. They are the corollary of a political will of two or more states that attempt to create alternatives to solve a problem, which can be developed into conflict without these measures just through an interpretation error.

involved in the system. [...] It assumes that the securitarian objectives of the partners have been identified as common and compatible, enabling the establishment of cooperation between the parties to achieve them." Firstly, this means to put emphasis on prevention as an enduring dynamics overtime and, secondly, the abandonment of unilateral practices, recognizing the inability of a state to increase its security in isolation. This model is somehow intended as a proposal that overcomes the weaknesses of Collective Security.

The same author states that the concept of Cooperative Security can be also applied bilaterally, as long as the two countries share a vision for future expansion. This is where our research identify a clearer sense, as we refer to the bilateral dynamics between Argentina and Brazil not as an isolated issue, but as part of a process that tends to be spread to other countries in the region.

Fontana defines Cooperative Security as a change of mentality, a transformation in the perception of others and their neighbors, which is based on trust and transparency. "This is not built only by unprecedented mechanisms, but largely on the basis of elements that largely exist, such as agreements, treaties or established routines" (quoted in Milanese 2005, 45). In this sense, Argentina and Brazil are developing a bilateral link on the subject, once incipient under military rule, but that have been deepening over the decades of democracy. The return of democracy was the ideal period to mend ties with countries that became embroiled in a logic of rivalry and distrust throughout the *de facto* administrations.

In this regard, Argentina and Brazil historically went through a situation of rivalry, but their relations found their most tense peak with the start of nuclear development in both countries during the 1950s. It is for this reason that we limited our study on the process of Cooperative Security to Confidence-Building Measures to the strictly nuclear field, since we believe that progresses in this technology generated the moment of greatest tension between the two countries, but at the same time it was the ambit where the first Confidence-Building Measures that would culminate in the consolidation of this process were established.

The aforementioned tradition of rivalry was manifested mainly through two key events during the military regimes. On the one hand, in the La Plata Basin, which presented the shared waters of the Paraná River as a scenario,

where some misunderstandings occurred in the context of construction of the Itaipu (Brazil) and Corpus (Argentina) dams during the 1970s. The kickoff to reverse this situation occurred with the signing of the Tripartite Treaty in 1979. On the other hand, this competition was also evident through the nuclear and arms race, which first took the path of cooperation after the signature of the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement for the Development and Application of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy in 1980. As from the 1980s, this rivalry disappears due to the re-democratization process in both countries that complements the various regional integration mechanisms, especially the MERCOSUR, among other factors.

## **2. Antecedents of Nuclear Development in Argentina and Brazil**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the importance of nuclear development has increased due to several factors such as the broad technological development, the increasing demands for diversification of energy sources, new threats to international security, among others. In turn, especially for developing countries, the control of this resource is an international symbol of power, and in many cases a bargaining chip before more powerful states. This leads us to make a brief analysis and description of nuclear developments in Argentina and Brazil.

### **2.1. Argentine Nuclear Development**

Regarding Argentina, we can say that progress in the nuclear field is one of the most advanced in the region and the world, a result of sixty years of national efforts. But the Argentine case is also particular due to the use of their own potential, with almost no external cooperation, allowing the development of purely national technology; and in those cases in which Argentina unavoidably had to resort to foreign companies through trade agreements, Argentina actively participated in the execution of the works. However, this exclusive development was driven by events like the distrust generated by nuclear advances, since foreign countries refused to provide technical cooperation and equipment.

According to Ornstein (2010), one can briefly describe the history of Argentine nuclear development in three stages: a first phase, formative, extending from 1950-1958; a second, transitional, spanning 1959-1967; and a

third, of consolidation, from 1968 until the departure of the military dictatorship in 1982; and a fourth and last phase, between the restoration of democracy and the late-1990s. This last stage was added to this section, but will be discussed later.

The first stage takes as its starting point the creation of the National Commission of Atomic Energy (*Comisión Nacional de Energía Atómica*, CNEA, in Spanish). With the creation of CNEA in 1950 and the installation of its first laboratories in 1965, an organic evolution of nuclear energy in the country begins. Thus, a first stage that lasted almost until the end of the decade found its beginning, which was mainly dedicated to the training of specialized personnel. To this end, several professionals studied in European and American laboratories and the visit of many foreign specialists was encouraged. From the beginning, it was a policy of CNEA to domestically produce the fuel elements to supply reactors to be built. From 1957 onwards, all fuel elements for research reactors that successively entered operation were designed and manufactured in the CNEA. Undoubtedly, the most significant event of this stage was the construction of the country's first experimental reactor. This reactor was the first of Argentine origin and also the first to operate in Latin America, which was a milestone in the history of nuclear power in the region. This experience allowed the realization of other more complex projects.

Another event that distinguishes this stage of nuclear development began in 1952 with uranium mining. The study of the Argentine territory for the purpose of determining its nuclear mineral wealth was also one of the first concerns of the CNEA. It was how uranium mining began and, additionally, a pilot plant for the production of metallic uranium through calciothermy was built in 1953 (Ornstein 2010). Moreover, the systematic study of uranium mining stocks began in 1955.

In the second stage of transition, CNEA becomes a body in charge of defining the application of nuclear energy programs. Production and research reactors are designed throughout this period, and a plant for the specific production of radioisotopes is built. These initiatives came to cover 90% of the national energy demand in the 1980s and allowed the exports to countries of the region. The successful experience of those years enabled many enterprises, like the export of reactors.

The beginning of the third period starts in 1968 and ends with the end of the National Reconstruction Process (*Proceso de Reconstrucción Nacional*, in Spanish) in 1982. At this stage, Argentina began its activities in the nuclear power ambit, dominating the nuclear fuel cycle and the production of heavy water, which allowed ensuring the supply of these inputs to nuclear power plants. This phase is characterized by the construction of the first nuclear plant Atucha I in 1968, the first nuclear facility in Latin America for the production of electricity. In 1973, the construction of the second nuclear plant Embalse began. The construction of the third plant, Atucha II, started the following year<sup>5</sup>.

In 1977, objectives and policies were defined in order to achieve self-sufficiency in a program that would serve national interests. These interests involved, first, meeting future electricity demand combining hydroelectric and nuclear sources and, on the other hand, obtaining maximum autonomy in the use of this energy source. Thus, in 1979 the government approved the Nuclear Plan, which consisted of the installation of four nuclear power plants and an industrial plant of heavy water production. However, the plan was delayed and later abandoned due to the economic crisis that affected the country. Another factor was the discovery of significant gas reserves and the increase of the supply of thermal energy. The stage that included the military dictatorship (1976-1983) accelerated nuclear development. The fragility of the economy and the Argentine political system did not represent an obstacle for the regime to significantly increase the budget of the nuclear ambit. Apart from this paradox, plans to complete the fuel cycle went ahead regardless of international pressure, especially from the United States. We affirm it because the Argentine plan was carried on throughout an international context marked by a process of corporatization of countries that exported nuclear technology and of reassessment of their strategies from the oil crisis and the Indian nuclear test in May 1974.

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<sup>5</sup> It is worth to mention that the Atucha II plant is not already operational.

While pressures were increasing, CNA and INVAP<sup>6</sup> launched in 1978 the secret uranium enrichment program. As suggested by Hurtado de Mendoza (2009), we believe that one of the geopolitical motivations of regime was, on the one hand, the 1973 Itaipu Treaty signed between Brazil and Paraguay that allowed the construction of a dam on the Paraná River and, on the other, the 1975 agreement between Brazil and West Germany on technology transfer.

In November 1983, the announcement that Argentina had created a uranium enrichment plant, the Pilcaniyeu Project, was formalized, marking the highest point of the Argentine nuclear program. Here the fourth and final phase begins. While the international arena expected the arrival of Alfonsín and the restoration of democracy would change the country's position on its nuclear program, it quickly went disillusioned. The "nuclear culture" was not wholly owned by the military, but was part of an Argentine tradition manifested in international forums, where the country opposed the discriminatory nature of the nonproliferation treaties. The downturn and budget cuts that CNA received were a result of the economic crisis facing Argentina, and not of a policy of opposition to independent nuclear development.

The 1990s were of an impasse in nuclear activity; most businesses were privatized or closed. Moreover, and in line with the new model of international insertion of the country, Argentina acceded to many international regimes like Missile Control Technology Regime (MCTR); the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (CoCom); the Australian Group control of chemical and biological weapons; and joined the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL, in Spanish). Argentina also ratified the Tlatelolco Treaty in 1994 and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) a year later. It disabled its nuclear development. Thus, it leaves behind a historical critical attitude of Argentina diplomacy towards the discriminatory nature of the measures of disarmament and nonproliferation adopted in international forums, as well as its claim for the right to a peaceful nuclear development held since the 1940s.

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<sup>6</sup> INVAP is a high-technology company created in 1976 dedicated to designing, integrating and building plants, equipments and devices in high-complexity areas, like nuclear energy, space technology, industrial technology and scientific and medical equipments.

It is just during the governments of Nestor (2003- 2007) and Cristina Kirchner (2007-2011)<sup>7</sup> that the Argentine nuclear project seems to be reinvigorated. Since the launching in 2006 of the works of the third Atucha II nuclear plant, until the beginning of the studies for the construction of a fourth nuclear power plant and resuming production of enriched uranium that had been interrupted in the 1980s; interest in advance is demonstrated. In March 2009, a draft bill was sent, and approved months later by the Congress. It granted a special regime for the development of the Argentine Nuclear Plan, aiming reactivation as a strategic issue, nuclear power generation and development of applications and services of nuclear energy in health, industry and scientific activity sectors. Within this context lays the 2006 decree, which decided the launch of Atucha II, and another decree of the same year, which declared the construction and commissioning of the Reactor Prototype CAREM for nuclear power generation as of national interest.

In recent years, the Argentine nuclear project looks outside: the export of nuclear energy constitutes one of the primary objectives of the Argentine commercial foreign policy, and the emphasis on promoting the export of nuclear technology responds to the goal of adding value and diversifying Argentine exports.

## 2.2. Brazilian Nuclear Development

As in the Argentine case, the history of Brazilian nuclear development can also be divided into four stages, according to the classification made by Cubillos Meza (2008). First, the “independent phase” (1945-1953). Second, the period of “cooperation with the United States” (1954-1966). The third is the “active phase” (1967-1978). And, finally, the “revisionist phase” (1979-2011).

During the first phase, the founding milestone is the creation of the National Council for Research (*Conselho Nacional de Pesquisas*, CNPq, in Portuguese) and the Brazilian Center for Physical Researches (*Conselho Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas*, CBPF, in Portuguese). The CNPq was dedicated to scientific and technological research and training for specialists in this type of

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<sup>7</sup> First mandate.



energy until 1956, thus institutionalizing basic research on the subject and marking the end of the first stage.

The second phase, in cooperation with the United States, begins with the signing of a bilateral treaty based on the delivery of three research reactors and in training staff. The link with the Northern country has its antecedent on the allied condition of Brazil during World War II, as well as Brazilian role as uranium exporter. We must remember that a bilateral agreement on financial and technical support for the implementation of projects and the construction and operation of reactors, which was kept secret, had already been signed in 1945.

In this context, Brazil justified its interest on nuclear technology by the growing energy demand, which was boosted by economic growth. So far, we see that during the Vargas government (1951-1954) the Atomic Energy Program was aimed at the creation and the consolidation of a research infrastructure. During the 1960s, its activities were directed to building reactors and developing the fuel cycle.

Much of what has been built ever since is rooted in the Kubitschek administration (1956-1961). Under the “Guidelines for Atomic Energy Policy”, there was the support for the creation of the National Commission for Nuclear Energy (*Comissão Nacional de Energia Nuclear*, CNEN, in Portuguese) on the premise of its peaceful use. The agency was in charge of managing the nuclear program as a whole, since the formation of human resources to the control of materials. From 1956, and for four years, an analysis on the uranium resources possessed by Brazil was put forth alongside the United States. In this context, it is necessary to note that the Latin American country was still receiving research reactors from the United States.

During the governments of Quadros (January-August 1961) and Goulart<sup>8</sup> (1961-1964), an approach was attempted to obtain a heavy water reactor from France, stepping away from the United States, but this process was interrupted by the 1964 military Coup d'état. After the coup, the National

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<sup>8</sup> Goulart was able to change the national policy on nuclear energy through the Act 4118 of August 27, 1962. The act decreed the monopoly on uranium and nuclear material. For its part, CNEN was consolidated as an autarchic entity in federal level, obtaining administrative and financial autonomy, directly subordinated to the nation's Executive Power.

Security Council was almost entirely composed of military, excluding the scientific considerations from decision-making. In turn, there was an increase in investments for projects to build nuclear power plants.

The arrival of the most active phase of nuclear progress came at the hands of the National Security Doctrine. In 1967, during the Castelo Branco administration, the CNEN was transferred to the Ministry of Mines and Energy. In 1974, U.S. support as nuclear supplier began to erode, generating approaches to other countries. In this sense, an important step was the 1975 agreement with West Germany that finally ended the autonomous development process for the production of nuclear energy. It was due in part to the agreements with the United States, which did not commit this country to the transfer of knowledge on sensitive parts of the fuel cycle, especially enrichment and reprocessing, and this threatened the inauguration of Angra I, whose construction and operation began in 1972 and 1985, respectively.

Figueiredo administration (1979-1985) inaugurated the last stage, characterized by the slowdown in the nuclear program and by a shift of resources to more local research efforts, away from the massive transfer of technology. This break on development was due to financial difficulties, technical problems and the criticism from public opinion. However, we can not ignore the fact that uranium enrichment was conducted secretly in 1978. The decision to continue building the Resende enrichment plant can be seen as a response to the Argentine developments in the control of the nuclear cycle. The project managed to be materialized only in 1982. In 1986, a committee in charge of evaluating the delay of Brazilian nuclear cycle was created, through which some causes, such as a decrease of energy demand and of the national GDP were identified. These difficulties broadened the dependence on external supplies of enriched uranium and prevented the control of the nuclear fuel cycle from being reached.

Thus, the official nuclear program was delayed as a consequence of the agreement with West Germany, initiating a parallel, secret initiative undertaken by the Armed Forces. Unlike Argentina, where the nuclear program was transferred to civilian hands with the return of democracy, this evidences that in Brazil it was the military who were controlling the process of decision-making in this area.

The 1990s came to reverse a fact that had characterized not only Brazil, but also Argentina. Though Brazil uttered its peaceful ends since the beginning of its nuclear development, it refrained from signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It was Cardoso who urged the Congress for approval, stating that it was necessary to review the position of the country, since its refusal would condemn it to international isolation. Thus, Brazil signed the treaty in 1998.

During President Lula da Silva administration, the National Defense Strategy was adopted. It proposed the modernization of the Armed Forces, emphasizing three sectors of strategic importance: space, cybernetic and nuclear. Hence, it was also decided to create the Committee for the Development of the Brazilian Nuclear Program, responsible for establishing its basic lines and objectives, and monitoring its implementation. In recent years, Brazil attempted to increase aerospace capabilities, launched a program for the construction of a nuclear submarine in association with France and signed an agreement for the production of intercontinental cruise missiles with China and Russia. In 2010, it began the construction of Angra III, which is expected to be operational by 2015. With these projects, Brazil seeks to increase its production of nuclear energy and diversify its energy sources. Another key factor in this new phase was the appointment of Nelson Jobim to the Ministry of Defence in 2007, who gave to this ministry a more agile dynamic, reassessing security as an essential agent for international negotiation. A clear example of this policy was the launch of the National Defense Strategy in 2008, which emphasizes progress toward building a defense industry that pushes forward the country's industrial and technological development. In this sense, Brazil began to build a nuclear submarine and to reequip ground and air forces.

Given these events, arises a question that has to do with the constitution of Brazil as a regional power able to hinder the strengthening of cooperative action and the building of mutual trust. Del Pilar (2010) believes that South America, more than a geographical reality, is a Brazilian geopolitical project necessary for the country to exercise the hegemony that was strengthened with the creation of the "South Americanization doctrine of the regional foreign policy of Brazil" during the Lula administration. This very author argues that Brazil has followed three strategic parameters for position

itself in international and regional scenarios. The first involves the formation of strategic partnerships for the military buildup that led the country to sign defense agreements with countries not only in Latin America, but in Europe, Asia and Africa – the objective was the technology exchange to expand its own defense industry. The second responds to the need for exporting military equipment surpassing its own supplying. In order to fulfill this parameter, many companies were created, like AVIBRAS for aerospace industry, IMBEL (Military Equipment Industry of Brazil), EMGEPRON (Management Company for Naval Projects), EMBRAER (Brazilian Aeronautical Company) and CBC (Brazilian Company of Cartridges). The third parameter was to convert military weaknesses into strengths. In order to do it, Brazil invested heavily in the renovation of the Armed Forces. In short, Brazil's transition to regional leadership has used soft and hard power resources. In the first case, we can mention the creation of MERCOSUR and UNASUR, besides the participation in solving regional political crises in neighbor states.

Finally, every nuclear project responds to a national development model that ultimately reveals a model of country inspired by political and economic ideals in force in a determined space-time, local and international context. On our summary of the nuclear dynamics in both countries, we were able to prove that military rules have promoted this activity, but in a climate of rivalry and distrust among neighbors. The return of democracy not only led to the growth of the nation in political terms, but in our case study is generating a process of Cooperative Security to make the work on both sides of the border more transparent.

### **3. Mutual Trust Measures after the Return of Democracy**

In the mark of its foreign policy, Alfonsín administration tried to reverse the country's international image that had been so damaged by the military regime that preceded it. Issues such as external debt, the border conflict with Chile and the Falklands War were major challenges for democratic governance. Based on these legacy issues, the foreign policy goals had to do with the recovery of the external prestige, mechanisms for the protection of democracy and the solution of structural problems of development.

On defense and security, one of the pillars of its foreign policy was the condemnation of the arms race, consistent with the ethical principles of idealism that were manifested through participation in the G6, the transfer of the control of CNEA to civilian hands and the pursuit of nuclear cooperation. However, the external actions in this area were not exempt of contradictions, such as the non-adherence to the Tlatelolco Treaty, the non-ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the continuation of the Cóndor II project.

The return of democracy to the region brought several changes, including increased political and economic cooperation, and also the overcome of old suspicions and misgivings among South American countries, especially Argentina and Brazil. As evidence, 24 protocols were signed between the two countries between 1986 and 1989, covering various areas of cooperation. Also the creation of integration processes, such as MERCOSUR, somehow legitimized political cooperation in the field of security. In this framework, it is possible to detect common positions of member states in terms of security and defense, and definitions of the various threats.

This new phase of nuclear cooperation was acquiring unprecedented political dimension through the presidential visits of Alfonsín and Sarney, and of technical teams to nuclear facilities in each country with the institutionalization of working groups and regular meetings. At the same time, the Nuclear Commissions of both countries underwent a restructuring, an “institutional demilitarization” (Brigagão and Valle Fonrouge 1999, 11). The series of bilateral agreements begins with the **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Foz do Iguaçu**, signed in November 1985. This agreement is the starting point for a series of political agreements that presents the primary stage of cooperation. According to Milanese (2005), it is the foundational moment of cooperation between the two countries, the first step of a transcendent confidence in bilateral ties. It is a statement that contains multiple axes and enables both states to face difficulties in the international supply of equipment, materials and nuclear fuels. It can be interpreted as an effort toward technological autonomy through the promotion of atomic energy. The Joint Declaration is the first step toward building a cooperative security process.

A second instrument was the **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Brasilia**, signed in December 1986. Through this instrument, there was an attempt to overcome the obstacles of integration in order to bring transparency through the exchange of views and policy coordination positions in multilateral fora.

A third instrument was the **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Viedma**, signed in July 1987. This document was the occasion for the visit of President Sarney to the Pilcaniyeu isotope separation plant, which highlighted the construction of an important measure of confidence. This was evident in the words of the president of Brazil to the newspaper Clarin on July 18, 1987 “[...] it is the first in the world that a head of state was invited by another head of state to visit a uranium enrichment plant, which by its nature is a secret facility” (quoted in Milanese 2005, 150. Our translation.).

The **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Iperó** was signed in the following year. This led to the visit of President Alfonsín to the experimental center Aramar, which belonged to the Brazilian Navy and where a nuclear submarine was being built. On this occasion, a stable and functioning schedule of meetings was set. In November of the same year, Sarney visited the Radiochemical Processing Laboratory of the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) for the fuel production for the Atucha I power plant and the heavy water reactor of Embalse. Result of the visit was the **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Ezeiza**. Although the reasons for this statement are almost identical to the previous ones and do seem redundant, it served to reaffirm the commitment between the two states for the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The aforementioned set of bilateral nuclear agreements annulled the nuclear issue in terms of obstacles to bilateral ties. This is confirmed by the creation of MERCOSUR, through the Treaty of Asuncion in 1991, which not only definitively eliminated the chances of a strategic conflict, but also extended cooperation in integrating Uruguay and Paraguay to this process.

In the 1990s, Carlos Menem assumed the presidency of Argentina in an external context marked by the end of the East-West confrontation. In this context, the objectives of the Argentine foreign policy proposed overcoming the internal economic crisis, having a high-profile before international financial institutions and private banks, and finding the way for the reintegration into

economic and trade globalization. Under these assumptions, the government adapted its foreign policy to the national interest defined in economic terms. This foreign policy found its theoretical basis in the Peripheral Realism of Escudé, which advised, among other things, not confronting the great powers, actively participating of international regimes, and implementing a policy of disarmament involving the adhesion to certain bilateral and multilateral instruments.

It is in this context that one should understand some decisions on security made by this administration, like the adhesion to international regimes such as MCTR, the CoCom, the Australian Group of control of chemical and biological weapons, and the OPANAL, or the ratification of Tlatelolco and the NPT, among others. This axis of its foreign policy was complemented by participation in international and peacekeeping operations, as well as by the abandonment of policies for autonomous development in sensitive areas, like the Cónдор II project: a sort of demilitarization of diplomacy.

At this time, Brazil sought greater projection in multilateral areas with a more universalist spirit, while Argentina took a more Westernized and north-aligned posture. In this sense, Brazil was presented as the benchmark of an essentially economic alliance. However, many bilateral instruments were implemented in this decade.

The first instrument institutionalized this government was the **Argentine-Brazilian Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy** of Foz do Iguazu signed in November 1990, which established new bases for the definite insertion into the global structure of nuclear material through the establishment of a Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and Installations (*Sistema Común de Contabilidad y Control de Materiales e Instalación Nucleares*, SCCC, in Spanish), whose goal was that both countries developed peaceful activities, raising the need to negotiate amendments to the International Atomic Energy Agency for the entry into force of the Tlatelolco Treaty in both countries.

The establishment of SCCC soon raised the need for a mechanism or institution responsible for its implementation. The latter could be implemented through the **Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Argentina and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on the Exclusively Peaceful**

**Use of Nuclear Energy**, signed in the city of Guadalajara on July 18, 1991. Also known as the Guadalajara Agreement, this instrument allowed the creation of Argentine-Brazilian Agency for Accounting and Controlling of Nuclear Materials (*Agencia Brasileño Argentina de Contabilidad y Control de Materiales Nucleares*, ABACC). It was responsibility of ABACC the administration and implementation of the SCCC.

Another breakthrough was the **Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Argentina and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for Consultation and Coordination**, signed in April 1997. Its aim was the establishment of a permanent mechanism for consultation and coordination for the strengthening of bilateral relations in defense and international security. It oversees the examination, evaluation, implementation and monitoring of defense and security issues of mutual interest related to military equipment and training, joint military exercises, among others.

In this sense, one observes the integrating engagement of both countries, which constitutes a security process. Within this process, the arrangements for the peaceful use of nuclear energy were essential, since they were established as the first measures of confidence that helped starting it up. In this context, the frequency of exchanges between institutions, coupled with the high-level political dialogue led to profound and positive changes in mutual perceptions.

Moreover, two treaties of great significance for both Argentina and Brazil are the Tlatelolco Treaty and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Both countries adhered these treaties during the 1990s and, therefore, the agreements deserve a separate paragraph. The **Tlatelolco Treaty, or Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean**, was signed in 1967, and its goal is the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the region. To achieve its objective, it proposes outlawing production, storage, introduction or stationing of nuclear weapons in the region, except for the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Argentina signed the Treaty but its Congress did not ratify it, arguing that the mechanisms of control system established to prevent the proliferation did not ensure an adequate protection for industrial secrets, affecting the national nuclear technologies and “(...) it established distinctions between the signatories, characterizing a position contrary to the principle of legal equality of members states” (Brigagão and



Valle Fonrouge 1999, 13. Our translation.). These arguments contributed to Argentina and Brazil to pass long years without a full and unreserved adherence to the treaty, though they actively participated of the creation of it. The adhesive process began in 1992, when both countries presented a set of subsequently adopted amendments at the conference of the OPANAL, with the aim of enabling the full entry into force of this regional legal regime. Argentina and Brazil, original signers of the Treaty, ratified it in 1994.

On the other hand, the **Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** guided Argentina and Brazil through different paths and was ratified recently, in 1995 and 1998, respectively. Since its inception, the two countries stood out in international forum for their persistent opposition because of the discriminatory nature of the treaty and its restriction to the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes by developing states that ratified it. This attitude remained unchanged until the 1990s, when both countries would ratify it, although with different paces. According to Waisman (2010), this was because in Argentina civilian control over the military system is greater than in Brazil, where military sectors showed strong opposition to the NPT.

After a decade of a *Menemista* government, the *Alianza* formed by the *radicalismo* and the *Frepaso* came to power. Affirming to be a different model than the precedent neoliberal project, it could not reverse the consequences of those policies. After the assumption of De la Rúa, the country faced a large fiscal deficit, a considerable foreign debt and a huge dependence on international capital markets. Given the critical situation, *Alianza* ended up applying adjustment measures and thus slowing economic recovery. The instability of policies at the domestic level had its counterpart in international politics. According to Miranda (2003), we can characterize the foreign policy of this period through elements such as discontinuation due to confusing and contradictory actions; the inefficiency in handling context changes and adapting; and the instability.

In this period, the government will seek the relaunching of MERCOSUR and the deepening of ties with Brazil. However, we can say that the latter is a misperception by the Argentina government, since Brazil was immersed in their domestic problems and was not interested in consolidating the MERCOSUR, on the contrary, it intended that Argentina only endorsed its

initiatives. Proof of this is the First Summit of South American Presidents, held in Brasilia in 2000, where President Fernando Henrique Cardoso claimed the regional integration through the complementation of MERCOSUR and CAN, proposing a South American free trade area. This fact marks the Brazilian leadership at the time when offering its market to the region in exchange for recognition of its strategic importance, resulting in Argentina's secondary role.

In 2003, Néstor Kirchner took office after winning just 22% of the votes. It was a government with little legitimacy in tune with the crisis of representation of Argentina at that time. During these events, it is not difficult to suppose that foreign policy was used as an instrument to domestic legitimization, at least until 2005. This scenario was transformed when the ruling party won enough votes in the 2005 legislative elections, allowing it to have more popular support. There are several hypotheses about the foreign policy of Néstor Kirchner. Both Llenderozas (2006) and De la Balze (2010) interpret it as a tool for internal legitimacy, while others, like Simonoff (2009) believe it was a double standard policy, where there were rhetorically revindicative purposes, but the necessary concessions were hidden. It is not our goal to develop a detailed analysis of this issue, but we regard as essential to understand that this administration tried to differentiate itself from the others, as we can observe a return to Latin America and a decline in the "carnal relations" with the United States.

In an international context marked by mistrust due to the declaration of default and the indifference of some states in the region due to the political alignment of Argentina to the U.S. Department of State's objectives during the previous decade, a retake of the regional policy was attempted by deepening ties with Brazil. This objective intended to regain some credibility when renegotiating the debt with international financial institutions and private creditors. The relationship with Brazil during the first Kirchner mandate was based on the attempt to deepen MERCOSUR. The bilateral relationship fluctuated between political cooperation supported by permanent consultations and coordination of positions in international forums, and trade conflicts due to nontariff restrictions and export subsidies by Brazil. However, these differences did not dampen cooperation.

On the other hand, the relationship with Brazil allowed Argentina to resume a certain international presence. This is expressed in various fields, like

the agreements on Cooperative Security. In this regard, it should be noted the changing international situation after the 9/11 attacks, which ended “securitizing” the agenda in Latin America due to the influence exerted by the United States. In addition, the new transnational threats put the region on alert and encouraged cooperative agreements on the subject.

When reviewing the bilateral agreements between the two countries during the *Alianza* administration, we are faced with a history linked to the MERCOSUR: the cooperation between Argentina and Brazil regarding to the problem of the Triple Frontier. In the words of Martínez and Tibiletti, the measures carried forward “(...) took away the ghost of a so-called lawless area, which could serve as a pretext for foreign intervention in the region” (2009, 231). With respect to this issue, collaborative spaces were maintained, such as the creation of the Coordination Center of Police Training (*Centro de Coordinación de Capacitación Policial*, CCCP, in Spanish).

Turning to bilateral agreements of strictly nuclear nature, we note that the Joint Declaration that creates the **Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Applications of Nuclear Energy** (*Agencia Argentino Brasileña de Aplicaciones de la Energía Nuclear*, ABAEN, in Spanish), signed on August 14, 2001, opened a new chapter in the relationship of both countries by enhancing cooperation in nuclear applications, such as the nuclear fuel cycle, production of radioisotopes, management of radioactive waste and participation in the development of innovative technology for power generating reactors.

The short and unstable government of Fernando De la Rúa also saw its difficulties reflected on the field of nuclear cooperation with Brazil. After several interim presidents, the arrival of *Kirchnerismo* will strengthen, not without shocks, ties with Brazil, and will extend the bilateral mechanisms directed towards the formation of a process of cooperative security.

There are several agreements on security between the two countries due to the political affinity between both governments. On August 15, 2003 the **Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Ministers of Argentina and Brazil** was signed in Asuncion. Its aim was to reaffirm the commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, the promotion of commercial and non-commercial cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, to initiate consultations with a view to developing joint projects in the framework of space

programs, development of satellites and other common interests, and to deal with the Argentine participation in future activities of the Alcântara Center. Furthermore, it approaches the beginning of consultations aimed at the co-production of aircraft and aeronautical equipment. Under these assumptions, the exchange of scientific, industrial and commercial technical information was developed.

Two years after the Memorandum, it was time for the **Framework Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Defense between Argentina and Brazil** signed in Puerto Iguazú on November 23, 2005, which aims to strengthen political defense cooperation through the exchange of experiences in designing and managing defense policies and actions in the area of planning, budget management, research and development, logistic support and procurement of defense products and services.

On 30 November of the same year, the **Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Puerto Iguazu** is materialized. Both presidents renewed their historic commitment to the Declaration of Iguazú, highlighting the importance of a broad set of new protocols and cooperation instruments, including the Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy as a highlight.

The need to define potential joint projects led to the **Framework Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Defence between Argentina and Brazil** on February 22, 2008. This agreement includes nuclear cooperation, infrastructure, energy and defense, and it consists of other 17 agreements. It aimed constituting binational subcommittees for strategic projects under the framework of the joint working group in order to undertake actions aimed at developing cooperation in research, development and joint production in the area of defense.

In the 2010 **Declaration of San Juan**, Cristina Fernández and Lula da Silva highlighted the successful independent implementation of comprehensive safeguards by ABACC and the IAEA for more than fifteen years. The heads of state signed a series of agreements, including one on nuclear cooperation to launch a project of reactors, one for each country, for the shipbuilding industry and medicinal uses. Fernandez claimed that both countries are convinced of the right to develop nuclear energy projects under the non-proliferation framework, for peaceful and alternative energy purposes only.

On January 31, 2011, in the context of the official visit of Dilma Rousseff to her counterpart Cristina Fernández, an agreement by which the CNEA and CNEN will jointly build two research reactors was signed. They also ratified the Joint Presidential Declaration on Nuclear Policy signed in San Juan in its entirety and encouraged the political dialogue established in the Standing Committee on Nuclear Policy (*Comité Permanente de Política Nuclear*, CPPN, in Spanish), in order to continue the exchange of information on the status of both countries' nuclear programs, coordination of positions in international forums, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), among others, and the political assessment of bilateral nuclear cooperation and the functioning of ABACC, in order to enhance its role.

On 5 September of the same year, the **Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Defense** Arturo Puricelli of Argentina and Celso Amorim of Brazil was signed. They reaffirmed the importance of the strategic relationship on defense and celebrated the launch of the Vice-ministerial Strategic Political Mechanism for Dialogue (*Mecanismo de Diálogo Político Estratégico Viceministerial*, MDPEVM, in Spanish). Under the purpose of deepening the political-strategic dialogue and cooperation in defense, the maintenance of South Atlantic as a Peace Zone free of nuclear weapons was established. Furthermore, they worked on the coordination of positions on the prospects for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), on cooperation of the Armed Forces in Peacekeeping Operations, on coordination of positions and actions in the ambit of the UNASUR South American Defense Council and other forums, and on the strengthening of a joint program of exercises. Bearing in mind the intention to cooperate in technology and production, it was considered to advance in terms of shipbuilding, aerospace equipment and computer science. It is clear the multidimensionality of security cooperation.

Once these bilateral agreements were described, it is clear that cooperation is also given in order to avoid an energy crisis. This topic is of great significance for two economies that need to diversify its energy matrix. In the case of Brazil<sup>9</sup>, nuclear energy accounts for 3% of current energy generation, and in Argentina, 7%. But the bilateral cooperation is not enough to achieve

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<sup>9</sup> Today, Brazil relies on hydroelectric energy for 91% of its energy supply.

the “energy goals”, since they depend on other projects and most experienced nuclear partners willing to make a technology transfer.

Another factor to be considered is the growing strategic influence and the opportunity for both countries to become global participants of the nuclear fuel market. From a geopolitical perspective, these circumstances would help Brazil to strengthen its leadership at regional and global levels. The active participation of Brazil in the creation of UNASUR and its proposal for the creation of a South American Defense Council are two indicators of this state’s intention to achieve regional leadership. In addition, Brazil has demonstrated a sustained effort to expand its influence outside the region, either through the campaign for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, their participation in rapidly developing economies (BRIC ) along with Russia, India and China, or its intention to partner with selective developed countries in selective international projects on nuclear fusion, such as the ITER (originally, the international consortium for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor).

The control over sophisticated nuclear technology provides an international prestige aspired by both Brazil and Argentina. The latter has had a Latin American nuclear leadership for a long time, but that leadership was lost due to successive political and economic crisis. Under the circumstances, it seems that Argentina is a very suitable partner for Brazil since it has the know-how, it is not competing for leadership and apparently considers the consortium as a good opportunity to reactivate its decayed nuclear program. This strategic alliance could also turn Brazil and Argentina in global suppliers of enriched uranium and advanced reactors of intermediate power.

From a the non-proliferation standpoint, a bilateral business conducted by two democratic countries without regional conflicts, and operating under the effective control of international organizations such as the ABACC and IAEA offers much more guarantees than independent projects developed in isolation. In any case, nuclear alliances should be based on transparency and be developed under close monitoring by the international community in order to extend this process of cooperative security.

#### 4. By way of Conclusion

The particularities of the different governments in both sides of the border often hampered the consolidation of integration processes, but the bilateral cooperation was overall stimulated during the negotiations analyzed in our work. The government of Raúl Alfonsín, in spite of the many difficulties faced due to the stage after Falklands War, the instability of the political system and the severe economic crisis, could make cooperative gestures to Brazil that can be observed by the number of signed agreements and visits paid by both presidents. These decisions led to the creation of Confidence Building Measures between the two states on security.

The advent of neoliberalism in the region conditioned the regional cooperation to the principles of market economy, although it was not drifted away from the agenda. The various initiatives, including MERCOSUR, were bounded to trade liberalization, isolating any deeper political alliance proposed. However, there was a boost for the adhesion of Argentina and Brazil to the large international regimes governing separate nuclear developments and the utilization of nuclear energy. At different speeds, both countries adhered.

The political and economic destabilization suffered by Argentina in the late-1990s shows its correlation in the scarcity of agreements with Brazil to deepen the process of Cooperative Security, a situation that began to turn during the government of Néstor Kirchner.

This path led to a gradual and cumulative increase in the weight of conflict prevention components, which also greatly expanded the scope of cooperative relations between the two states. Thus, it is possible to appreciate the importance and significance of the experience of bilateral cooperation in the sector, which involved the development of a functional common policy to build mutual trust and a security process, both essential for the construction of a relatively successful integration process and for a healthy consolidation of a democratic regime in the region. Cooperative security is a process that finds its natural habitat in democracy. The recovery of the institutions promoted regional integration in many areas. The economic and trade cooperation, represented by MERCOSUR, along with the various bilateral agreements were pioneer, generating a set of policies and shared visions also reflected in the

ambit of security. A complex ambit, especially between two countries that have a history of distrust and rivalry.

Argentina and Brazil led a transformation process of their relations, from the tension of military rule to the approach in times of restoration of democracy, and then to a political, economic and strategic alliance that began in the 1990s and has been consolidated since 2003, at least from a discursive point of view.

Both Argentina and Brazil were pioneers in nuclear technology in the region, which somehow led to active cooperation with their neighbors. However, the model of autonomous nuclear development that characterized the 1980s was replaced by that of self-restraint and external controls in the 1990s, in response to external pressures. Finally, during the presidential terms of Lula and Kirchner a part of the autonomous margin in nuclear development was recovered, and this has led to some scuffles with international monitoring bodies. Despite the ambitious nuclear program presented by the Argentine president, it is Brazil that carries out the most important developments in the nuclear field in this period.

We believe that Argentina and Brazil have actually started an irreversible path towards Cooperative Security. Besides, they have intensified their bilateral ties in other areas, making regional integration a multidimensional dynamic. Without actions or decisions that build trust and transparency, it is impossible to advance in other agreements. In short, in the words of Brigagão (2011. Our translation.): “Argentina and Brazil created a political, diplomatic and technical architecture through a very good and sophisticated articulated system based on confidence-building cooperation”.



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**ABSTRACT**

The article applies the Cooperative Security approach to the bilateral relation between Argentina and Brazil through the development of Confidence-Building Measures as elements that generate mechanisms of long-term cooperation. The aim is to review bilateral cooperation in the nuclear field.

**KEYWORDS**

Cooperative Security; Confidence-Building Measures; Brazil; Argentina.

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