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Defense Orientation Conference Association



Argentina Executive Summary

April 2017

Cole Porter loved Paris in the springtime, but autumn in Buenos Aires (the "Paris of Latin America") could easily have inspired him to write yet another hit song. Fifteen DOCA members and prospective members gathered on April 23rd (spring in the U.S. but well into fall south of the equator) in this cosmopolitan city with its stunning architecture and intimate sidewalk cafes to start our most recent DOCA adventure. In fact, several members arrived even earlier to sample some of the rich culture and renowned cuisine of one of South America's most influential and populous cities. Adding to the appeal was our headquarters hotel, the Palacio Duhau, which is now a Park Hyatt but is anchored by a Louis XVI-style palace built in 1934 as a private residence.

On Monday, April 24th, we were met at the hotel by our U.S. Embassy escort officers to attend a breakfast meeting with the American Chamber of Commerce, followed by extensive discussions with various senior officials at the Embassy on the current state of U.S.-Argentine relations. That evening we enjoyed the company of diplomats from several countries at the home of the U.S. Senior Defense Official (SDO). SDO is a relatively new title that administratively combines the Defense Attaché with the Office of Defense Cooperation at our diplomatic posts.



The next day consisted of meetings with a leading consulting company to discuss Argentina's political transition and near-term challenges, followed by a Joint Chiefs of Staff presentation and discussion with the Military Strategy and Affairs Secretary. In the evening, most of the group opted to experience one of Argentina's most famous cultural offerings, a Tango show and dinner at the Faena Hotel.

Wednesday was primarily a travel day as we flew to the Patagonian town of Bariloche, although we did take some time that afternoon for a guided tour of the town before settling in to the historic Llao Llao resort and spa. Our trip to Bariloche was prompted by the opportunity to visit with the Argentine Mountain Brigade, whose mission is similar to our own 10th Mountain Division, and the Instituto Balsiero, a nuclear research and academic facility established in 1955. As always, the program seemed to end much too soon as we went our separate ways with a better understanding of Argentina's place in the world.