

Letter to Delegates

Hello delegates,

Welcome to ClarkMUN XVI! My name is Cayetana Rodriguez, and I will be your Chair for *Between Corralitos and Debates: the Argentinian Congress, 2001*. I am really excited to bring this topic to you, as it contains different issues and interesting topics related to economics, politics, and Argentinian culture!

I am currently an MBA student at Clark University (through the ADP Program) doing a concentration in Business Analytics. I graduated with my BA from Clark University in May 2025, with a focus in Management and Political Science. I began my Model UN journey back in 2018, in high school, and continued it all throughout college. I have been Committee Director twice at NHSMUN, chairing committees such as the Conference of Parties. At Clark Model United Nations, I have been involved in several different roles, including as Director-General for ClarkMUN, Treasurer for the Executive Board, and, most noticeably, last year as Senior President.

On a personal note, I am originally from Lima, Peru. I currently work as a Graduate Assistant at Clark Residential Life & Housing and as a Clean Energy Analyst Intern at ClearlyEnergy Inc. In my free time, I enjoy going for runs, singing to Broadway soundtracks, or explaining to friends non-stop why Peru has the best food in the world.

I am eager to hear your ideas and meet you in March. I hope this background guide serves as a map to navigate these crucial topics. This is a very exciting topic in modern Argentinian history, and it helps explain the current economic and political statuses in the country. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at crodriguezpolar@clarku.edu.

Sincerely,

Cayetana Rodriguez
Chair, Argentinian Congress, 2001

Committee Expectations

This committee will simulate the Argentinian Congress of 2001. Argentina faced a severe political and economic collapse triggered by recession, public debt, and bank withdrawal freezes. This sparked riots and political unrest, leading to a presidential resignation. This event was a deeply significant and triggering period in Argentina. Delegates are reminded that this was a real historical event that affected millions of people through poverty, unemployment, and social unrest. Delegates must approach conversations with professionalism, sensitivity, and an understanding of the impact that these policies had on the Argentinian population. Delegates are expected to engage respectfully with Argentinian culture, history, and political institutions throughout this committee. Stereotypes, dismissive language, or trivialization of the crisis will not be tolerated. This simulation has the objective of promoting fruitful discussions and negotiations while honoring the lived experiences of those under the 2001 crisis.

Additionally, the terms “Argentine” and “Argentinian” are used interchangeably. For the purposes of our committee, both terms are okay to be utilized, and there is no penalty for using either. However, utilizing the term “Argentinian” is preferred as the word is more related to Argentina and its culture.

Delegates will participate in a general-assembly (GA) style committee. The expectation for delegates is to build “blocs” — which are groups of delegates writing a resolution as a team — and collaborate with different delegates in the room to find compromise and similarities across

resolutions. Even though it is a committee with presidential and congressional members, there **will be no crisis elements in the Argentinian Congress committee.**

In order to follow what was actually happening in the Argentinian Congress in 2001, the committee will start on December 19th, 2001. The *corralito* was already in place, and public outrage was widespread. Protests were beginning to escalate in Buenos Aires and other major cities.

Introduction

The Argentine Republic is a country in South America, covering most of the southern portion of the continent. Argentina is bordered by Chile to the south and west, Bolivia and Paraguay to the north, and Brazil, Uruguay, and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. Argentina's capital is Buenos Aires.

Argentina declared independence from Spanish colonization in 1816. During its modern times, Argentina tended toward periods of *caudillismo* (the rule of strong, charismatic leaders who maintained power through the use of military and political force). This was most noticeable under Juan Peron's presidency. The 1970s consisted mainly of military dictatorship and repression. Thousands of government opponents were "disappeared" or murdered.

Argentina was not always known for its economic crises and turmoil. In the early 20th century, Argentina became the world's largest exporter of corn, flax, and meat. However, the Great Depression of the 1930s damaged the Argentinian economy by reducing foreign trade. In

response to this, Argentina transformed into a self-sufficient country through its agricultural sector. This was achieved through high tariffs on imports, such as Argentine textiles and leather. By 1970, Argentina was producing most of its oil, steel, and automobiles and was exporting manufactured goods. Manufacturing became one of the largest components of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Import substitution ended in 1976 when the Argentinian government lowered import barriers, liberalized restrictions on foreign borrowing, and supported the peso (the Argentine currency) against foreign currencies. In parallel, there was growing government spending, large wage raises, and inefficient production that created a chronic inflation that rose through the 1980s. Successive regimes tried to control inflation through wage and price controls, cuts in public spending, and restriction of the money supply, or the amount of pesos in circulation. With the peso quickly losing value to inflation, a new peso was introduced in 1983, which was in turn replaced by another new peso in 1992 (Britannica).

The December 2001 Crisis in Argentina was initiated due to a long-run economic depression, a rigid currency system, and the *corralito*, or the notorious bank deposit freezes. This provoked social unrest and protests, leading to harsh police repression and a toll of 39 dead Argentinians.

Background

During the 1990s, Argentina was a regional model of successful policymaking. During Carlos Menem's presidency, Argentina experienced a series of economic reforms and policy adaptations that shaped its economic future. One of the principal new economic measures was convertibility,

which fixed the Argentinian peso (Argentina's currency) to the U.S. dollar — also known as a currency board type arrangement (Lazzari, 2025). Through this policy, Argentina was able to stop hyperinflation. Other measures were implemented, such as the privatization of government-owned enterprises and the deregulation of markets to increase competitiveness. The Argentinian bank sector strengthened, particularly due to the increase in foreign banks. For example, in 1998, the World Bank rated Argentina as 2nd place among emerging markets in the quality of its bank supervision (Moreno, 2002).

In 1999, the collapse of the Brazilian currency affected export revenues, and economic growth was negative. With the ongoing public debt and the demand from yields investors to hold Argentinian bonds, uncertainty about the Argentinian economic landscape started. This prolonged the durability of the currency peg. The financial system was also backed to a significant extent by peso assets. This decline context left great marks on the history of Argentina and was the foundation for future crises of the 21st Century.

El Corralito and the December 2001 Crisis

The 2001 economic crisis was one of the most detrimental episodes in modern Argentinian history. This occurred due to a range of multiple factors, such as convertibility and a series of mistakes that perpetuated the country's foreign debt (Lazzari, 2025).

The consequences of this crisis were long-lasting and severe. Firstly, the 2001 crisis sparked poverty and unemployment nationwide. Thousands of Argentinians organized protests,

culminating in a profound social unrest in December 2001. The banking system collapsed, which led to the freeze and the loss of savings for thousands of Argentinian citizens.

This measure was implemented primarily by Domingo Cavallo, the Minister of Economy during that time, as an attempt to stop the massive withdrawal of deposits that was threatening to collapse the national banking infrastructure. This is known as *el corralito*. *El corralito* was a direct response to the financial panic, but it had detrimental effects in Argentina. Argentina reacted outrageously. Thousands of citizens saw from one day to the next that they were not able to freely access their funds anymore. This measure also generated a lot of mistrust between Argentinians and the banking system.

Characters

To incorporate a wider range of perspectives and encourage richer debate, this committee will include both members of the Argentinian Congress, Presidential Cabinet officials, and relevant third-party actors. However, assigned roles do not grant delegates additional authority or special powers over other characters in the room.

Characters are intended to serve as a lens through which delegates can better understand political interests and personal experiences in shaping policy in 2001. Delegates are encouraged to research their character's background, policy priorities, and expertise when engaging in debate and collaborating with others.

Please also note that being assigned a character directly involved with the economic and political crisis of Argentina is not grounds to exclude other delegates from participating in debates and policy writing. Undiplomacy based on a character's background is **not accepted**. **The goal is to question and improve the policies and decisions in Argentina**, rather than blaming other characters for historical outcomes. All characters were carefully curated due to their involvement in the crisis. If you are unable to find accessible information on the character's background, you are welcome to email the chair directly for further support.

Presidential Cabinet/Governors

Chrystian Colombo, *Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers*

Chrystian was President Fernando de la Rúa's Chief of Staff during the final months of his presidency and a close political advisor. He was deeply involved in crisis management and policy adaptations that weakened the government. Chrystian was born in 1952 in Zapala, Neuquen Province, and graduated with a degree in economics from the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina.

Ramón Bautista Mestre, *Minister of the Interior*

Ramón was the Minister of the Interior from March 20, 2001 to December 21, 2001. He was born in San Juan, Argentina. Ramón was responsible for domestic security and managing conflict between the national government and provinces during the crisis. Like much of La Rúa's cabinet, he resigned as a consequence of the 2001 government downfall. He graduated from the

National University of Cordoba's School of Dentistry. Ramón also had multiple notorious political roles, such as Governor of Cordoba in 1995 and as Federal Interventor in Corrientes Province.

Domingo Cavallo, *Minister of Economy*

Domingo was the architect of the “convertibility plan” that had tied the Argentinian peso to the U.S. dollar, a system that became unsustainable. In 2001, he introduced the *corralito*, restricting bank withdrawals that triggered massive public outrage. Domingo is a Doctor in Economics Sciences from the National University of Cordoba and holds a PhD in Economics from Harvard University. He has also been a professor at renowned institutions, such as the Catholic University of Cordoba, Yale University, Harvard University, and more.

Horacio Jaunarena, Minister of Defense

José Horacio Jaunarena is an Argentine lawyer and politician, and the Minister of Defense during the December 2001 crisis. He was elected as Deputy for the province of Buenos Aires on behalf of the Radical Civic Union (UCR) party. In March 2001, De La Rúa appointed him Minister of Defense, replacing a previous defense leader. Horacio has held various political roles, including President of the Defense Commission for the Radical Civic Union (UCR) party.

Adalberto Rodriguez Giavarini, *Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship*

Adalberto is an economist and former military officer. His political career began at the National Atomic Energy Commission, where he was Chief Economist between 1971 and 1974. Adalberto held several other roles such as Undersecretary of Budget in the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Defense in previous administrations. In 1999, he was appointed by De La Rúa as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Some of his more recognized statements as Minister of Foreign Affairs is his stance towards the Malvinas issue, declaring that they are “a territory of Argentina” and that he doesn’t recognize the Malvinas island government.

Andres Delich, Minister of Education

Andres Delich is a politician and sociologist who replaced Hugo Juri as the new Minister of Education. Andres initiated his political career as president of the Radical Youth in Buenos Aires between 1985 and 1989. In 1997, he was elected as National Deputy for the Radical Civic Union party, later being appointed Minister of Education by De La Rúa in 1999.

Jorge Enrique de la Rúa, *Minister of Justice and Human Rights*

Jorge Enrique de la Rúa is a lawyer from the National University of Córdoba. Unconventionally, his career started as President of the Belgrano de Córdoba sportclub. In December of 1999, his brother, Fernando de la Rúa, took over the national government and Jorge made his debut as secretary general of the Presidency. In October 2000, he was appointed Minister of Justice and Human Rights to replace Ricardo Gil Lavedra.

Hector Lombardo, *Minister of Health*

Hector Jose Lombardo is a politician and doctor. He graduated from the University of Buenos Aires with a medical undergraduate degree. Lombardo is a member of the Radical Civic Union party. He was Director-General of hospitals in the city of Buenos Aires. In 1996, when Buenos Aires transformed into an independent city, de la Rúa appointed Lombardo as Secretary of Health until 1999, when de la Rúa became President - naming Lombardo as Minister of Health and Social Action.

José Gabriel Dumón, *Minister of Labour, Employment and Human Resources Training*

Member of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), José Gabriel Dumón is a lawyer and current Minister of Labour, Employment and Human Resources Training. His political career began as a Secretary General of the Radical Youth in Buenos Aires, from 1970 to 1972. Between 1984 and 1987 he was Director General of Schools and Culture of the Province of Buenos Aires. He is known for proposing initiatives related to vocational training, as social and economic mobility is linked to the learning of the trades. In May 1989, he was appointed Minister of Education by Raúl Alfonsín (previous President) and was called by De La Rúa to join his cabinet by the end of October 2001. Despite his short time in the cabinet, he brings a diverse expertise in social and educational action plans, such as music education, educational reform, mobile cultural unit projects.

Patricia Bullrich, *Minister of Social Security*

Patricia Bullrich is currently the Minister of Social Security for De La Rúa's presidential cabinet. As a young politician, she was involved with Peronism as a member of the Peronist Youth (JP). Later, she joined more centrist and reformist political groups. During the 1990s, she served as deputy and is known for her work in institutional reforms and government transparency. In 2001, she was appointed by De La Rúa as the Minister of Social Security. She is a reformist and a direct politician, and is a strong defender of institutionality and market flexibility.

Hernán Lombardi, *Minister of Tourism and Culture*

Hernán Lombardi is a civil engineer and politician currently holding the position of Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sports. In 1979, he initiated his undergraduate studies in civil engineering at the University of Buenos Aires, where he was president of the Engineering Students Club. At 18 years old, he was affiliated with youth radicalism. In 1999, he was the Secretary of National Tourism as appointed by De La Rúa. However, in October 2001, De La Rúa unified the offices of tourism, culture and sports, making it into one single ministry. Lombardi was appointed as Minister of this new merged proposal.

Adolfo Rodríguez Saá, *Governor of San Luis*

Adolfo Rodríguez Saá is an Argentinian politician born on July 25th, 1947, and was the governor of the province of San Luis from 1983 to 2001. In the real events of the 2001 crisis, Adolfo was interim president of the republic for seven days (however, this does not necessarily need to occur

in committee; delegates will be able to shape these outcomes). He had a populist style of government and an efficient administration of the province's revenue.

Carlos Ruckauf, Governor of Buenos Aires Province

Carlos Ruckauf was born in the province of Buenos Aires. He graduated with a law degree from the University of Buenos Aires in 1967. His first step as a politician occurred when he worked for an insurance company and began to act as a union member in the Insurance Union, quickly becoming secretary. During Carlos Menem's government, he served as the Minister of the Interior and then as Vice President. Ruckauf was elected governor of the Buenos Aires Province in 1999. Carlos Ruckauf belonged to the Justicialist Party.

José Manuel de la Sota, Governor of Córdoba

Argentinian lawyer, professor, and politician. He was one of the main promoters of the movement called "Peronist renewal" in the 1980s. He was a national deputy for Cordoba, ambassador to Brazil, and three times the governor of Cordoba.

Carlos Reutemann, Governor of Santa Fe Province

Carlos Reutemann is the Governor of Santa Fe and member of the Justicialist Party. Before entering politics, Carlos Reutemann achieved international fame as a racing driver who competed in Formula One from 1972 to 1982. In recent times, Santa Fe has suffered from fiscal pressures and unemployment. Reutemann advocates for provincial finances while balancing the needs and issues of the capital. Many have even started to talk that he would be a great candidate to run for the Argentinian Presidency, due to his discipline and interest for politics.

Congress/Senate Members

José Luis Gioja, *Unidos por San Juan*

Gioja was an Argentinian politician from San Juan Province, affiliated with the Justicialist Party and broader Peronist coalitions. In 1973, he graduated from the National University of Cuyo with an agronomy degree. In 1991, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies for San Juan for the Popular Justicialist Front. He was re-elected in the Senate in 2001 and led the Peronist bloc.

Cristina Fernández de Kichner, *Partido Justicialista*

Cristina Fernández de Kichner is a prominent Argentinian lawyer and politician. Born in La Plata, Buenos Aires Province, she studied law at the National University of La Plata. She was elected national senator in the 1995 general elections. She was removed from the Justicialist Party in 1997 for misconduct. She ran again for senator in the 2001 midterm elections. For this committee, we will be solely focusing on this historical period and not future events such as Fernández de Kichner's presidency from 2007 to 2015.

Nicolás Alejandro Fernández, *Partido Justicialista*

Nicolas Alejandro Fernández was born on December 16, 1958, in Puerto Deseado, Santa Cruz. He is an Argentinian lawyer and politician affiliated with the Justicialist Party. He served as national deputy from 1999 to 2001. Early in his career, he provided legal advice services to municipal governments and trade unions in Santa Cruz before entering congress.

Maria Elisa Castro, *Frente Justicialista*

Maria Elisa Castro is a politician and architect with a long career in public service, affiliated with the Justicialist Party and its allied fronts. She served as national senator for Santiago del Estero Province from 2001 to 2007. She worked on committees related to housing and infrastructure. She also had several provincial government roles related to urban planning and social development.

Ramón Puerta, *Frente para El Cambio*

Ramón Puerta is a Peronist leader who briefly was interim president during the December 2001 crisis for a period of 2 days. Before this, he was the Governor of the Misiones Province (from 1999 to 2001) and a long-serving national senator.

Liliana Bayonzo, *Frente de Todos*

Bayonzo is an Argentinian politician who was a member of the Chamber of Deputies and was an active lawmaker. Her career in congress was affiliated with the broader Peronist alliances, such as *Frente de Todos*.

Blanca Inés Osuna, *Partido Justicialista*

Blanca Inés Osuna was born on October 25, 1950, in Paraná. She is an Argentinian educational psychologist and politician from the Justicialist Party (PJ). She has served multiple roles, including National Deputy for Entre Ríos Province from 2001 to 2007. Due to her teaching background, she was often a leader and member of educational committees in congress.

Miguel Ángel Pichetto, *Partido Justicialista*

Argentinian lawyer and conservative Peronist politician. He was born in Banfield, Buenos Aires and earned a law degree from the National University of La Plata in 1976. Pichetto was elected senator in 2001. Pichetto would often take a more legal role, leading roles in judicial and penal matters, as well as sitting in committees related to prosecution.

Elisa Carrió, *Democratic Socialist Party and ARI*

Elisa Carrió is a deputy and former member of the Radical Civic Union (UCR) party. She is the chair of the Congressional Committee on Corruption and Money Laundering, She has recently founded the *Argentinos por una República de Iguales (ARI)*, as an informal front of the Democratic Socialist Party, positioning herself as an anti-corruption reformer. She is all about institutional reform, transparency, and social justice during times of social crises.

Leopoldo Moreau, *Senior Leader of the Radical Civic Union and VP of Senate*

Leopoldo Moreau is an Argentinian journalist and politician. Moreau is a member of the Radical Civic Union (UCR) party. He was born in Santa Fe, but grew up in San Isidro, Buenos Aires. He initiated his undergraduate studies in law at the University of Buenos Aires, but later dropped out of university during his fourth year to pursue a journalistic career. He is the Vice President of the Senate and firmly opposes to neoliberal economic policies.

Hilda Gonzalez de Duhalde, *Senator, Justicialist Party*

Hilda is a prominent Peronist and senator. Throughout the 1990s, Hilda gained recognition in Argentina for social programs that targeted poverty reduction and community development. She criticizes the current government's lack of care towards vulnerable Argentinian populations.

Hilda shapes an important role during congressional negotiations, and makes sure her voice is being heard.

Third Party Actors

Estela de Carlotto, *President of Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo* (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo)

Estela is a human rights activist and the current president of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo. Her daughter, Laura Estela Carlotto, was kidnapped and went missing while pregnant in Buenos Aires in 1977. Unfortunately, in April 1978, Estela was handed the dead body of her daughter, who was buried in La Plata. Since then, she became heavily involved in local social justice movements, becoming a member of the *Abuelas Argentinas con Nietitos Desaparecidos*, and later, president of the Association of Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo in 1989. Estela is close to relevant political figures such as Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner.

Adolfo Perez Esquivel, *Human Rights Activist and Artist*

Adolfo Perez Esquivel is an activist, community organizer, and painter. He gained international recognition for opposing human rights violations during Argentina's military dictatorship of Jorge Videla. He was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980. Adolfo has served multiple roles, including president of the Honorary Council of Service, Latin America Peace and Justice Foundation and a member of the International League of Human Rights. His artwork has also been related to social justice causes, such as the Monument for Refugees.

Victor de Gennaro, Secretary-General of the State Workers' Association (ATE), Founder of Argentina's Workers Central Union

Victor de Gennaro is an Argentinian activist, born and raised in Lanus, Buenos Aires. In 1996, he joined the National Mining Secretariat. In 1973, he was elected as Secretary General of the Internal Board of Delegates of the State Workers's Association, bringing together workers from the national state and from some autonomous and non-state public entities. This year (2001), the ATE has been undergoing several struggles, jeopardizing Victor's leadership and reputation.

Joaquin Morales Sola, *Political Columnist and Journalist at La Nacion*

Joaquin Morales is a well-known Argentinian political journalist and columnist. He writes extensively on national politics, government, and events that affect the Argentinian broad society. He is known for his insider knowledge of the Argentinian political elites and institutional dynamics. He plays an important role in voicing the opinions and statements of the Argentinian population to the government, and through this crisis, he is determined to utilize his tools to highlight weak authorities, and even raise more tensions amongst De La Rúa's cabinet and congress.

Magdalena Ruiz Guinazu, *Prominent radio journalist and member of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons*

Magdalena Ruiz Guinazu is a prominent and respected Argentinian radio and TV host. In 1983, she was elected *Woman of the Year* by popular vote. In 1987, she took the lead on the Argentinian presidential debate as host, advancing the opportunities for women in political media and television spaces. She also serves as a member of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP). Her career is focused on defending human rights and

democracy. She has a lot of influence in the Argentinian people and many see her as a prominent moral voice in public and political affairs.

Miguel Angel Broda, *Private Economist Consultant and Influential Macroeconomy Analyst*

Dr. Miguel Angel Broda is a prominent economist. He received his bachelor's degree in economics from the Catholic University of Argentina, and both his master's and Ph.D in economics from the University of Chicago. He is founder and executive director of the economic consulting firm *Miguel A.M Broda and Associates*. He is also an editor and director at the *Carta Economica*, an economics newspaper. Broda is well-respected in the world of Argentinian politics due to his extensive knowledge in macroeconomic policies, serving as an advisor and mentor for the ministers that directly impact the economic situation of Argentinians.

Questions to consider

1. How can the Argentinian Congress and Presidential Cabinet members ensure the immediate stop of current social unrest and riots to prioritize Argentina's safety?
2. What mechanisms should have been in place to prevent or mitigate the harmful effects of the *corralito* on ordinary citizens, especially low-income communities and small entrepreneurs?

3. How can the Argentinian government ensure transparency and accountability for those who incorporated the policies that led to the crisis? Will there be any type of penalties and/or punishments?
4. What will future relations with international financial institutions like the IMF look like after this turmoil? What is the role of these international figures during a severe economic downturn like this?
5. What alternative economic policies could Argentina pursue instead of continuing the path of strict convertibility to avoid financial collapse?
6. How can future governments prevent withdrawal freezes and banking runs without damaging citizens' right to economic freedom?
7. What is the role of women and other marginalized communities in this crisis? How is the government appropriately responding to safeguarding the well-being and stability of these communities? How can their political participation increase?
8. What lessons from this crisis should other countries in Latin America apply to avoid similar economic breakdowns, as well as prevent this from happening again in the Republic of Argentina?

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