

symbol not only of the postponement of something in which we were pioneers when our country almost 40 years ago, to be more precise, in 1974, started up Atucha I, becoming the first country in Latin America to operate a nuclear plant—I felt the way I did when recently we were in Yacyretá, the way I did when he [then-President Néstor Kirchner] decided to put an end to the debt with the International Monetary Fund, when we decided to also restructure the debt in 2005, and last year, to put an end to that sword of Damocles which had continuously hung over the growth of the Argentine Republic...

Just a few operatives kept the *Adolfo Storni* [submarine] alive, perhaps the same operatives who here maintained this marvelous plant during the years of paralysis. Today I thank you who have been the guardians of national sovereignty, the workers... When they entered the plant where the turbine is today, there was a huge warehouse full of owls and rats, because this was paralyzed in 1994. When he [Néstor Kirchner] decided to once again activate the Argentine Nuclear Plan, in 2006, he was restoring one of the most important bastions of Argentine technological development, which has been a pioneer in Latin America.

I believe that we, the generation of the Bicentennial, are repaying all the historic debts generated over decades of abandonment, mistakes, bad policies, or also of foreign interference so that Argentina would not have nuclear development. We have restored the will and the decision that the country is going to govern itself...

I remember when I came here with him [Néstor Kirchner] for the first time, in 2007, for the closure of the pressure vessel. And the truth is that I feel great emotion today, because I know that he is watching this from somewhere, and he is seeing that everything he did was not in vain, that it was worth it. There are 2.2 billion pesos here in this project; but there is something more. Eighty-eight percent of that money is in Argentine inputs, and the labor of Argentine workers. It's also the more than 800 technicians and skilled operatives who returned, after we began to once again push the nuclear issue. More than 900 nuclear welders have been trained here over these years, more than 100 technicians, more than 200 specialized workers...

Hear the numbers clearly: We have added 8,122 megawatts of power, I repeat, 45.4% more than we were generating in 2003. And it's not just power that has been added: We were able to add that power be-

Documentation

Fernández: Argentina's Best Fuel Is Its People

The following are excerpts from the speech delivered by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of Argentina, at the inauguration of the Atucha II nuclear plant in Zárate, Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Sept. 28, 2011. The speech is translated from Spanish.

The truth is that when I first pressed the two buttons—one which started the rotor of the turbine, and the other which brings water in for cooling, as we begin the work of this Atucha II plant, which was also the

cause over these eight years we opened factories, workshops, businesses, which demanded that power. Therefore, we had to generate that much power and we still have to keep generating more.

Because over these eight years, we Argentines have achieved the most important economic growth of our entire history. And last year, in 2010 and 2011 to date, we also have the pride of being the second country in the entire world, after China, in economic growth. I feel proud, as President of all Argentines....

What a Country!

And we have to go for more in the Argentine Nuclear Plan. That is why the next goals have to be to extend the life of Embalse de Rio Tercero [nuclear plant]; second, the construction of Atucha III [nuclear plant]; and also the construction of the CAREM nuclear reactor, which has already begun....

Here today, with this incredible nuclear plant, I feel we are starting up the machine that our country Argentina was, which knew how to be a leader in all fields in Latin America—nuclear, aeronautics, building railroads, automobiles, scientific matters.... Look at what a country we have been!

And allow me to tell you that, of course, in the things that have happened to us, we Argentines have also been responsible; but I also think that perhaps there are those who did not want Argentina to be able to achieve that magnificent development which it was achieving back in the 1970s, where we were taking off in all fields, and where workers also had achieved a very important level of participation in national income, where we excelled in science and in the full development of our industry.

I also want to tell you that my commitment is not only to be a generation which pays its debts, but also the generation which again starts up that formidable and marvelous machine which is Argentina, and which also, as in this plant, has nuclear fuel. I say that the Argentine machine has the best fuel: the Argentine people and its strength. That is the fuel of the machine, and all of us Argentines have to stand up to make sure that that machine can never be stopped again by anybody, that it continues its unstoppable march to achieve more growth, more justice, more equality, more liberty, more democracy, more of a country for all.

Thank you very much, and congratulations to all of you.