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Dear Professor Maiani,

I am writing to express the appreciation of the ATLAS Collaboration for the help given by the HELEN programme in establishing and reinforcing collaboration between physicists working in Latin American countries and the ATLAS experiment at CERN.

The support of HELEN was appreciated by our colleagues from UFRJ, Brazil who are long-standing members of the ATLAS Collaboration. The additional visits, which they were able to make, supported work in the areas of computing and electronics for the experiment. HELEN also provided support for physicists and engineers from Chile who have worked - so far as individuals - with the ATLAS experiment. Here the activity has been connected with commissioning the detector and on physics performance evaluations. Building on these initial contacts we are now discussing with Chilean Institutes and CONICYT about the possibility of extending the collaboration, possibly to the extent of formal admission to the ATLAS Collaboration.

A highlight of the ATLAS-related work supported by HELEN was the entry of two groups from Argentina into the Collaboration. There is no doubt that the HELEN programme was an important factor in establishing this first involvement of groups from Argentina in the CERN-LHC experimental programme. Professor M.T. Dova from La Plata and Professor R. Piegaia from Buenos Aires, together with a total of six students, are now working very actively with us. They are involved in preparing event-selection algorithms for the high-level trigger and also on physics-performance studies. Funds are being sought from the Argentinian Funding Agency to support their contributions to ATLAS, and Professor Baranao, President of the Agencia ANPCyT, will attend the CERN Resources Review Board this October.

In conclusion, the HELEN programme is strongly appreciated by ATLAS. It has been very effective in bringing new groups from Latin America into the Collaboration where they are making excellent contributions. It has also significantly helped groups and individuals from Latin America with whom we already had contacts to work more efficiently with us. We hope that it will be possible to continue and extend this excellent programme.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Jenni
Spokesperson, ATLAS Collaboration