

## **Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC)**

**Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference  
Geneva, 28 April – 9 May 2008**

Statement by Mr. Antonio Abel OLIVEIRA, Secretary of ABACC

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, let me join those who preceded me on the floor and congratulate you for being elected as the Chairman of this meeting.

I also want to profit of this opportunity to express the total support of ABACC during the development of this meeting and to foretell the achievement of the proposed objectives.

In 2008, ABACC will be completing seventeen years of activities within the framework of the Agreement between Brazil, Argentina, the ABACC and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the application of safeguards. During such a period, ABACC has become an essential instrument for transparency and rapprochement throughout the long way involved in the implementation of safeguards and in complying with the active and permanent commitment by both countries in favour of non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the promotion of the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Under the frame of this Quadripartite Agreement, both Member States committed themselves to accept the application of safeguards to all the nuclear materials involved in all the nuclear activities performed within their territories, under their jurisdictions and their control, with a single objective: assuring that such materials would not be diverted for their application in nuclear weapons or other explosive nuclear devices.

While recognising the sovereign right of every nation to have access to nuclear technology for the scientific, technological, economic and social development of their inhabitants, in 1991 both countries created their Common System for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (SCCC). It was so ratified the clear and definite compromise for the use of all the materials and nuclear facilities submitted to their jurisdictions or control exclusively for peaceful purposes. Today, it represents a paradigmatic framework of the long process of economic, political, technological and cultural integration by both countries.

It was within this context that they created the Brazilian Argentine Agency of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials —ABACC—, in order to manage and apply the SCCC.

Currently, ABACC applies the Common System to all the nuclear materials existing in the approximately 70 nuclear facilities available in Argentina and Brazil. In order to verify the nuclear inventory, ABACC performs approximately 110 inspections in those facilities every year.

At present, ABACC can show the world a considerable experience in the compliance with the mission assigned to it. In doing so, ABACC has become a bi-national agency for the application of safeguards enjoying a great credibility in the international arena, as well as one of the main contributors to the international non-proliferation system.

It is worth noting that maintaining the nuclear facilities in both countries under safeguards implies moving permanently throughout a long path that is crowded with challenges. For this purpose, we have done with the essential support provided by both countries, which supply both human and economic resources and offer the scientific and technical infrastructure in the hands of their national authorities and other agencies in the nuclear field, as required by the ABACC's Secretariat.

In compliance with its institutional mission, the ABACC guarantees that all of the nuclear materials and the rest of the safeguarded elements in both Brazil and Argentina were used exclusively for peaceful purposes and were properly accounted for. After completing its tasks, the ABACC did not find any signs of non compliance with the commitments undertaken by both countries regarding non-proliferation and safeguards.

Mr. Chairman,

The current status of civilisation, with its ever-growing energy requirements, does not allow for any further naive positions. We cannot accept that enormous portions of the world population be left out of development and of the fruits it bears. Now that humanity is starting to realise that its impact upon the environment can lead to its own destruction, nuclear energy is aimed at playing a leading role. Nowadays, several nations are taking a new approach to nuclear reactors as reliable sources of energy with zero contribution to the greenhouse effect; this, in turn, leads to an expectation of growth in all the activities related to the nuclear production chain.

On the other hand, political instability and the complexity of the relationship among nations and communities, associated with the simplicity of communications in this globalised world, produce an outlook of concern with regard to the possibilities of diversion of nuclear materials for belligerent purposes.

During the last 53 years, history has demonstrated that, undoubtedly, the best way to guarantee a peaceful use of nuclear energy is promoting understanding and co-operation among nations. Co-operation and mutual understanding have been the basis for the joint work performed by the IAEA and the ABACC in the application of safeguards, as provided in the Quadripartite Agreement.

Both the Argentine and the Brazilian authorities have repeatedly stressed the relevance of the co-operation between the ABACC and the IAEA. Both organisations have also been asked to coordinate their tasks with a permanent goal: an efficient management of the cost of safeguards activities, avoiding any unnecessary duplication of efforts.

The good results attained in the joint safeguards activities and procedures, with regard to unannounced inspections and the joint use of safeguards equipment units, reflect the high level of understanding and co-operation reached by both Agencies.

It must be noted, Mr Chairman, that offering incentives for co-operation between Regional Systems and the IAEA has been a reason for concern by its Board of Governors, which—in article 7 of INFCIRC/153— highlights the role of regional agencies and establishes that the Agency must give consideration to their technical efficiency. Besides, the enhancement of co-operation with the national or regional systems was one of the actions identified for the improvement of the effectiveness and the efficiency of safeguards in Part I of the so-called "Programme 93+2" approved in 1995.

On the other hand, the cooperation agreements with other institutions of international prestige, such as the US Department of Energy (DOE) and EURATOM play an important role in the activities performed by ABACC.

Mr Chairman,

As expressed by both Governments, Argentina and Brazil have decided to reactivate their nuclear programs. Early in 2008, Presidents Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, from Argentina, and Luiz Ignacio Lula da Silva, from Brazil, have signed an agreement on cooperation in the nuclear field, including in areas such as nuclear power reactors and uranium enrichment, which would allow

them to continue to work together to satisfy the energy necessities of their countries in an open and transparent manner and with guarantees that such materials would be used for peaceful purposes.

This context implies an even more significant role of ABACC, involving an increase in its activities of inspection, accounting and control for the years to come. It also means that ABACC must reassert its commitment for improving continuously its performance in the application of safeguards in Argentina and Brazil, as established in the framework of the Quadripartite Agreement.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, please accept our votes for a Conference full of good results and our appreciation for giving us the opportunity to deliver these statements.

Thank you.

