

Statement of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) at the 70th IAEA General Conference

Mr. Marco Marzo – Secretary of ABACC

Mr. President,

The Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) celebrates its 35th anniversary this year.

Established in 1991, ABACC was created to verify compliance with the commitment undertaken by Argentina and Brazil to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. Since then, it has distinguished itself as a unique and successful example of regional cooperation in the implementation of safeguards, serving as a model of how verification, transparency, and dialogue can strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Mr. President,

ABACC implements the Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (SCCC), designed to verify—under the terms of the Bilateral Agreement—that all nuclear materials involved in all nuclear activities in Argentina and Brazil are used exclusively for peaceful purposes. Its primary verification tool is cross-inspections, through which it ensures that nuclear materials at all facilities in both countries are not diverted for the manufacture of nuclear weapons. In addition to inspections, ABACC records, processes, and analyzes data from the nuclear material accounting system. It also applies containment, surveillance, and radiation detection technologies to nuclear materials and evaluates inspections and other verification activities related to nuclear materials and facilities. Together, these activities provide the technical basis for credible and independent safeguards conclusions and demonstrate the robustness and coherence of ABACC's verification system.

Over the course of 35 years, our inspectors have conducted more than 4,300 inspections and design information verifications, including over 400 unannounced inspections. On average, three to four ABACC inspectors are on inspection missions daily. Based on the assessment of all verification activities carried out, the ABACC Secretariat issues an annual conclusion regarding the countries' compliance with all terms of the Bilateral Agreement for the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Mr. President,

One of ABACC's priorities is to maintain a highly qualified body of inspectors. To this end, the Agency places special emphasis on the continuous training of its inspectors. Another ongoing priority is the modernization of non-destructive measurement systems, as well as containment and surveillance systems. This continuous investment in equipment,

instruments, and software is essential to keep technical capabilities aligned with the latest international standards and, consequently, to reach credible conclusions regarding safeguards.

ABACC's importance extends beyond the bilateral dimension. The Quadripartite Agreement, which entered into force in March 1994, established a well-defined framework for coordination and cooperation between ABACC and the IAEA. This framework provides for the two agencies to cooperate and minimize the duplication of activities while reaching independent conclusions. This balance between cooperation and independence has been crucial to the arrangement's success and has helped maximize both the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards implementation.

Indeed, ABACC's experience demonstrates the value of regional mechanisms that complement and reinforce the broader international safeguards architecture. Its work has shown that verification can be strengthened through institutional innovation, technical professionalism, and sustained political commitment. It also illustrates how regional leadership and international cooperation can work in a mutually reinforcing manner for the benefit of the non-proliferation regime as a whole—especially given the projected increase in the use of nuclear energy worldwide.

Mr. President,

Over the years, the work of ABACC has contributed to mutual trust and cooperation between Argentina and Brazil. It stands as an example of how cooperation, dialogue, and mutual respect among nations contribute decisively to regional and international security.

As we celebrate this thirty-fifth anniversary, we pay tribute to the vision that gave rise to this unique mechanism, to the professionalism of those who have sustained it, and to the contribution it continues to make to peace, trust, and international security.

May ABACC's anniversary inspire us all to deepen our commitment to dialogue over mistrust, cooperation over division, and peace over proliferation.

Thank you, Mr. President.