

**General Statement of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials - ABACC at the Third Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference of the Parties in Charge of the Review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of 2026.**

**New York, April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, ABACC, I extend my congratulations on your election as President of this Third Meeting of the Preparatory Committee. I wish you every success in your important role.

Mr. President,

Nuclear safeguards are critical to the international nuclear non-proliferation framework. They are implemented through three types of treaties and agreements, defined by their scope. The first type comprises treaties of international scope, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Under these treaties, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is responsible for applying its safeguards system. The second type includes regional treaties, specifically the five Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs) established globally. In this context, the IAEA typically enforces nuclear safeguards as well. The third type consists of regional safeguards agreements, encompassing two distinct systems: a multinational system administered by EURATOM across 27 European countries, and a binational system operated by ABACC in Argentina and Brazil.

The creation of ABACC thirty-four years ago reflects the development of mutual trust between Argentina and Brazil. The Bilateral Agreement is a crucial non-proliferation instrument for these two nations, which possess advanced nuclear programs in our region.

ABACC manages the Common System of Nuclear Material Accounting and Control. This robust and independent system, through reciprocal inspections (with Argentinean inspectors examining Brazilian nuclear facilities and vice-versa) and evaluation measures, verifies that nuclear materials are not diverted to the production of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

This binational agency stands as a symbol of a historic and unprecedented process of transparency and confidence-building. It demonstrates the firm political commitment of both countries—to each other and to the international community—to developing and utilizing nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes.

As the world's only binational safeguards organization enforcing full-scope safeguards, ABACC has conducted over 3,600 inspections in both countries, including more than 350 unannounced inspections. On average, ABACC maintains a daily presence of 3 to 4 inspectors performing inspection missions.

Mr. President,

The anticipated expansion of nuclear power over the next 25 years poses a significant challenge to the IAEA's ability to fulfill its safeguards mission. The expected integration of small modular reactors (SMRs) for diverse applications—from nuclear power generation to industrial processes, desalination, heating, data centers, and marine uses—presents substantial hurdles. Another challenge is the projected increase in spent fuel dry storage at reactor sites, which presents access difficulties and necessitates stringent control measures. Furthermore, verifying spent fuel transfers from reactor spent fuel ponds to dry storage is labor-intensive and demands considerable inspection resources.

Given the inevitable increase in the costs of applying safeguards, regional safeguards systems can be leveraged to increase efficiency without compromising the effectiveness of safeguards. It is crucial to recognize that the safeguards agreements between the IAEA and regional systems include comprehensive provisions that dictate how the IAEA must coordinate its activities with these systems. This coordination is essential to minimize duplication of effort while enabling the IAEA to draw independent safeguards conclusions.

While, historically, the international community have not actively promoted the establishment of regional systems in other parts of the world, the predicted expansion of nuclear power makes it appear inevitable that regional systems will assume a vital role within the international safeguards regime.

As we consider the future of nuclear non-proliferation and safeguards, it is essential for all stakeholders to acknowledge this evolving landscape and the vital role that regional systems will play in addressing emerging challenges. Through concerted efforts and collaboration, we can achieve a more secure future in nuclear governance.

Mr. President,

The political and legal framework that Argentina and Brazil have developed serves as an inspiration for other nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. The kind of creative thinking and strong political will demonstrated by the Argentine-Brazilian experience will be of paramount importance in achieving and maintaining a more secure world. A world free from the threat of nuclear weapons, and where nuclear energy is used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

In closing, I express my hope that this meeting and the 2026 NPT Review Conference will reaffirm the importance of the regional system established by ABACC.

Thank you, Mr. President.