

**Speech of the secretary of ABACC at the Annual Meeting of the Institute of Nuclear Material Management**

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First of all, I would like to welcome and thank all of you for being here, celebrating with us, the 20th anniversary of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, the ABACC.

The signature of the Bilateral Agreement for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy on 18 July 1991 which established the Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, the SCCC, and a binational agency to manage this system, the ABACC.

The Agreement, definitively and clearly sealed the commitment of both countries for the exclusively peaceful use of all the material and nuclear installations submitted to their jurisdiction or control. Today, this represents a model reference of the long process of economic, political, technological and cultural integration of Argentina and Brazil and it is a clear demonstration of the political desire of both countries to provide total transparency in their nuclear programs. The creation of an environment of mutual trust facilitates the good understanding between the parties and produces the conditions required to confront new technological challenges.

At the same time, it provides a constructive framework for collaboration in policies of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, and encourages the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The two countries adhered voluntarily to these policies by becoming signatories of the international treaty known as the NPT and which, in fact in our perspective, should be known as the NPDPUT – Non-Proliferation, Disarmament and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy Treaty.

Argentina and Brazil were capable of establishing a safeguard system that is unique in today's world and which, consolidated and matured over these twenty years, has

become respected by the international community. Proof of this is its acceptance at the last meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group-NSG, as a valid alternative to the NPT's Additional Protocol. This perception has also been witnessed in academic theses and articles recently published in journals and specialized magazines, in different parts of the world. They presented the Argentinean-Brazilian safeguards regime as a successful experience and, taking into account the political and social characteristics of each region, one that is capable of being repeated.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The search for excellence has been a constant concern in ABACC's history; for this purpose, a policy has been implemented for the qualification of its officials and team of inspectors. Technical cooperation programs developed with several international partners has been of fundamental importance in this regard. Among them I would like to underline, in this opportunity, our past and ongoing programs with INMM. It is of special interest the participation in INMM's technical divisions such as the International Safeguards, Materials Control and Accountability, Non-proliferation and Arms Control. ABACC has also profited from sharing of knowledge at INMM-ESARDA joint meetings, where the most conceptual safeguards challenges are reviewed.

We are also very pleased with the cooperation established with the Department of Energy of the US Government, since ABACC's early days. These cooperation projects with several US National Laboratories are always developed in an environment of mutual respect, technical excellence and with a high level of professional skills. I would also like to mention the mature relationship with the IAEA, constructed over time, allowing both agencies to work in harmony and with great objectivity. Mechanisms developed for joint operation, such as the common use of equipment (the Joint Use Agreement), allow for a significant optimization of resources.

The partnership that ABACC maintains with the IAEA is, in our understanding, fundamental, for both agencies to comply with their institutional objectives with efficiency and effectiveness.

My Friends,

We all have perfect awareness of what the history of an institution reflects, in truth, are pieces of the history of each one of the personnel that works or worked in it. Its victories, its defeats, its moments of triumph and its failures. The dedication, the sweat, the tears, the sadness and the happiness. When we celebrate the twenty years of a successful institution, such as ABACC, and with this perception, I want to thank and pay homage to all the persons that in some form have contributed to this success; and this includes people that some day, in the past, were ABACC's personnel but also people from other institutions; important partners in the construction and consolidation of ABACC. To all of them our deepest gratitude and respect.

Many thanks!