

IAEA Board of Governors

March 2016

25 years of ABACC

Mr. Chairman,

I have the pleasure to take the floor on behalf of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina to refer to celebration of the 25th anniversary of the agreements associated with the creation of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC).

The binational agency has become a symbol of a historic, unprecedented process of transparency and confidence-building, displaying the two countries' political determination — between themselves and before the international community — to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only.

The bilateral agreement for the creation of ABACC was ensued by the quadripartite agreement concluded in that same year of 1991, involving the two countries, ABACC and the IAEA. The two countries took additional steps, by giving effect, at the domestic level, to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated region of the world. Subsequently, Argentina and Brazil adhered to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, acceded to the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and were among the first countries to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

As the only binational organization in the world to deal with the enforcement of full-scope safeguards, ABACC has performed, in partnership with the IAEA, more than 2500 inspections in both countries, with an effort of 22000 calendar days of inspections. While ABACC is independent from the two governments, and while ABACC and the IAEA draw independent conclusions, close cooperation between the two agencies has been crucial for the success of the

whole undertaking. As a result, it has been possible for the two agencies to develop procedural arrangements for the maximization of the effectiveness and efficiency in safeguards implementation, including, for example, the joint use of equipment. This sharing of responsibilities has led to an increase in the tasks performed by ABACC within its framework of cooperation with the IAEA.

ABACC has been promoting the continuous training and qualification of its officials and inspectors, and the use of state-of-the-art equipment. That has also been facilitated by the cooperation arrangements it maintains with other organisations and research and development institutions, for the joint technological development in areas such as non-destructive analysis, containment and surveillance, training courses, and safeguards approaches.

Mr. Chairman,

Looking at the past 25 years, Brazil and Argentina are proud that the dialogue and cooperation in the nuclear field has become a common asset of their strategic partnership. The political and legal framework the two countries were able to build has become a source of inspiration for other efforts related to nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Creative thinking and strong political will at the highest level, as the one underpinning the Argentine-Brazilian experience, will be of paramount importance for the achievement and maintenance of a more secure world, free from the threat of nuclear weapons, and where the atom is exclusively used for peaceful purposes.

To conclude, I would like to acknowledge the presence in our midst of the observer delegation of ABACC, led by its Secretary, Mr. Odilon Marcuzzo do Canto, who will shortly cease his functions, after nine years of excellent services provided to its Secretariat, in alternation with his Argentinian counterparts. We wish Mr. do Canto success in all his future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Ministro Ricardo Ayrosa