

**Statement by the Secretary of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for
Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), Dr. Marco Marzo,
at the 68th IAEA General Conference**

Mr. President,

The Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) applies a comprehensive system of safeguards in Argentina and Brazil with the aim of verifying that all nuclear materials in all nuclear activities are used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

In 2023, the ABACC Annual Verification Plan has been satisfactorily fulfilled. The ABACC inspectors performed 47 physical inventory verifications and 61 interim inspections, including 15 unannounced inspections. In addition, 59 design information verifications have been performed. The overall verification effort employed was 874 inspector-days. The total inventory of nuclear material increased by 3.4% compared to the previous year in Significant Quantities; at the end of 2023 the total inventory was 4515 Significant Quantities.

Based on the assessment of all verification activities carried out in 2023, the ABACC Secretariat concluded that both countries have complied with all terms of the Bilateral Agreement – The Agreement Between the Republic of Argentina and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy.

Mr. President,

One of ABACC's priorities is to keep our body of inspectors properly trained. In 2023, eight training courses and workshops have been organized in the following areas: accounting records auditing; containment and surveillance systems;

Another permanent priority for ABACC is the continuous modernization of non-destructive gamma and neutron measurement systems, as well as containment and surveillance systems. ABACC continues making a significant investment in the acquisition of equipment, instruments and software, in order to maintain our technical capacity at the latest international standards, what is essential for drawing credible safeguards conclusions.

Mr. President

Next month, ABACC will host fellows from the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Program for the fourth time. During the four-day Program, fellows will learn about ABACC's activities and have the opportunity to visit a nuclear facility.

This year marks 30 years since the entry into force of the Quadripartite Agreement – The Agreement between Argentina, Brazil, ABACC and the IAEA for the Application of Safeguard. This agreement contains well-defined provisions on coordination and cooperation between the IAEA and ABACC, in particular, envisions that the two agencies will cooperate and minimize duplication of activities and at same time, reach independent conclusions. 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. Under this framework of cooperation, ABACC is firmly committed to continue promoting mechanisms and means by which IAEA safeguards can make full use of the findings and conclusions of this regional mechanism, as provided for in the Quadripartite Safeguards Agreement and as it has been picked up by the NPT revision conferences.

Mr. President,

Over the past 33 years, ABACC's work has contributed to mutual trust and cooperation between Argentina and Brazil. It is an example of how cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect between countries contribute decisively to regional and international security.

Thank you very much.