



OPANAL
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

General Conference

XXVII Session
30 September 2021
Agenda Item 6

Original: Spanish

Courtesy translation

**STATEMENT BY THE BRAZILAIN-ARGENTINE AGENCY FOR ACCOUNTING
AND CONTROL OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS (ABACC) FOR THE XXVII
SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF OPANAL**

30 September 2021

Mr President, on behalf of ABACC I would like to congratulate you on your appointment and wish you success in your task.

We also want to greet very especially the Secretary-General of OPANAL Ambassador Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, the authorities of the Agency and the Member States of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, for their continuous contribution to the consolidation of the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in a densely populated area of the world, a key component in the international scaffolding of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The process initiated in the 1980s, of trust building, transparency and cooperation between two countries of the region, Argentina and Brazil, with relevant nuclear activities, came to underpin the non-proliferation policy in the region and led to the creation of a model organization like ABACC.

30 years ago, on July 18, 1991, the Argentine Republic and the Federative Republic of Brazil signed an Agreement for the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy. It establishes a reciprocal control system for nuclear materials and facilities, which is a regional safeguards system, and an independent body from both countries, ABACC, for its implementation. This model constituted an innovation within the international non-proliferation regime, and until now there has not been a similar regime in the world.

To fulfill our objective of guaranteeing that all nuclear materials and facilities in both countries are used exclusively for peaceful purposes, during 2020, in the 75 nuclear facilities currently under our control, we have carried out and evaluated 114 inspections and 70 technical visits, being able to affirm that both countries have fulfilled up to the present with the assumed commitments.

Since the heart of our work and one of our pillars is the cross-inspection regime through which Brazilian inspectors inspect Argentine facilities and vice versa, we have faced a great challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to emphasize that, although the health of ABACC personnel has been a priority, we set ourselves as a direction to continue achieving the objectives of our mandate in addition to complying with the prevention measures that both countries were adopting.

Likewise, the construction of new nuclear facilities in the two countries continues to advance, this constitutes a challenge and a reason for dedication of ABACC to develop, in coordination with the IAEA, the appropriate safeguards approach for effective and efficient verification.

In this framework, more challenges await us in the near future, which we are tackling in a forward-looking manner, in order to move through this growth with the response capacity and technical excellence that have characterized our agency from the beginning.

This year ABACC celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. We have consolidated a solid international credibility in the effective and efficient verification of the nuclear activities of Argentina and Brazil. The main reasons for this have been the continuous political commitment, the technical and financial support provided by the two countries and the independence of ABACC in the implementation of its verification activities.

Both OPANAL and ABACC are part of a network of international instruments and organizations, each one playing a distinctive role in guaranteeing the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy. In this framework, ABACC periodically informs Argentina and Brazil on the status of implementation of the Bilateral Agreement in their respective territories, thus contributing to the declarations that both states, as members of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, must make.

As part of the relationship between ABACC and OPANAL, in May 1993 an agreement was signed that establishes a framework for regular consultations, harmonization of activities, information exchange, and scientific and technological support work. Framework for a relationship that we hope to continue deepening in the future.

ABACC and OPANAL are a clear example that fostering trust, cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect between countries is a decisive contribution to regional and international security.

Likewise, we hope that the successful implementation of model regional systems, such as those established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco or the Bilateral Agreement, will serve as inspiration for other regions of the world.