



THE EXPERIENCE OF ABACC AFTER TEN YEARS APPLYING SAFEGUARDS

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During the second half of this century, Argentina and Brazil shared a common ambition: to gain knowledge on and develop the technology required for attaining a full command of the nuclear fuel cycle. Until mid-1990's, neither of these countries had fully adhered to the Tlatelolco Treaty, nor had they signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as a way to protect themselves towards the development of such technology. The discriminatory nature of the NPT was the argument used to resist the international pressure for its signature. On the other hand, the text of the Tlatelolco Treaty involved special inspections to non-declared facilities that meant a threat of industrial espionage which Argentina and Brazil wanted to avoid. This position -maintained for almost two decades - led the international community to view these countries as competing for nuclear supremacy.

As of 1985, both Argentina and Brazil, by means of joint declarations, expressed their decision to provide transparency to their nuclear programs. Consequently, they undertook several commitments concerning the exclusively peaceful purposes in their use of nuclear energy and in their respective nuclear programs. This process of joint declarations led to the signature of a Bilateral Agreement for the Exclusively Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy in July 1991. Through this agreement, they formally established their Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (SCCC) and created the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) in order to implement the established verification system. Also at that time, the decision was made to start negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) towards a joint agreement on safeguards based on the SCCC. In March 1994, the Quadripartite Agreement between Argentina, Brazil, the ABACC and the IAEA entered into force.

The experience in the application of SCCC during its first ten years and the improvements in the coordination of activities between the ABACC and the IAEA, as well as between the two organizations and the two countries are described. Additionally, a summary of the main changes expected with the implementation of integrated safeguards is presented