



ARCAL

**REGIONAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT FOR THE PROMOTION
OF NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**REPORT OF THE
XVIII MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF ARCAL REPRESENTATIVES (BAR)
DURING THE
61ST SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**19 SEPTEMBER 2017
VIENNA, AUSTRIA**

**ORA 2017-04
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CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Adoption of the agenda and development of the meeting

III. Decisions adopted

Annex 1: Agenda of the meeting

Annex 2: Remarks by Mr Dazhu Yang, Deputy Director General, Head of Technical Cooperation Department

I. Introduction

The XVIII Meeting of the Board of ARCAL Representatives (BAR) was held on the 19th of September of 2017 at the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), pursuant to Article II of the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL).

Representatives of the following countries took part in the meeting: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic and Uruguay. The meeting was also attended by a representative of the Government of Spain, Mrs Pilar García, as ARCAL's strategic partner. The current Chair of the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology for Asia and the Pacific (RCA) was also present.

At the onset of the meeting, the Board of Directors of the BAR was composed by the resident representatives of Brazil, as President, Mexico, as Vice-President, and Paraguay as Secretary. During the meeting, HE Mr Marcel Fortuna Biato, Resident Representative of Brazil to the IAEA, transferred the BAR's presidency to HE Ms Alicia Buenrostro Massieu, Resident Representative of Mexico to the IAEA.

After the handover, the Board of Directors was composed by the President of the BAR, HE Ms Alicia Buenrostro Massieu, Resident Representative of Mexico, by the Vice-President of the BAR, HE Mr Juan Antonio Fernandez Palacios, Resident Representative of Cuba, and by the Secretary of the BAR, HE Mr Marcel Fortuna Biato, Permanent Representative of Brazil.

The following IAEA senior officials participated in the meeting: Mr Dazhu Yang, Deputy Director General, Head of the Technical Cooperation Department; Mr Aldo Malavasi, Deputy Director-General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications; Mr Juan Carlos Lentijo, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, Mrs Mary Alice Hayward, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Management, Mr Luis Longoria, Director of the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean; Mr Frank Bruhn, Section Head, Division of Planning and Coordination; Mr Raul Ramirez, Head of Section 1; Mr Saul Perez-Pijuan, Head of Section 2, Programme Management Officers of the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean (PMOs), and other technical staff of the Agency.

II. Adoption of the agenda and development of the meeting

Ambassador Biato opened the Board of ARCAL Representatives (BAR) meeting and, after welcoming Representatives and participants attending the meeting, presented the provisional agenda, which was adopted by consensus (Annex 1). Ambassador Biato took the opportunity to welcome Belize as a new Member State of ARCAL.

Mr Dazhu Yang was then greeted and the floor was given so that he could deliver his statement. Mr Yang referred to his visits to different countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, noting that he had benefited from a better understanding of the situation in the countries and closer interaction with the national authorities. He mentioned the important challenges the region was facing, but also pointed out the opportunities that those represented for the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department.

Moreover, he highlighted the contribution of ARCAL as a framework of collaboration that invigorates and fosters collaboration among the countries of the region for the promotion of nuclear science and technologies. Mr Yang also mentioned the efforts made by the Secretariat's Technical Cooperation Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean to organize the Workshop for the Review of Regional Designs held in Vienna, Austria, which brought together fourteen technical groups for the design of the new technical cooperation projects. Furthermore, he also extended his appreciation for

the help provided by Member States in the preparation of the new regional programme, emphasizing the importance of the Regional Strategic Profile (RSP) as a reference for the preparation of current and future projects. Finally, the Deputy Director General mentioned the good implementation of the current programme, which is in line with the implementation of recent years, and encouraged the compliance of countries' with their financial commitments. The full text of the intervention is attached (Annex 2).

In this context, the BAR President moved on to the projection of a video related to the IAEA and ARCAL's contribution to the Technical Cooperation Programme in the field of Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean. The video presented the experience of the Dominican Republic with the fruit fly and the successful response of the IAEA to fight its outbreak¹.

Mr Malavasi highlighted the joint effort among IAEA departments to provide technical support to the Latin American and Caribbean region. He informed that the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, through its 12 laboratories, provides technical support to more than 60% of Technical Cooperation projects. In addition, the Head of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications emphasized the key role of the Technical Cooperation Department in transferring technologies and developing technical capacities related to nuclear technologies. He also took the opportunity to mention the Agency's rapid and successful response to the challenges faced by the region and stressed once again as an example the recent emergency in the Dominican Republic caused by the outbreak of the Mediterranean fly.

Mr Lentijo then pointed out that, thanks to ARCAL, those areas in which the safety infrastructure needed to be strengthened had been identified. He then mentioned the region's significant progress in relation to safety regulatory frameworks and the strengthening of the capacity to protect workers, patients and the environment. To conclude, the Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security recalled that radiation safety is not simply an objective, but a process that must be continuously pursued.

Additionally, Mrs Hayward highlighted the changes and improvements in the services provided by the Department of Management, which have experienced a growing demand in recent years. Mrs Hayward mentioned the special attention that is given to the effectiveness of services in terms of conferences and simultaneous interpretation; the purchase of equipment through the Technical Cooperation Programme; the transition to the new AIPS system, including the Intouch+ platform; and the incorporation of the gender perspective in aspects related to human resources.

On the next agenda item, the President of the BAR presented the report on the activities carried out by the Board of Directors during the period September 2016 to September 2017 (ORA 2017-01) and then submitted it for approval of the participants. The report was adopted by the plenary of the meeting and Ambassador Biato then extended his appreciation to those who had participated and collaborated with ARCAL during his time as the President of the BAR.

Next, Ambassador Biato proceeded with the transfer of the BAR's Presidency, inviting HE Mrs Alicia Buenrostro Massieu to assume the Presidency on behalf of Mexico. The new President then welcomed Ambassador Juan Antonio Fernández Palacios in his capacity of Vice-President of the BAR and the Brazilian Ambassador in his new position as Secretary.

The new President of the BAR expressed her gratitude for the position and acknowledged the successful trajectory of the Brazilian Ambassador in leading ARCAL. Furthermore, she pledged to continue the good momentum that had been created for the benefit of the Latin American and Caribbean region.

¹ <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/multimedia/videos/nuclear-technology-helps-the-dominican-republic-fight-insect-pests-0>

The President of ARCAL's Technical Coordination Board (ATCB) and Mexico's National ARCAL Coordinator, Ms Lydia Paredes, presented the report of the activities carried out by the ATCB during the period from September 2016 to September 2017, contained in the document ORA 2017-02. The President reported on the status of the 2016-2017 regional programme and its high implementation rate, as well as on the XVIII Regular Meeting of the ATCB, held in Cancún, Mexico, from 8 to 11 May 2017, where the implementation of the recommendations regarding the inclusion of the elements of communication and strategic alliances was discussed. Moreover, the President informed about the completion of the design of the new ARCAL 2018-2019 Programme, which was prepared on the basis of the new Regional Strategic Profile for Latin America and the Caribbean (RSP) 2016-2021 and which has a total of 12 new projects.

Mr Luis Longoria then presented the report on the main activities carried out by the Secretariat under the framework of ARCAL in 2016 (ORA 2017-03). The report contains an analysis of the meetings and initiatives supported by the Secretariat in 2016 under ARCAL's framework, the funds provided for the activities implemented throughout the year, together with an analysis of the status of ARCAL's projects. The high implementation rate achieved by the Division in 2016 was also highlighted and the great importance of the extra-budgetary contributions received from Argentina, Chile and Spain in 2016 for the execution of ARCAL's programme was acknowledged. The Director also mentioned the importance of a new ARCAL project, which will aim at strengthening the sustainability and networking of national nuclear energy institutions. The report of the Secretariat was adopted by the plenary of the meeting.

In relation to the planning process of the Regional Technical Cooperation Programme proposed for the 2018-2019 cycle, Mr Raul Ramirez gave a presentation that included an overview of the national and regional programmes that have been designed for the next cycle. He presented information on the programme by thematic area, highlighting that the areas of human health, food security and environment are the most representative. To conclude, he mentioned the estimated budget for the 2018-2019 Technical Cooperation Fund. The Programme will be submitted to the Board of Governors of the IAEA for approval in November 2017. The plenary of the meeting took note of the information presented.

In the section on other matters, an informative presentation was made for the knowledge of Member States. Mr Frank Bruhn, Head of the Quality Assurance Division, mentioned the tools available to ensure the quality of the projects. The criteria used to assess the quality of the design of national, regional and interregional projects were briefly described.

To conclude the meeting, Ambassador Buenrostro emphasized the objective of ARCAL and the IAEA to address the priority areas and needs defined by Member States and the importance of the strong commitment and support of countries to work jointly under the Regional Agreement.

III. Decisions adopted

As a result of the discussion items included in the agenda of the meeting, the Representatives of the BAR agreed:

1. To adopt all reports presented at the meeting: Document ORA 2017-01, Document ORA 2017-02, Document ORA 2017-03.
2. To approve the proposal of the twelve regional projects that will be considered for approval by the IAEA Board of Governors.

Vienna, September 19, 2017.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA
XVIII Meeting of the Board of ARCAL Representatives (BAR)

Vienna, 19 September 2017, 14:00
Meeting Room M6, M Building, VIC

Opening of the Meeting.

Adoption of the agenda.

1. Introductory Statement by the BAR President, HE Mr Marcel FORTUNA BIATO, Ambassador, Resident Representative of Brazil to the International Organizations in Vienna and Representative of Brazil to ARCAL.
2. Introductory Statement by Mr Dazhu YANG, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation.
3. Video about the eradication of the Mediterranean fly in the Dominican Republic.
4. Introductory statements by Mr Aldo MALAVASI, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Applications; Mr Juan Carlos LENTIJO, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security; and Mrs Mary Alice HAYWARD, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Management.
5. Report on the activities undertaken by the BAR during the Brazilian Presidency from the period of September 2016 to September 2017 (Document ORA 2017-01).
6. Transfer of the Presidency:
 - a) Designation of the Steering Committee of the XVIII BAR meeting
 - b) Statement by the BAR President, HE Mrs Alicia BUENROSTRO MASSIEU, Ambassador, Resident Representative of Mexico to the International Organizations in Vienna and Representative of Mexico to ARCAL.
7. Report on the activities undertaken by the ARCAL Technical Coordination Board (ATCB) and the ATCB Steering Committee between September 2016 and September 2017 (Document ORA 2017-02).
8. Secretariat's report on the activities implemented under the ARCAL Programme in 2016 (Document ORA 2017-03).
9. Presentation on the planning process of the Regional Programme for the upcoming cycle 2018-2019.
10. Other matters.
 - a) Process of quality review of projects presented for the 2018-2019 cycle of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

Welcoming remarks by Mr. Dazhu Yang

IAEA Deputy Director General,

Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives of ARCAL States Parties and other Member States, Delegates, Colleagues,

I am pleased to extend a warm welcome from our Director General and myself to all ARCAL Representatives and participants in this 18th Meeting of the ARCAL Board of Representatives. I wish to thank Brazil, represented today by Ambassador HE Mr Marcel FORTUNA BIATO, for their effective and active chairing of ARCAL throughout the two years of Brazil's presidency of the ARCAL Board of Representatives. Likewise, I would like to welcome Mexico, represented by Ambassador HE Mrs Alicia BUENROSTRO MASSIEU, as they take the Presidency for the next two years. I would also like to welcome Belize, who joins us today no longer as an observer, but as the newest member of ARCAL. You are all very welcome.

Since we last met in September 2016, I have been able to visit some more countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. These visits have given me the opportunity to learn more about your countries, to develop relationships with relevant national authorities, and to hear many impressive testimonials about the Agency's long history of cooperation with all the countries represented here.

ARCAL's work during this year has been both intense and fruitful. Projects approved in previous cycles continued to be successfully implemented. Much has been achieved in the Latin America and the Caribbean region throughout 2016 and 2017. You have also faced some significant challenges, where the TC programme was able to provide rapid assistance. After responding to the Zika outbreak and providing immediate support to Ecuador after an earthquake struck the country in 2016, the programme was also able to provide prompt assistance and equipment to Peru following devastating floods in early 2017.

The Dominican Republic also faced challenges with the spread of the Mediterranean Fruit Fly. This insect pest infested several regions within the country, affecting agriculture products and related international commerce. This Agency and other partners offered immediate support, with the IAEA providing experts and equipment to contribute to resolving the problem. With this support and with firm government intervention, the outbreak was controlled after six months, and commercial activities were restored to the benefit of the country. More details on the assistance provided will be shown in the video which will be played later on.

The preparation of the regional programme proposed by ARCAL for the 2018–2019 TC cycle was finalized. I note that the new programme has been developed to address the common needs and problems identified in the region, and that it will continue to address key development priorities as laid out in the Regional Profile for Latin America and the Caribbean (RSP) for the period 2016-2021.

The IAEA has been implementing a continuous improvement process, and I note that the quality of the project designs in this region has shown considerable improvement. I would like to recognize the work of the National ARCAL Coordinators, Designated Team Members (DTMs) and experts from the region in the different fields of activities.

The new programme submitted by ARCAL is focusing on health, environment, food safety and agriculture, industry, energy and knowledge management. These will be presented to you in more detail later today.

I would like to draw your attention to a regional project which has been presented by ARCAL with the objective of promoting sustainability and fostering networking between nuclear institutions. It aims to strengthen the overall sustainability of the TC programme through activities such as the development of strategic action plans and business cases; resource mobilization; management of nuclear talent; enhancement of innovation; and certification by international accreditation. We hope that in the future we will be able to share experiences gained through this project and enhance networking opportunities with other key institutions all around the world through the Quadripartite Forum.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of creating a very solid basis in radiation safety and regulatory infrastructure in your countries. With this in mind, and in order to contribute to a more effective and tailored assistance to member states, the TC programme is proposing a national approach with an integrated regional vision. This new approach will enhance sustainability as each Member State will be able to decide if and under which terms to address radiation safety and regulatory challenges. This will enhance effectiveness, as the IAEA's support will be customized to each country's particular needs and institutional structures, allowing for realistic objectives within the frameworks of the projects.

I am convinced that these new approaches will move your countries' and ARCAL's programme even further forward, increase both the visibility and sustainability of activities, and contribute to the long-lasting impact of projects.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This year we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the Technical Cooperation Programme of the IAEA in the *International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development*, held from 30 May to 1 June, 2017. With your help in promoting the Conference, we were able to attract an impressive number of participants, including a very high-level audience. This was crucial to the success of the conference, which raised awareness of the achievements and potential of the IAEA's technical cooperation programme, and strengthened partnerships with Member States, sister UN organizations, and other relevant partners.

The impact of ARCAL and the regional programme in Latin America and the Caribbean was demonstrated during the Conference, as key speakers from the region shared their testimonies regarding the impact of the TC programme in different fields of activities. I would like, once again, to thank you for your active participation, including that of the president of Uruguay and ministers from the region, in the Conference sessions, and also for organizing exhibition stands and presentations, engaging in fruitful discussions, and participating in side events.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I like to underline that financing the Agency's technical cooperation programme is a shared responsibility, and reflects the commitment of all Member States to the TC programme. Although some countries have made considerable efforts to bring their TCF payments up to date, a number of Member States have not fully paid their contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund. I would very much appreciate it if you, as ARCAL representatives, can convey a message to your authorities urging them to ensure the timely payment of their contribution to the TCF. As we embark on the 2018–2019 TC programme, I would also like to remind you that the early payment of the National Participation Cost (NPCs) is extremely important. This ensures that national TC projects become operational as early as possible, and avoids delays in the implementation of planned activities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to reiterate my appreciation for your efforts to continue and expand the fruitful cooperation under the framework of ARCAL, and assure you the full support of the TC Department, particularly the Division of Latin America and the Caribbean, to your programmes.

I wish you a productive meeting and a pleasant stay in Vienna.

Thank you.