

Brazil Reaffirms Peaceful Goal of Its Nuclear Program While Enriching Uranium

Contributed by Vladimir Platonow
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The Brazilian Minister of Science and Technology, Sérgio Rezende, informed that uranium enrichment will save Brazil US\$ 11 million annually in the initial phase.

On Friday, May 5, Brazil joined the group of ten countries that have mastered the technology of producing nuclear fuel on an industrial scale.

The achievement came with the inauguration of the first uranium enrichment unit using ultracentrifuges in the Nuclear Industries of Brazil, in Resende, located in Brazil's southern region of Rio de Janeiro.

The unit will produce nuclear fuel for the Angra 1 and 2 nuclear power plants. In the future it will also supply fuel to the Angra 3 plant.

Angra 1 and 2 are the source of nearly 50% of the energy consumed in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This corresponds to 20% of the energy consumed in the entire southeastern region of the country.

According to the minister, the INB has received license to function at its current level from the National Nuclear Energy Commission (CNEN) and the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Resources (IBAMA).

During the inauguration ceremony, Rezende stressed once again the peaceful ends of the Brazilian nuclear program, which was approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The minister informed that the decision about resuming construction on the Angra 3 plant should be made in June. According to Rezende, the Electric Energy Ten-Year Expansion Plan foresees the beginning of operations at Angra 3 in January, 2013.

He also remarked that this year's budget provides for resources on the order of US\$ 113 million for the Brazilian nuclear program.

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