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Brazil

Reprocessing Proposal

A nationalist group within the Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission is advocating that Brazil develop its own fuel-reprocessing capability, free of international safeguards. We have no evidence that the group has influenced anyone outside the Commission, or that the Commission itself is advocating such a capability. [redacted]

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The group hopes that Brazilian technicians will acquire the necessary technology through the recent nuclear agreement with West Germany and will eventually be able to build a Brazilian plant not subject to international safeguards.

The use of West German technology to build unsafeguarded facilities would be in violation of the accord with the International Atomic Energy Agency that accompanied the bilateral nuclear accord.

The Nuclear Energy Commission formerly controlled all aspects of Brazil's nuclear energy development, but its duties were passed to Nuclebras, the state-owned nuclear energy enterprise, after the signing of the agreement with West Germany. Since that time, the Commission has performed an advisory function for Brazilian policymakers but is not involved with the West German nuclear accord.

The Commission recently regained control of two Brazilian nuclear research institutes that had been under the control of Nuclebras and were intended for use in conjunction with the West German agreement. It is now the only institution in Brazil capable of directing independent nuclear development.

Brazil's perception of Argentina's development of non-safeguarded fuel-reprocessing facilities and of US opposition to Brazil's own nuclear development—especially fuel reprocessing—would very likely be used to rally other Brazilians to this group's position. [redacted]

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Sensitive Intelligence Sources and Methods Involved

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