

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional FIRST Workshop 2026

<Background/Objectives>

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) supports the Foundational Infrastructure for Responsible Use of Small Modular Reactor (SMR) Technology (FIRST) program led by the U.S. Department of the State. The FIRST program harnesses the power of the nuclear industry and innovation to advance energy security worldwide by engaging countries considering nuclear energy deployment, especially SMR technologies.

<Details>

The U.S. Department of State held the FIRST Workshop in Buenos Aires, Argentina on June 2-4, 2026 with the aim of deepening understanding of non-electric applications of SMRs and the use of AI in the nuclear field.

Over 50 participants from 10 countries - Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru attended the workshop, along with over 30 participants from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Japan representing government agencies and organizations involved in the nuclear sector.

With the cooperation of the Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships (AOTS), one representative from JICC participated in the workshop and delivered a presentation on seawater desalination, power generation, and hydrogen production using SMRs, introducing Japanese technology and expertise.

<Results>

Japan's participation in the FIRST Workshop was of significant importance in showing the support for the United States's FIRST program within a framework of international cooperation, and the U.S. side expressed its appreciation for Japan's participation. Furthermore, countries in Central and South America, where securing freshwater resources can be a major challenge, showed great interest in the presentation on seawater desalination using SMRs. Through this workshop, we established a valuable network of contacts with nuclear policy officials and other stakeholders from Latin American and Caribbean countries, while also strengthening the foundation for promoting future nuclear cooperation.



Opening Remarks by the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Mr. Christopher Yeaw



Lecture by an AOTS expert on "Hydrogen Production, Electricity Generation, and Seawater Desalination with SMR"



Group photo taken inside the turbine building at the Atucha Nuclear Power Plant