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Comments:

MINISTERS REAFFIRM THE IMPORTANCE OF ITER FOR THE WORLD'S FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS

SAINT PAUL-LEZ-DURANCE, France (6 September 2013)—Convening for a meeting at ministerial level in Saint Paul-lez-Durance, France, high-level representatives of the seven ITER Members acknowledged the progress achieved in the construction of one of the most complex scientific and engineering projects in the world today, the ITER international collaboration for fusion.

Ministerial representatives reaffirmed the importance of fusion for the world's energy future and stressed the importance of the ITER experimental device as an indispensable step on the path to the development of fusion energy—a virtually limitless and environmentally benign energy source. The participants also emphasized the role played by the ITER international partnership in defining a new model of worldwide scientific collaboration.

china

eu

india

japan

korea

russia

usa

The meeting took place on 6 September at the Headquarters of the ITER Organization at the initiative of Günther H. Oettinger, European Commissioner in charge of Energy and representative of the European Atomic Energy Community.

It was the second time in the project's history that ministerial representatives of the seven ITER Members (China, European Union, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the USA) had met. On this occasion, against a backdrop of construction work proceeding at full speed, the ministerial representatives discussed progress in the implementation of the project, recognized the challenges inherent to such a first-of-a-kind enterprise, notably as regards schedule and cost containment, and reiterated their common effort towards the successful completion of ITER.

ITER construction has been underway in Saint Paul-lez-Durance, south of France, since 2010. During the meeting Geneviève Fioraso, the French Minister of Higher Education and Research, stated, "ITER, at the same time as it addresses important societal concerns and nurtures major scientific ambition, is also working on difficult technological challenges that hold promise for the future."

As work progresses on the ITER site, the high-tech components of the tokamak fusion reactor are being manufactured by industries in the ITER Member countries. Most of the contracts have now been signed with leading industrial players; components have already begun to arrive at the ITER site and the first large components are expected on site in June 2014 in time for assembly operations to begin.

The ministerial-level representatives visited the construction site and commended ITER on progress to date. Osamu Motojima, Director-General of the ITER Organization, confirmed, "Good progress has been made possible through the enormous collaborative effort within what we call the 'Unique ITER Team'; that is, a strong partnership formed by the ITER Organization and the seven Domestic Agencies. We are grateful to the ITER Members for their confidence in us."

Commissioner Oettinger stated: “We understand that the ITER project is a historical undertaking and that intensive effort and innovative methods will be required to meet all the challenges that still lay ahead, especially the challenge of staying within a tight but realistic schedule while containing costs.”

In this context, the ITER Organization was urged by the ministerial representatives to propose an improved management plan for ITER construction, which will be implemented in close cooperation with the ITER Domestic Agencies.

BACKGROUND TO THE PRESS RELEASE

ITER—designed to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion power—will be the world's largest experimental fusion facility. Fusion is the process that powers the sun and the stars: when light atomic nuclei fuse together to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. Fusion research is aimed at developing a safe, abundant and environmentally responsible energy source.

ITER is also a first-of-a-kind global collaboration. European Union will contribute almost half of the costs of its construction, while the other six Members to this joint international venture (China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the USA), will contribute equally to the rest. The ITER project is under construction in Saint Paul-lez-Durance, in the south of France.

Photos of the Ministerial Meeting can be found at this [link](#).

More information on the ITER project can be found at: <http://www.iter.org/>