

ITER Press Release

28 March 2007

EU establishes the European Domestic Agency

The European Joint Undertaking for the ITER Fusion energy organization and the development of fusion energy has been established by the Council of the European Union at its meeting in Brussels on 27 March. The Joint Undertaking will form the European Domestic Agency that will manage the EU's contribution to ITER.

With a lifetime of 35 years, a total budget of 9.653 M Euro and based in Barcelona, Spain, the Joint Undertaking will play a major role in the EU's fusion activities:

- Provision of the contribution of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) to the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization
- Provision of Euratom's contribution to 'broader approach' activities with Japan for the rapid realisation of fusion energy
- Preparation and co-ordination of programme of activities in preparation for construction of a demonstration fusion reactor and related facilities

ITER Nominee Director General Kaname Ikeda welcomed the decision: "The EU Domestic Agency has a very large role to play in the ITER Project, and I congratulate the EU on this important progress. We hope that this organization will become operational as soon as possible, and we look forward to working with this new counterpart."

Source: EU Press Release <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

BACKGROUND TO THE NEWS RELEASE

ITER will be the world's largest experimental facility to demonstrate the scientific and technical feasibility of fusion power. It will be sited at Cadarache in the South of France. The construction costs of ITER are estimated at 5 billion Euros over ten years, most of which will be awarded in the form of contracts to industrial companies and fusion research institutions. Europe will contribute roughly half of the costs of construction, while the other six Parties to this joint international venture (Japan,

China, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, India, and the USA), will contribute equally to the rest.

Each Party will set up a Domestic Agency to organise and carry out procurement of their in-kind contributions to ITER. The Domestic Agencies will employ their own staff and have their own budget and will place contracts with suppliers. The European Joint Undertaking will be the European Domestic Agency.

Fusion is the process which 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 prototype fusion power plant that is safe and reliable, environmentally responsible and economically viable, with abundant and widespread fuel resources.

Notes for editors:

More information on the ITER project and fusion energy can be found on www.iter.org

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