

## Joint News Release

### **ITER NEGOTIATORS MEET IN SPAIN Assessment completed for three of four potential sites, growing international interest in participating**

**Barcelona, Spain, December 10, 2002** – At their Seventh Negotiations Meeting, delegations from Canada, the European Union, Japan and the Russian Federation continued their work towards the implementation of the ITER international fusion energy research project. The Meeting in Barcelona, Spain, saw progress on a number of fronts including the drafting of the Agreement to implement the project, the process for site selection, and the organization, management and staffing of the international body that would implement ITER.

Mr. Josep Piqué, Minister of Science and Technology of the Spanish Government and Mr. Antoni Gurgui, General Director of Industry of the Catalan Government, welcomed the delegates. In his opening remarks, Minister Piqué referred to Spain's recognition of the impressive scientific and technological challenge that ITER represents and how close the ITER participants are to making the dream of fusion energy come true. Minister Piqué emphasized the unconditional support of the Spanish Government and regional and local authorities for the proposal of Vandellòs as a European site for hosting ITER.

Canada advised the Negotiations Meeting that the current Canadian offer, which was the first firm proposal made by any government, was put forward in a context that has now changed. The Canadian Government indicated that in light of the competing proposals made by the European Union and Japan, it is reviewing its current offer with a view to indicating a revised position early in 2003.

The Japanese delegation reported that discussions both on the basic approaches to the safety management of ITER and on the safety regulations for hosting ITER in Japan are continuing in MEXT. An interim report is to be issued by the end of this year.

The Joint Assessment of Specific Sites (JASS) is nearing completion following last week's assessment of the European site at Cadarache, France. This followed the assessments in September, 2002 of the proposed Canadian site at Clarington, and in October, 2002 of the Japanese site at Rokkasho-mura. The last site assessment will occur later this week at the proposed European location at Vandellòs, Spain. The final report on the JASS is to be presented to the Negotiators at the upcoming February Negotiations Meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia. The participants are now beginning to develop scenarios for each of the four different site options for ITER.

The final report of the Project Board on the Coordinated Technical Activities for ITER was presented. The program's significant accomplishments were noted and the delegations thanked the Chairman of the Board Academician Evgeny Velikhov for his leadership and for the important role he played in the development of ITER. The ITER Transitional Arrangements put in place by the Participants will ensure technical and engineering continuity until the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization is established,

The delegations received expressions of interest from the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea in the ITER project and discussions are underway with both countries regarding the possible steps to join the ITER Negotiations process.

The delegates were informed by the International Team Leader that a United States mission had visited the International Team in Garching in order to discuss and assess costing issues on ITER in relation to a possible US reentry into ITER. The mission's report confirmed the soundness of the ITER cost estimates.

Further meetings are planned for the Negotiators and technical experts over the next few months. They are intended to finalize, by mid-2003, the drafting of the Agreement to implement ITER.

At the conclusion of this seventh Negotiations Meeting, the delegations welcomed the growing international interest in ITER and the support it demonstrates for proceeding with the development of fusion as a future energy source.

The eighth Negotiations Meeting will be held in St. Petersburg, Russia on February 18 - 19, 2003.

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## BACKGROUNDER

- ITER, which means “the way” in Latin, is an international fusion energy research and development project with the goal of taking the next major step in the development of fusion energy as a safe, clean and sustainable energy source for our planet. The ITER International Fusion Energy Organization is the entity that will implement ITER.
- Fusion is the energy that powers the sun and the stars. Research into fusion has been conducted since the 1950’s, and recent advances have intensified interest in the technology. It is inherently safe and clean - any change in the process will result in an immediate shutdown and no fuel waste or greenhouse emissions are produced.
- ITER would be the world’s largest international cooperative research and development project next to the space station and would be constructed for approximately \$4 B US over 10 years and operated for about the same amount over 20 years.
- The international ITER co-operation was launched in 1987. The design of ITER and building of key prototype components was completed in 2001. Negotiations began in November 2001 towards the joint implementation of the project – where it will be built, how the costs and procurement responsibilities will be shared, and how it will be managed and operated. Current ITER participants are Canada, the European Union, Japan and the Russian Federation.
- Four offers to host ITER have been submitted. The first was from Canada with an offer to host ITER at its Clarington site near Toronto, submitted on June 7, 2001. On June 5, 2002 three additional site offers were submitted, two from the European Union, one at Cadarache, France and one at Vandellòs, Spain, and one site from Japan at Rokkasho-mura in Aomori Prefecture. Under the framework of the Negotiations, a group of international experts is conducting the Joint Assessment of Specific Sites.

*The upcoming Negotiations Meeting is planned for St. Petersburg, Russia February 18 - 19, 2003.*

For more information, contact the preceding list and visit the ITER-related websites:

- [www.iter.org](http://www.iter.org)
- [www.itercanada.com](http://www.itercanada.com)
- <http://www-fusion.ciemat.es/fusion/iter/ITER-eng.html>
- <http://www-fusion-magnetique.cea.fr/>
- [www.efda.org](http://www.efda.org)
- [www.jaeri.go.jp](http://www.jaeri.go.jp)
- <http://www.pref.aomori.jp/iter/index.html>
- [www.iterru.ru](http://www.iterru.ru)
- [www.mext.go.jp](http://www.mext.go.jp)