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29th ITER Council: Steady progress despite challenges including COVID-19

ST PAUL-LEZ-DURANCE, France (18 November 2021) – The ITER Council has convened to review the performance of the ITER Project. The Council evaluated the progress of construction, manufacturing, and assembly, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project progress.

At its Twenty-Ninth Meeting on 17-18 November 2021, the ITER Council convened via remote videoconference to assess the latest progress reports and performance metrics of the ITER Project. The project has continued to progress, with respect to both Members' best efforts for delivery of components and worksite installation and assembly activities. The effects of technical challenges and the ongoing pandemic are being closely monitored, with constant attention to mitigation measures to uphold project progress. Significant experience has been gained in the course of the last two years with assembly and installation of the components received from ITER Members. In this context, the Council asked the ITER Organization to prepare a latest baseline update for consideration at its next meeting in June 2022

china

eu

india

japan

korea

russia

usa

Physical progress: The Council noted, with appreciation, the significant project achievements since its last meeting in June 2021, including continued delivery of major components and progress in machine assembly.

- The second of ITER's superconducting magnets, poloidal field (PF) coil #5, has been positioned in the tokamak pit, with fabrication of the remaining PF coils steadily progressing.
- Assembly of the first vacuum vessel sector sub-assembly is nearing completion, incorporating two associated toroidal field (TF) coils and thermal shield elements, and preparations are advanced for placing the first sub-assembly in the tokamak pit.
- The second vacuum vessel sector, the first two central solenoid modules, and eight TF coils have now been delivered to the ITER site, with four more TF coils in shipment.
- Assembly and welding are in progress on the ITER site for all 12 sectors of the cryostat top lid.
- Manufacturing of the other key components is underway in the Member's industrial enterprises.
- Major progress has been achieved on plant support systems, with completion of the cooling towers, reactive power compensation, and harmonic filtering.

ITER Member support: The Council noted that the ITER Organization and its collaboration partners are facing unprecedented pressure due to the pandemic and the difficulties encountered in manufacturing some of ITER's First-of-a-Kind components. The Council encouraged all ITER Members to meet their in-kind and in-cash commitments to enable the successful implementation of the construction strategy on schedule. The Council requested the ITER Organization and its collaboration partners to take all possible measures to ensure Fusion Power Operation in 2035 as currently planned.

Council Members reaffirmed their strong belief in the value of the ITER mission, and resolved to work together to find timely solutions to facilitate ITER's success. The Council congratulated the One-ITER Team on the commitment to effective collaboration that has put the project on the path to success.



The Council will continue to monitor project performance closely, and to provide the support needed to ensure a robust pace of achievement.

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. Europe is contributing 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), are contributing equally to the rest. The ITER Project is under construction in Saint-Paul-lez-Durance, in the south of France.

For more information on the ITER Project, visit: <http://www.iter.org/>