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30th ITER Council: continuing progress during a time of challenge and transition

ST PAUL-LEZ-DURANCE, France (16 June 2022) – The ITER Council has convened in a hybrid format to review the performance of the ITER Project. The Council evaluated the progress of construction, manufacturing, assembly, and commissioning, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project progress.

At its Thirtieth Meeting on 15-16 June 2022, the ITER Council convened to assess the latest progress reports of the ITER Project. The project has maintained steady progress, reflecting the efforts of the ITER Organization (IO) and Domestic Agencies (DAs) to succeed in the delivery of components and worksite installation and assembly activities.

Succession planning: The Council mourned the recent tragic and untimely passing of former Director-General Bernard Bigot. The Council has launched a process to select a successor, with the expectation that the new Director-General will be ready to take office as soon as possible. The Council commended the ITER senior management—including in particular Dr Eisuke Tada, appointed in the interim role of Director-General—as well as the entire IO-DA One-ITER team for their strong performance and collaboration during this challenging transitional period.

Baseline update: The Council took note of the proposed revision to the Project Baseline, presented by the IO as requested by the Council at its previous meeting in November 2021, taking into account the effects of technical challenges and the pandemic, with an emphasis on mitigation measures to maintain project progress. The Council requested the IO to further develop the proposal, in close collaboration with the DAs, aiming at approval by the ITER Council in 2023.

ASN hold point: In January 2022 the French regulator, Autorité de sûreté nucléaire (ASN), declined to release one of the regulatory “hold points” established in 2013 following approval of the ITER design. The Council took note of the IO efforts to provide additional information to address the ASN’s concerns, and asked to be kept closely apprised of progress in this matter.

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

- The first vacuum vessel sector sub-assembly, incorporating two associated toroidal field (TF) coils and thermal shield elements, has been completed and installed in the tokamak pit; and the third vacuum vessel sector has been delivered to the ITER site.
- With the completion of the cryostat top lid, all elements of the cryostat are now complete.
- The delivery of superconducting magnets now includes a total of 3 of 6 poloidal field coils, 13 of 18 toroidal field coils, and 2 of 6 central solenoid modules, with additional coils completed and ready for shipment, and with all bottom correction coils now installed.
- Major progress has been achieved on plant systems: the cooling water system has been turned over for commissioning; the cryogenics plant has completed construction and is now in



functional testing; and 100% of the equipment needed for First Plasma has been installed in the magnet conversion buildings.

ITER Member support: While noting the ongoing pressures facing the project, the Council encouraged all ITER Members to meet their in-kind and in-cash commitments to enable the successful implementation of the construction strategy. 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 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/>