

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Michel Claessens
+33 6 14 16 41 75
michel.claessens@iter.org

Comments:

TENTH ITER COUNCIL IN WASHINGTON D.C. REASSERTS THE CRITICAL NEED TO MAINTAIN PROJECT SCHEDULE WITHIN COST

WASHINGTON D.C., United States (21 June 2012) - During its tenth meeting in Washington D.C. (the first Council meeting held in the USA), the ITER Council acknowledged a number of positive advancements for the project, noting, in particular, the progress of ITER construction and licensing. The Council stressed that respecting the project schedule within cost remains a critical issue and that reported slippages need rapid correction; it also noted that the ITER Organization and the seven Domestic Agencies are working together on these corrections. Relative to schedule issues, decisions were taken regarding the manufacturing of some major ITER Tokamak components. This meeting took place in the Ronald Reagan building, which is fitting given the fact that ITER was born out of the shared vision of Secretary General Gorbachev and President Reagan at the Geneva Summit in 1985. This ITER Council was the first chaired by Dr. Hideyuki Takatsu of Japan, who began his term as ITER Council Chair on 1 January 2012.

china

eu

india

japan

korea

russia

usa

On 20 and 21 June 2012, the ITER Council, the governing body of the ITER Organization, convened for the tenth time. The Council was welcomed to the United States by Secretary of Energy Steven Chu and Representative Rush Holt, who expressed the strong US commitment to the project. The two-day meeting brought together representatives from all the seven ITER Members—China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States—under the chairmanship of Dr. Hideyuki Takatsu (Japan).

The Council noted the substantive advances of construction at the ITER site in Cadarache (France) as well as the progress made in the manufacturing of Tokamak components in all the ITER Members. The Council welcomed the completion of the Tokamak Complex Seismic Pit as all 493 anti-seismic bearings were successfully installed.

A legal framework arrangement was finalized to provide for the deployment of test blanket modules, which are a key research element of the ITER experiment. The Council welcomed the Korean participation into this research program.

The Council expressed concern over delays in the manufacturing of some major components such as the vacuum vessel. The ITER Organization presented proactive and forward-looking measures to stop further slippage; the implementation of some of these measures has already begun. The Council urged the ITER Organization to further develop and implement a complete schedule recovery strategy in close cooperation with Domestic Agencies. Council members reasserted the necessity of keeping the project well on schedule and within cost.



The Director-General of the ITER Organization, Osamu Motojima, commented during the meeting: “ITER is like a huge international train that we need to keep on the right track. In the year ahead, our most important duty is to accelerate this train through the joint efforts of the Domestic Agencies and the ITER Organization.”

The Council made several technical decisions to reinforce the ITER project’s ability to stay on schedule. The Council noted the progress made in qualifying high performance superconductors for ITER’s Central Solenoid and endorsed the timely manufacture and testing at the Switzerland-based SULTAN facility. The Council also endorsed a strategy for the cold testing for the ITER Toroidal Field Coils.

During the meeting, it was reported that 76 Procurement Arrangements have been signed to date by the ITER Organization and the respective Domestic Agencies, a figure which represents close to 80 percent of the total procurement value of ITER construction.

The ITER Organization also informed the Council that it had received an official letter on 20 June from the French nuclear regulatory authority, ASN, stating that after a thorough 18 month-examination—and taking into account all recommendations made during the examination process—the ITER Organization proposal on the operational conditions and the design of ITER fulfils the expected safety requirements at this stage of the licensing process. In the next weeks, the ASN will transmit to the French government the draft decree that authorizes the creation of the ITER facility. This is a major milestone in the ITER licensing process.

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 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 safe, abundant and environmentally responsible energy source.

ITER is also a first-of-a-kind global collaboration. Europe 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 Cadarache, in the south of France.

Photos of the Council Meeting can be found at: http://www.iter.org/gallery/pr_2012_06_ic10
More information on the ITER project can be found at: <http://www.iter.org/>