

Joint News Release

ITER NEGOTIATIONS SEE LAUNCH OF SITE ASSESSMENT PROCESS Momentum builds towards implementation of ITER

Toronto, Canada – September 18, 2002. Progress accelerated as delegations from Canada, the European Union, Japan and the Russian Federation met this week to negotiate the implementation of the ITER fusion project.

On behalf of the Honourable Herb Dhaliwal, Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, Benôit Serré, his Parliamentary Secretary, welcomed the delegates to Canada. He emphasized the importance for the world of the implementation of the ITER project and reaffirmed Canada's recognition of fusion as a promising potential energy source for the future.

A notable accomplishment was the commencement of the process for the site assessment as a group of international experts began in the framework of the Negotiations with the assessment of Canada's proposed site at Clarington. The next assessments will be of the Japanese site at Rokkasho-mura in October and of the European sites at Cadarache in France and Vandellos in Spain in December.

Also of significance was the agreement on arrangements for the transitional phase towards the possible joint implementation of ITER in 2003. These arrangements would be under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), represented at the Negotiations meeting by Dr. Robert E.H. Clark. Dr. Clark noted the IAEA is pleased to offer its continuing support.

In addition, significant progress was made on the full range of other issues including matters such as the treaty to implement ITER (the Joint Implementation Agreement) and organizational structure.

Japan provided a formal document of the site proposal of Rokkasho-mura at this meeting and explained its excellent characteristics for ITER site. Representatives of Aomori prefecture stated that Aomori welcomes the opportunity to offer a site for ITER as well as the Negotiators' visit scheduled in coming October.

Over the next few months, the negotiators and technical experts have a full slate of meetings in Japan, Spain, France, and the Russian Federation with a view to finalizing the Joint Assessment of Specific Sites by early next year and completing the drafting of the Joint Implementation Agreement by mid-2003.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the delegations were unanimous in expressing their optimism at the substantial progress made on the issues critical to the implementation of the ITER project, in particular the successful beginning to the process for the Joint Assessment of Specific Sites.

The next meeting of the negotiators will be held in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, Japan on October 29 - 30, 2002.

In addition, Japan invited all delegations to attend the International ITER Forum to be held on the 31st of October hosted by Aomori Prefecture. The ITER Symposium, which is hosted by Japan Federation of Economic Organizations, will be held in Tokyo on the 1st of November.

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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.
- 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 Vandellós, Spain, and one site from Japan at Rokkasho-mura in Aomori Prefecture.

Upcoming Negotiations Meetings in 2002 are planned for Rokkasho-mura, Japan October 29-30 and Barcelona ,Spain December 9-10 (to be confirmed).

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

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