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Associated Press

**EU Expected to Offer Japan Bigger Role**

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**EU Expected to Offer Japan Bigger Role in Operating Planned Multinational Nuclear-Fusion Reactor**

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) -- The European Union will offer Japan a larger role in operating a planned multinational nuclear-fusion reactor in an effort to end the dispute over the planned facility's location, an EU official said Tuesday.

EU Research Commissioner Louis Michel is scheduled to present the EU's latest plans for reaching an agreement at a news conference later Tuesday.

The EU-Japanese disagreement has hobbled the progress of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor, or ITER.

The project is to build the world's first nuclear fusion plant. The EU and Japan along with the United States, Russia, South Korea and China plan to join forces to research uses of fusion energy to create clean, long-term renewable energy.

Europe wants to locate the facility in Cadarache, a town in southern France, with the backing of Russia and China. Japan is pushing to build it in the village of Rokkoshu, in the northern part of the country's main island. The United States and South Korea support the Japanese location.

Talks in Vienna last week failed to produce an agreement with Japan.

If no agreement can be found, the EU has warned it may try forge a new alliance for a French-based facility with countries other than Japan, the United States and South Korea. Possibilities include India and Canada.

EU ministers are likely to discuss next steps when they meet November 26.

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