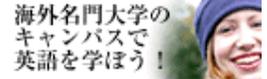


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Japan wants ITER data center in France, reactor in Japan

PARIS (Kyodo) Japan suggested Friday that a data analysis and remote control center for an international nuclear fusion project should be built in France -- and that the fusion reactor itself should be built in Japan.

Japanese Ambassador to France Hiroshi Hirabayashi proposed in the French daily Le Monde that the data and control center for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor be located in Cadarache, southern France, and the reactor based in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture.

In Friday's article, run under a headline translated as "Let's not fight over ITER," Hirabayashi stressed that international cooperation is vital to the project's success.

Referring to recent remarks by French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, who said Europe may go ahead with the project on its own, Hirabayashi questioned whether France was really up to the task without any international cooperation.

In the article, the ambassador claimed it is widely recognized by the world's scientists that Japan has more scientific studies and experience in fusion than France.

He also said that the 96 km of road between Cadarache and the nearest viable port, near Marseille, would pose transportation problems with regard to huge precision instruments used at the plant.

He said that France has failed to clarify its plans to improve the roads, including road-widening plans, the reinforcement of 26 bridges, and detours for existing tunnels.

The six parties involved in the ITER project have been unable to agree on where the world's first prototype nuclear fusion reactor should be located. They met in Washington in December, but failed to reach an accord.

The Japan Times: Jan. 24, 2004

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