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Japan, EU, others to discuss nuclear fusion reactor next week

Japan, the European Union and four other countries will hold a deputy ministerial meeting in Vienna next week to discuss where they will build the world's first prototype nuclear fusion reactor, Japan's science ministry said Tuesday.

Officials from Japan, the European Union, the United States, Russia, China and South Korea, which are together working on the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project will meet next Tuesday, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology said.

The six parties have made no major headway on the ITER project since they met in June. It remains to be seen whether the next round of meetings will yield a decision on the location.

The United States and South Korea support Japan hosting the reactor, while Russia and China are in favor of having it in the European Union.

Some EU officials are believed to have said the European Union should go it alone in building a nuclear fusion reactor in the region if next week's meeting does not produce any agreement.

In the last meeting in June, Japan proposed that it host the project in the northeastern village of Rokkasho, while the European Union selected the southern French town of Cadarache as its candidate.

The ITER project is aimed at creating the world's first sustained nuclear fusion reaction, similar to the energy-producing process taking place constantly in the sun.

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