

Spain offers a total of 900 Millions

Spain proposes to double her contribution to host ITER, the experimental fusion reactor.

The prime minister Jose Maria Aznar has informed the president of the European commission Romani Prodi and the rotating presidency of the European Union, held by Italy, that Spain will double its contribution to host ITER from the 450 million Euros agreed so far to 900 million Euros.

The science and technology minister, Juan Costa, stated that Spain is now willing to contribute 20% of the ITER construction costs (4500 million Euros) instead of the 10% to which the government initially agreed in order to host this international nuclear fusion project.

With this offer the government reiterates their commitment to this project and guarantees its viability, Costa said. He also indicated that the government expects the European Union take into account this Spanish financial commitment in the final selection of the European ITER site.

The European Union will decide on the 27th of November on the European ITER site between France, with the Cadarache site, and Spain with Vandellos.

The Spanish government has proposed that the EU submits the two ITER European sites to the final international selection but the rest of the EU members and the European Commission prefer to submit only one European ITER site and, thus, it is expected that the European Council of Ministers will have to decide the European site by a majority vote if there is no agreement on a single site before.

ITER is an international consortium whose members are the EU, with a participation between 10 and 30% of the project budget, USA, Canada, Japan, Russia, China, and South Korea. This consortium must decide in December, in a meeting scheduled to take place in Washington, which country will host ITER, the largest nuclear fusion project for which besides the EU there are other two hosting offers from Japan and Canada.

ITER is a project designed to develop the technologies to be used in the production of energy from the fusion of hydrogen nuclei.

The selection of Vandellos as the ITER site will bring to this area 1000 ~2000 highly qualified scientists and the creation of 100000 jobs along the next 30 years.