



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

From : The Commission
To : Delegations
Subject : ITER
- Information from the Commission

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Commission services on the above-mentioned topic.

ITER

Information note from the Commission services

The Council of the European Union (General Affairs and External Relations) adopted conclusions on the next steps in the ITER project, on 16 November 2009.¹ These served as guidance for the Commission at the ITER Council (IC-5, 18-19 November 2009).

Before IC-5, the European delegation undertook a series of visits to the ITER Parties, in which the above mentioned guidance was conveyed, as was the reasoning behind Europe's actions and the possible paths for solutions.

At the IC-5 Council, the European delegation refused to support the Scenario 1 schedule for construction proposed by the ITER Organization (IO). As expected, this stance was strongly challenged by many of the ITER international partners. Despite this opposition, agreement was reached that an updated scenario should be prepared by the IO, by the end of February 2010. This updated scenario should be more realistic and at the same time capable of better mitigating potential risks, especially those arising in the early construction phase (the so-called critical path). This new scenario should be the subject of examination during an extraordinary ITER Council meeting currently foreseen for March 2010. This examination should allow for the possible adoption of the ITER Baseline (scope, schedule, and cost) at the ordinary ITER Council of June 2010. The European delegation agreed to look for possible ways to reasonably accelerate its planned activities concerning the ITER buildings.

Regarding the IO's cost estimates, the independent assessment panel led by Dr Briscoe presented its final report at IC-5, noting the continued good progress. The report also points out that the IO's current cost estimates are "*much more soundly based*" than previous figures. Nevertheless, it considers that there is still room for further optimization and that IO cost estimates could be accepted at 10% less than currently proposed.

¹ Docs. 15815/09 (limité), 15815/09 ADD 1 (Restreint UE), and 15818/09 (limité), the latter containing a statement from the Commission.

The outcome of the management assessment of the IO was also discussed at IC-5 on the basis of an extensive report produced by Prof. Namkung (Korea). The report includes a broad range of far reaching recommendations touching *inter alia* on the top management and the organizational structure. It did not prove possible to reach decisions on these issues at the meeting. Nonetheless, a group has now been set up to build consensus on possible actions to be taken by the ITER Council. The mandate of this group sets the end of December 2009 as the deadline for submitting the corresponding proposals.

As regards the European contribution, the management assessment of the European Joint Undertaking "*Fusion For Energy*" calls for radical changes to its organisation and culture for it to be in a position to fulfil the Euratom obligations towards ITER. The Commission already started working on the necessary changes, to be implemented as soon as possible. Close cooperation with the Member States will be essential for successful implementation of these necessary changes, particularly in some areas.

On the assessment of the existing cost estimates for the construction of the ITER buildings, an Expert Group was created. It is composed of five experts from the Member States and two from the Commission. The final report is expected before mid-December. It will then be distributed to the Member States.

A group has also been set up within the Commission to explore funding possibilities for ITER construction. This group is expected to report to the Member States early next year.