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## *31<sup>st</sup> ITER Council: ITER project addressing challenges*

***ST PAUL-LEZ-DURANCE, France (17 November 2022) – The ITER Council has convened to review the performance of the ITER Project. The Council evaluated the progress of construction, manufacturing, assembly, and commissioning, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain challenges on project progress.***

At its thirty-first Meeting on 16-17 November 2022, the new Director-General reported on the progress of the ITER Project, reflecting the efforts of the ITER Organization (IO) and Domestic Agencies (DAs) to succeed in the delivery of components and worksite installation and assembly activities. The Director-General has started an assessment of the ITER Project, which has identified several areas to address further.

Physical progress: The Council noted, with appreciation, the continuing physical progress, both onsite and in Member facilities:

- Ongoing fabrication and delivery of First-of-a-Kind components, including most recently the departure for shipment of Poloidal Field Coil #1;
- Ongoing installation of plant support systems, including the installation of all magnet conversion equipment required for First Plasma, and the initiation of subsystem commissioning for the cryogenics facility and cooling water plant; and
- Ongoing onsite construction works, including substantial progress on the tritium building, the control building, and civil works for the neutral beam facility.

Technical challenges: The Council noted the need to address a number of concerns related to First-of-a-Kind components. In particular, recent results from analysis of key components indicated the need for extensive repairs. The Council urged the Director-General to assess the impacts of these setbacks and commence the necessary repair work as soon as possible. In addition, the Council urged the ITER Organization and Domestic Agencies to work together to ensure an appropriate project-wide quality culture to prevent any recurrence of such issues.

Regulatory questions: The Council noted the ongoing efforts to address remaining questions of the French regulator, Autorité de sûreté nucléaire (ASN). The Council welcomed the intention of the Director-General to ensure technically correct and transparent communication to ASN to address these issues effectively, and asked to be kept closely apprised of progress in this matter.

Baseline update: The Council accepted the Director-General's recommendation to establish an updated project baseline after a comprehensive assessment and development of a corrective plan. The successful accomplishment of these actions will allow the ITER Organization to make a solid estimation of the new timeline and cost to complete the construction of the project.

ITER Member support: Council Members reaffirmed their strong belief in the value of the ITER mission, and resolved to work together to find timely solutions to facilitate ITER's success. The Council noted the ongoing pressures facing the project and encouraged all ITER Members to meet



their in-kind and in-cash commitments to enable implementation of the construction, installation and assembly strategy.

## **BACKGROUND TO THE PRESS RELEASE**

ITER—designed to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion power—will be the world's largest experimental fusion facility. Fusion is the process that powers the Sun and the stars: when light atomic nuclei fuse together to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. Fusion research is aimed at developing a safe, abundant and environmentally responsible energy source.

ITER is also a first-of-a-kind global collaboration. Europe is contributing almost half of the costs of its construction, while the other six Members to this joint international venture (China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the USA), are contributing equally to the rest. The ITER Project is under construction in Saint-Paul-lez-Durance, in the south of France.

For more information on the ITER Project, visit: <http://www.iter.org/>