

In addition to the Committee, the structure for the Arrangements shall also comprise a Nominee Director General, assisted by his TPT and the Participant Teams (PT).

Each Participant shall contribute staff to the TPT. The TPT should have the capability of assisting the Nominee Director General in the exercise of his responsibilities and functions. The TPT shall be located at one or more sites for joint technical work so designated by the Committee. Following consensus on site preference, the Participant on whose territory the site is located shall present to the Committee proposals to establish a designated site for joint technical work at the preferred site.

Each Participant shall establish its own Team and designate a PT Leader that shall act as a single point of contact with the Nominee Director General for the purpose of ensuring the coherence of the Project. The Participant Teams will undertake technical tasks assigned to them in the agreed Work Programme.

Providing auspices for the ITER Transitional Arrangements, the IAEA will, in addition, undertake assistance functions to the ITA, as agreed between the Participants and the IAEA. These functions will include, inter alia, publication of ITER ITA documents and technical reports and the monthly Newsletter; providing assistance in the organization of ITER meetings and in ensuring rapid communications between individual Participant Teams.

UNITED STATES REJOIN ITER

by Dr. M. Roberts, US Contact Person for ITER Negotiations

Upon pressure from the United States Congress, the US Department of Energy had to withdraw from further American participation in the ITER Engineering Design Activities after the end of its commitment to the EDA in July 1998. In the years since that time, changes have taken place in both the ITER activity and the US fusion community's position on burning plasma physics. Reflecting the interest in the United States in pursuing burning plasma physics, the DOE's Office of Science commissioned three studies as part of its examination of the option of entering the Negotiations on the Agreement on the Establishment of the International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project. These were a National Academy Review Panel Report supporting the burning plasma mission; a Fusion Energy Sciences Advisory Committee (FESAC) report confirming the role of ITER in achieving fusion power production, and "The Lehman Review of the ITER project costing and project management processes (for the latter one, see ITER CTA Newsletter, no. 15, December 2002). All three studies have endorsed the US return to the ITER activities.

For instance, the Lehman Committee Report was uniformly positive using expressions like "...the ITER Team has prepared a complete cost estimate that is based on sound management and engineering principles ..." and "The credibility of such a value estimate is supported by the design and R&D results that are unusually mature for a science project facing the decision to fund construction."

As recent as 28 January, five key members of the US Congress House Science Committee wrote to the Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham: "We urge you to send a clear message to the ITER community that the US plans to participate in the Negotiations and the subsequent design, construction and operation of the facility."

Based on its analysis of the situation, and responding to all these and similar opinions and views expressed in the United States, the White House released on 30 January a statement by the President, in which it was said:

"I am pleased to announce that the United States will join ITER, an ambitious international research project to harness the promise of fusion energy. The results of ITER will advance the effort to produce clean, safe, renewable and commercially available fusion energy by the middle of this century. Commercialization of fusion has the potential to dramatically improve America's energy security while significantly reducing air pollution and emissions of greenhouse gases."

This historical decision was announced by DOE Secretary Abraham during his remarks to employees of the Department's Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory.

The United States will be working with the other Participants in the ITER Negotiations on the Agreement and is preparing to participate in the ITA.

As Secretary Abraham said in his remarks, the US proposes to provide a number of hardware components for ITER construction, to be involved in the project construction management and to participate in the ITER scientific research and technology development. The nature and details of the US participation and contributions would be determined during the negotiations. DOE's Office of Science, which has extensive experience in large, international programs, will lead US negotiations on ITER.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA JOINS ITER **by Prof. HUO Yuping, Zhengzhou University, People's Republic of China**

The People's Republic of China is the largest developing country with a projected population of 1.6 - 2 billion people and an energy consumption growing from the current 1.3 Billion Tons Coal Equivalent (TCE) to more than 4 Billion TCE by 2050. This large demand needs to be accommodated in a sustainable way, requiring energy generation in an environmentally friendly way. Fusion is one of the most promising candidates to solve this important issue.

This explains why in the second half of 2002, the ITER Participants' delegations to the ITER Negotiations received expression of interest from the People's Republic of China in the possibility of Chinese participation in ITER, including joining the ongoing Negotiations.

Subsequently, the exchange of views on that matter was the subject of an informal meeting of the ITER Parties' legal experts with Chinese representatives held in Beijing on 25-26 November 2002. As a follow-up to this meeting, it was decided at the Seventh ITER Negotiations Meeting (Barcelona, 9-10 December 2002) to agree to the Chinese request to be given a copy of the seventh draft agreement, taking into account the PRC's commitment to join the ITER Negotiations.

In January 2003, an official technical delegation from the ITER International Team and Participant Teams visited China's plasma physics laboratories and relevant industries in Beijing, Hefei, Cheng-du and Xi'an. The visitors were impressed by the dynamism and optimism shown by all the scientists met and by their strong wish to participate in ITER. It should be noted that the history of fusion in China goes back to the 1950's when Magnetic Confinement Fusion research was first started at the Institute of Atomic Energy in Beijing.

Equipment and methods in use in the laboratories and industries visited were similar to those in the more developed countries. In particular, quality assurance programmes were implemented in a manner that already satisfies European and Japanese customers. It was clear that the Chinese would be able to make an in-kind contribution of satisfactory quality to ITER construction.

The speed with which the Chinese authorities had made their decision to participate in the ITER Negotiations was impressive. The Prime Minister and the State Council had already confirmed their decision to apply to join ITER as soon as possible, and Mr. Xu Guanhua, Chinese Minister of Science and Technology, wrote on behalf of his government, on 10 January 2003, to the four heads of delegation in the ITER Negotiations, requesting that China participate in the present ITER Negotiations, pointing out that China intends to provide a substantial contribution to the Project, comparable to what is currently envisaged by some of the participants in the present Negotiations.

Therefore, a Chinese delegation will participate in the forthcoming Eighth Meeting of the Negotiators in St. Petersburg in February.