

United States Department of Energy

In addition to activities under the S&T Agreement, the U.S. and China continue to collaborate through multilateral forums such as the ITER. This partnership has begun work on the International Thermal Nuclear Reactor to demonstrate the feasibility of fusion as a future source of energy.

The USG and its partners are finishing negotiations on a Joint Implementation Agreement (JIA) in April 2006 for initialing the text in May 2006. This will allow construction to begin later in 2006 and operation of the ITER project from 2013. Finalization within FY2006 of the JIA and its subsidiary documents is necessary to maintain momentum and financing, the latter to conform with Congressional expectations for review of the JIA and for funding in the current budget cycle. The present draft JIA provides for effective and efficient management of this long-term project, including workable cost-sharing plans and related rules for ITER decision making.

Once the JIA is finalized, it divides the project into four phases -- Construction Phase FY 2006-2013, Operation Phase FY 2013-2033, Deactivation Phase FY2034-2038 and Decommissioning by the EU in FY 2038. The USG will contribute 10% of Construction, 13% of Operations, and 10% of Deactivation costs. OMB has capped USG Construction Phase funding at \$1.122 billion from FY2006 to FY2013.

Next Steps

Japan's Kaname Ikeda was designated ITER's Director General Nominee, and will be putting together the ITER organization staffing and structure as soon as the JIA negotiations are finished in April and the text finalized in May. Director General Nominee Ikeda has already begun work with the ITER interim skeleton staff to establish the main office in Cadarache, France, on the ITER reactor site and to work with the IAEA and France's nuclear and local agencies on the various authorizations needed. The ITER negotiators will end negotiations at Tokyo April 1-3, and there will be a ministerial-level initialing of the draft JIA at Brussels May 24. Final signing of the JIA is slated for fall 2006 after each partner has completed its internal ratification process.