Supplementary Research Programme for the ITER project (2014-2018)

2011/0460(NLE) - 10/06/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Vladimir REMEK (GUE/NGL, CZ) on the proposal for a Council decision on the adoption of a Supplementary Research Programme for the ITER project (2014-2018).

The committee gives a favourable opinion on the Commission proposal as amended:

Financing: Members consider that the **Programme should be funded through the Union's own resources** as opposed to Member State contributions as proposed by the Commission.

According to the committee, the Programme shall be financed through a maximum contribution of EUR 2 573 000 000 (in current values) **over and above the ceilings of the Multiannual Financial Framework** (MFF), namely outside Heading 1A, and in addition to the budget for the Horizon 2020 programme, the EURATOM framework programme or other Union programmes, while maintaining the full powers of both arms of the budgetary authority.

The report proposes that the MFF regulation should set a **ring-fenced maximum amount for contributions from the Union budget for the years 2014-2018**. Any cost overruns above this maximum amount shall not have any impact on the budgetary allocations for other projects and shall be financed through additional resources over and above the ceilings as appropriate.

Protection of EU financial interests: Members calls on the Commission to put in place appropriate measures ensuring **adequate risk control** and the avoidance of cost overruns.

Given the magnitude and the past considerable shortcomings of the ITER project **close scrutiny by the European Parliament** will be required in its capacity as budgetary authority and discharge authority, and the Commission shall inform the European Parliament of the development of the Programme, in particular in terms of costs and schedule, on a regular basis.

The results of such audits, on-the-spot checks and inspections shall be forwarded to the European Parliament.

Scientific and technical objective: the report states that the priorities proposed in the 2012 EFDA *(European Fusion Development Agreement)* should be taken into account in order to ensure that ITER will play a key role in the energy transition.

The demonstration of competitive electricity production by 2050 must be ensured. In response to that target, the Commission shall review the Programme regularly and produce a progress report on an annual basis in response to physics, technological, budgetary and safety challenges.

Harnessing fusion energy is a significant challenge and in order to best meet some of this challenge, it is essential that the Union makes every effort to **support and exploit the efforts of the Joint European Taurus (JET) facility** in order to help bridge any knowledge or experience gap.

Implementation: the Commission shall submit a mid-term review of the progress of the Programme to the European Parliament and the Council for their opinion before 30 June 2016.