



Brussels, 12.2.2014
C(2014) 765 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion on the proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision 2007/198/Euratom of the Council establishing the European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy and conferring advantages upon it {COM(2013) 607 final}.

The Commission acknowledges the position of the Bundesrat which rejects the Commission's proposal to fund the ITER project for the period 2014-2020 from the EU budget and asks for the EU to withdraw from the financing of the project and the ITER agreement.

The Commission is aware of the inherent challenges of ITER which is a first-of-a-kind project, a complex international endeavour both from a technological and managerial point of view.

As Representative of Euratom both in the ITER Council and in the Fusion for Energy Governing Board, the Commission constantly monitors the budgetary aspects of the project and, in line with the concerns expressed by the Bundesrat, calls for an active policy approach both at the level of the European Domestic Agency and at international level to address cost risks and mitigate cost escalations with corresponding savings wherever possible.

Nonetheless the Commission reiterates, in line with the positions expressed by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, the important role played by fusion research, and by the ITER project in particular, towards a full decarbonisation of the global energy landscape. European funds deployed in ITER and fusion research shall therefore not be considered as alternative but as complementary to the funding of other sustainable energy sources and of storage and energy transmission technologies.

Finally, the Commission would like to highlight that a large part of the funding for ITER, half of which has already been committed, is allocated to the procurement of industrial components never built before, providing European industry with the possibility to develop its know-how in highly specialized technologies and generating important spin-off opportunities well beyond the nuclear industry sector.

*Mr Stephan WEIL
President of the Bundesrat
Leipziger Straße 3 - 4
D - 10117 BERLIN*

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns raised in the Opinion and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Bundesrat in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*