EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 11.4.2018
C(2018) 2016 final

Mr Michael MÜLLER
President of the Bundesrat
Leipziger Straße 3 - 4
D – 10117 BERLIN

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion on the proposal for a Council Regulation on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2019-2020) complementing the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation {COM (2017) 698 final}.

Euratom research activities in nuclear fission as proposed by the Commission are limited to safety and security aspects, in line with the position adopted by the Bundesrat. In this sense, the current proposal follows from its immediate predecessor, the 2014-2018 Euratom programme, aiming at reducing safety risks and risks associated with the various radiation exposures from industrial or medical applications and supporting emergency preparedness for accidents involving radiation. The scope and objectives of the programme were refocussed on these areas following a compromise reached in the Council after the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011. German researchers have benefitted from this approach, securing no less than one fifth of the available Euratom funding since 2014.

Germany, with the largest share (approximately one third) of the Member States' contributions to EUROfusion[1], is also the most important fusion research actor in Europe. German research institutes and industry play a leading role in the development of components and techniques at the cutting edge of fusion research and innovation and in providing access to facilities such as Asdex-Upgrade in Munich and Weldenstein-7X in Greifswald. Research on superconductors at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology has been instrumental in European market leadership in Nuclear Magnetic Resonance[2] instruments resulting from the development of the magnets for the fusion programme. The testing and analysis facilities at the Forschungszentrum Jülich are important assets in the programme, providing significant data and support for the EUROfusion effort on the design of the next generation of electricity-producing fusion facilities.

---

[1] EUROfusion is a consortium of 30 beneficiaries from all Member States except Luxemburg and Malta and including Switzerland and the Ukraine. It has the mandate of implementing the European Roadmap to electricity from fusion energy in the second half of this century. The Max-Planck-Institut für Plasmaphysik is the European coordinator for this first of a kind European Joint Programme.

[2] Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy is essential for materials and life sciences research. German industry has a 78% leadership in this ~ EUR 1 billion market.

In conclusion, with its focus on safety aspects and with its leadership in the EUROfusion programme, Germany can be considered as an important actor in nuclear research in Europe.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President

Carlos Moedas
Member of the Commission