Department of Energy Press Release

July 13, 2004

U.S. ITER Project Office will be Located at Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Energy announced today that the U.S. project office for ITER, a major international fusion experiment, will be located at Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL). PPPL is located on Princeton University's James Forrestal Campus in Plainsboro, NJ, and is charged with developing the scientific understanding and key innovations that will lead to an attractive fusion energy source.

PPPL, in partnership with DOE's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), will be responsible for overseeing the U.S. ITER Project Office and providing it with the requisite staffing and facilities.

"The United States and our international partners are in talks to launch ITER, a critically important experiment to test the feasibility of nuclear fusion as a source of electricity and hydrogen," Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham said.

"Throughout its history, Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory has earned a reputation for the highest-quality science and top-flight management," Secretary Abraham said. "Ever since fusion research began at Princeton University in 1951, our nation and the world have looked to this facility's researchers for scientific and engineering insights that will enable mankind to realize the benefits of fusion, the energy that powers the stars and the sun."

"That is why I am pleased to announce that, after careful review, we have selected the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory/Oak Ridge National Laboratory partnership to run the U.S. ITER Project Office," Secretary Abraham said. "I am confident that our partners in the ITER negotiations will recognize our choice of PPPL/ORNL to manage the U.S. participation in ITER for what it is: the clearest possible indication that our Nation takes ITER – and our role in ITER – very seriously."

The U.S. ITER Project Office at PPPL will be responsible for project management of U.S. activities to support construction of this international research facility. These will include securing technical assistance from the U.S. fusion community; procuring and shipping U.S. hardware contributions; arranging for U.S. personnel to work abroad at the ITER site; representing the U.S. with the international ITER organization on construction and preparation for ITER operations; and coordinating and integrating the U.S. fusion community's ITER project activities with the international ITER project.

The PPPL/ORNL proposal was one of three proposals submitted by DOE national laboratories to lead the Project Office. The two other proposals were from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory. The applications were reviewed by a merit review committee, which was appointed on April 12 by Dr. Raymond L. Orbach, Director of the Office of Science. The committee was comprised of six members – five current senior DOE federal officials and one retiree, who were selected for their experience overseeing complex projects. The panel included legal advice. The review panel conducted a rigorous, objective and fair

review of the three proposals and forwarded their evaluations to Dr. Orbach, who made the final selection.

On January 30, 2003, President Bush announced that the U.S. was joining the negotiations for the construction and operation of the international magnetic fusion experiment ITER. There are two competing sites to host the $5 billion test bed for harnessing nuclear fusion to generate electricity. The European Union has selected Cadarache, France, as its candidate site; Japan's contender is Rokkasho. The U.S. supports the Japanese site.

The ITER international fusion experiment was priority one in *Facilities for the Future of Science: A Twenty-Year Outlook*, a proposed portfolio of 28 new facilities and upgrades of current facilities that Secretary Abraham released in November 2003 to serve as a roadmap for future scientific facilities to support DOE's basic science and research mission and to help the Department plan its future scientific investments.

A fusion power plant would produce no greenhouse gas emissions, use abundant and widely distributed sources of fuel, shut down easily, require no fissionable materials, operate in a continuous mode to meet demand, and produce manageable radioactive waste.

Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory is a collaborative national center for plasma and fusion science. PPPL is managed by Princeton University for the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Science. The lab's web site address is **www.pppl.gov.**

Oak Ridge National Laboratory is the Department of Energy's largest science and energy laboratory. It is an international leader in a range of scientific areas that support DOE's mission in the Office of Science, and it manages a major fusion energy sciences program. ORNL is managed by a partnership of the University of Tennessee and Battelle, and is located in Oak Ridge, TN. The lab's web site address is **www.ornl.gov**.

The Office of Fusion Energy Sciences in DOE's Office of Science conducts the Nation's basic research program to broaden our understanding of fusion energy science and to harness this energy source for the production of hydrogen and electricity.

DOE's Office of Science is the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the Nation, manages 10 world-class national laboratories and builds and operates some of the Nation's most advanced R&D user facilities. More information about the office is available at **www.science.doe.gov.**

Media contact: Jeff Sherwood, 202/586-5806

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