Press release | 24.03.2015

ITER nuclear fusion project

MEPs' concerns with ITER budget underline need to pull the plug

The European Parliament's lead budgetary control committee refused to recommend granting a discharge (1) to the EU budget line for the ITER nuclear fusion project in a vote yesterday evening. The report voted by the committee highlighted concerns with cost overruns, delays and mismanagement. Commenting after the vote, Green budgetary transparency spokesperson **Igor Soltes** said:

"The ITER nuclear fusion project is a costly white elephant for which the European taxpayer is being left to foot the bill. MEPs have today raised serious concerns with the project, which relies on the EU budget for a large proportion of its funding (2). Citing concerns about further future cost overruns, delays, mismanagement in the ITER agency and the negative impact on other EU budget lines, MEPs have refused to grant a discharge to the EU budget line on ITER.

"*Beyond these serious question marks about the budget for ITER and how the project is run, there is the inescapable reality that nuclear fusion is a pipe dream. Even if the disappointing ITER project were to produce some results in the medium-term, we would remain decades away from commercial application. In the meantime, ITER is diverting funds from home-grown and immediately actionable sustainable energy technologies in the energy efficiency and renewables sectors. It is time to finally pull the plug on ITER and hopefully this vote marks the first important step on this path."*

(1) The European Parliament is responsible for granting discharge to the annual EU budget. Where concerns about budgetary irregularities are raised, MEPs may withhold or postpone the discharge of sections of the budget. The EP's budgetary control committee is the responsible committee, which forwards its recommendation to plenary. Today's vote was on the discharge of the 2013 budget. More on the annual budget discharge:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/20150201PVL00005/Budgetary-powers

(2) Over 1/3 of the funding for the ITER nuclear fusion project comes from the EU budget, with the remainder from EU member states and the other participating countries (China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the USA).

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Responsible MEPs



Igor Šoltes

Member

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