



IP(86) 614

**PRESSE-MEDELDELSE • MITTEILUNG AN DIE PRESSE • PRESS-RELEASE • INFORMATION A LA PRESSE
ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΤΥΠΟ • INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA • MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

EMBARGO: 17.00 hrs

Brussels, 15 December 1986

**COMMISSION SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH USA
ON CONTROLLED THERMONUCLEAR FUSION**

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Vice-President Karl-Heinz NARJES and Mr. John William MIDDENDORF II, US Ambassador to the European Community, today signed an agreement for cooperation between the Community and the United States in the field of controlled thermonuclear fusion.

"The conclusion of this agreement is further proof of the Community's increasing role in research and technology", declared Mr. NARJES. "The Community's Fusion Programme shows quite clearly the benefits which EC Member States can draw from pooling their resources at the Community level. The Council of Research Ministers should bear this in mind at their next meeting. A satisfactory decision must now be reached on the Community's 1987-1991 framework programme for research and technological development if Europe wants to maintain and reinforce its position in key R&D sectors".

Research into thermonuclear fusion is of major importance, irrespective of short-term fluctuations in the price of oil. Fusion has significant long-term potential as a virtually inexhaustible and economically competitive source of energy, with only a limited environmental impact. Also, because of its demand for high technology, fusion research is already stimulating other branches of science and industry.

With this new framework agreement - the first that the Community (under the EURATOM Treaty) has concluded with another large fusion programme - the two parties will reinforce a long tradition of cooperation in this field. The similarity in the strategies of the two programmes, and the complementary nature of a number of their constituent actions, make tangible cooperation highly desirable.

This cooperation will extend to research on experimental fusion machines, including the existing large "tokamak" projects, and activities relating to those of the next generation, and magnetic fusion technology. It will include the exchange of specialists, materials and instruments, and the execution of joint projects.

Today's signature will give a quick start to several important cooperative actions, including an American participation in terms of qualified personnel and substantial hardware in the Joint European Torus (JET) near Oxford in the UK, and the TORE-SUPRA, the largest superconducting tokamak in the world, currently under construction at Cadarache in France.