

DOE News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 28, 2005

NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS:
Jason Van Buren, 202/586-4940

Bush Administration Moves Forward to Develop Next Generation Nuclear Energy Systems

WASHINGTON, DC—The Bush Administration today took a major step in advancing international efforts to develop the next generation of clean, safe nuclear energy systems. Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman joined representatives from Canada, France, Japan, and the United Kingdom to sign the first multilateral agreement in history aimed at the development of next generation nuclear energy systems. The work of the Generation IV International Forum (GIF) is essential to advancing an important component of the Bush Administration's comprehensive energy strategy in the development of next generation nuclear energy technologies.

"Each of our nations recognizes that developing new nuclear power technologies will be indispensable in meeting our growing energy needs and support continued economic growth. This research agreement will accelerate an international effort to develop Generation IV nuclear energy systems nuclear energy technology that will be safer, more reliable, cost-effective, and more proliferation-resistant than any technology available today," said Secretary Bodman.

The GIF partners have identified six next generation technologies for development including: the Gas Cooled Fast Reactor; the Sodium Fast Reactor; the Lead-Cooled Fast Reactor; the Molten Salt Reactor; the Supercritical Water Reactor; and the Very High Temperature Reactor. The last technology concept forms the basis of the U.S. research program to develop an ultra-safe, economic nuclear system that will be designed to produce electricity and hydrogen with substantially less waste and without emitting air pollutants or greenhouse gases.

The Framework Agreement signed today allows participating countries to go beyond coordination of research and to begin conducting joint research projects all over the world. This agreement will allow the United States and other GIF member countries to carry out their research and development programs more effectively by leveraging the resources and expertise of the international research community.

Through other practical common-sense policies the Bush Administration is working to balance America's energy needs with environmental stewardship. Policies aimed at improving air quality include proposals to significantly cut the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions; \$4 billion in tax incentives to spur the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficient technologies such as hybrid and fuel cell vehicles; residential solar heating systems; and energy produced from landfill gas, wind, and biomass. In addition the Administration is working with farmers and ranchers to restore millions of acres of wetlands, protect habitats, conserve water, and improve streams and rivers.

The Generation IV International Forum is composed of 11 countries including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, France, Japan, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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