

Russia Joins Fourth-Generation Nuclear Reactor Project

The world is getting smaller in the nuclear trade.

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Russia will join an international project on the development of fourth-generation nuclear reactors, the country Federal Nuclear Power Agency Rosatom said on Friday, July 14.

“The political group of the Generation IV Forum (GIF) unanimously voted during a meeting on July 13, 2006 in Washington to accept Russia to this international organization,” Rosatom’s press service said in a statement that was quoted by RIA Novosti.

The GIF is an 11-member nuclear energy research and development consortium established in January 2000 to develop innovative nuclear energy system concepts to meet future energy challenges. GIF members include Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Euratom, France, Japan, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the U.S., with the OECD-Nuclear Energy Agency and the IAEA as permanent observers.

Russia is expected to sign the GIF Charter in two months to have the right to participate in all political, organizational and project-development events conducted by the organization, the statement said.

“This event, on the one hand, confirms an important role Russia plays in global cooperation in the nuclear energy sphere, and on the other hand, it opens new perspectives for Russia in the nuclear energy sector through international cooperation,” the document quoted Vladimir Kuchinov, head of international cooperation department at the agency, as saying.

Russia will have one year to sign a framework agreement that outlines the goals and ways of cooperation with other countries.

Sergei Kiriyyenko, Russia’s top nuclear official, said during his May visit to the U.S. that the country was willing to cooperate with other countries on a wide range of future projects in the sphere of nuclear energy industry, including the development of fourth-generation reactors.