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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EURATOM HOSTS CONFERENCE
ON NUCLEAR SHIP PROPULSION

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 5 -- The Euratom Commission has just concluded a six-nation conference on nuclear ship propulsion, it was announced by Commission headquarters in Brussels today. Experts from each of the six member countries were invited to Brussels by the Commission to discuss the legal problems involved in the development of nuclear merchant shipping.

The conference was described as marking the beginning of a program of cooperation between these countries, aimed toward the goal of drawing up a framework of laws governing the first new kind of shipping since the advent of the steamboat.

General purpose of the talks was to enable member states of Euratom to coordinate the position which they will adopt at the month-long London Conference scheduled to begin the middle of May. There, delegates will consider revision of the international convention of 1948 on the safeguarding of human life at sea. The conference will be concerned in particular with the problem of adapting the 1948 Convention to the new situation created by the emergence of nuclear propulsion for shipping.

The London Conference and the preliminary discussions which have just been held in Brussels are of particular importance in view of the fact that the arrival of the world's first nuclear-propelled merchant ship, the United States cargo-passenger ship SAVANNAH, is expected in European harbors in less than two years.

Need for an international agreement on the safety of nuclear shipping and on the granting of port access to such shipping stems from the special problems posed by the use of nuclear energy and from the fact that the anticipated rapid growth in the use of nuclear propulsion for shipping makes it imperative that a uniform set of regulations on this matter be adopted by as large a number of countries as possible.

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