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**THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EURATOM SIGNS RESEARCH CONTRACT WITH GERMAN 'PEBBLE-BED' REACTOR PROJECT**

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 22 --- The Commission of the European Atomic Energy Community signed today in Brussels a joint association contract with the German Brown-Boveri/Krupp (BBK) group and the Kernforschungsanlage Juelich (KFA) for research on the thorium high-temperature reactor concept (THTR).

The research program, covering 1963-1967, will cost \$20 million of which Euratom and the German agencies will each contribute 50 per cent. Under the association, the Euratom Commission will gain access to experimental equipment in service or under construction, particularly the AVR reactor, entirely financed by German funds. The AVR reactor is now being constructed at Juelich for the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Versuchsreaktor GMBH.

The joint program will study the development of a thermal reactor fueled by a thorium-uranium mixture arranged in a 'pebble-bed' core and cooled with high temperature helium. The AVR reactor, to be operated by the association, will serve as a test-bed for fuel elements.

The program will also involve the engineering assessment of a large power station operating on the thorium-high temperature concept and the design of a prototype THTR. The project will be directed by a steering committee consisting of three Euratom representatives, and one representative each from the KFA, the BBK, and the Federal Ministry for Scientific Research.

Research is presently being conducted on high temperature gas-cooled reactors by Euratom in participation with member states in the European Nuclear Energy Agency 'Dragon' project. Coordination between the two projects will be carried out by Euratom staff.

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