A B S T R A C T

The present invention relates to apparatus for holding and guiding a floating riser (1) relative to a floating support (2), the apparatus comprising joint means (3) secured to said floating support and enabling:

a) said riser to rotate about a horizontal axis (XX', YY') perpendicular to the longitudinal axis (ZZ') of said riser; and

b) said riser to slide longitudinally along the longitudinal axis (ZZ') and lateral displacements of said riser to be guided in a horizontal plane (XX', YY') perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of the riser; and

said joint means (3) comprise:

- friction pads (5), said pads being mounted on a pad support (7) enabling said pads (5) to pivot;

- said pads (5) preferably co-operating with wheels (9) such that said wheels (9) bear against said riser and enable it to slide, and said riser comes to bear against said pads (5) only when said wheels (9) are moved away under the effect of lateral displacements of said riser.