

# ESO/Chile Committee meeting - January 8, 2007

## *Minutes*

**Participants:** L. Campusano, M. Catelan, C. Cesarsky (ESO DG), G. Mathys, F. Mirabel, H. Quintana, M. Rubio, M. T. Ruiz

**Excused:** W. Gieren, R. Mendez

1. C. Cesarsky presents a report of the highlights of ESO since the June meeting of the Committee.
2. H. Quintana reports about the salient events in the Chilean astronomical community since the previous meeting of the Committee.
3. H. Quintana acknowledges the statistics of allocation of telescope time and expresses the satisfaction of the Chilean community with this allocation.
4. C. Cesarsky presents the list of the VISTA Public Survey proposals recommended by the Public Survey Panel (PSP) and the OPC for implementation; she points out that the Chilean Public Survey proposal (PI: D. Minniti) is among them. She also mentions that the PSP and the OPC have agreed that VISTA should be used exclusively for execution of Public Surveys during its first year of science operations, and made available for general users as of the start of the second year. However, the Chilean astronomical community wishes to be offered the opportunity to submit normal proposals for observing time on VISTA in the second semester of science operations, towards allocation of up to 5% of the operational time in the first year, on a shared risk basis. The possibility to implement a new category of programmes (“Long Survey Programmes”) for usage of the VST (and possibly VISTA), which had been contemplated at the previous meeting of the Committee, is considered unnecessary. It is agreed that it will be possible to apply for Large Programmes with the survey telescopes (when they are offered to the community), and that this regular scheme fulfils the foreseeable needs of users of these telescopes. In particular, when the VST becomes available for science operations, the proposers of the Chilean Large Programme proposals unduly submitted for Period 78 (due to a misunderstanding) will have the possibility to resubmit them (in updated form, if they wish to do so). C. Cesarsky emphasises that the original proposals have never been accessible to anyone but ESO’s Visiting Astronomers Department, and that they will continued to be treated as confidential information and will not be communicated to anyone in the future.
5. The draft of the rules for handling of the Chilean time on non-ESO telescopes that had been prepared by the Chilean representatives is discussed. Following this discussion, G. Mathys will prepare a revised version of this draft for review by the Chilean representatives and iteration.
6. C. Cesarsky confirms that, in accordance with the “Acuerdo”, the Chilean National Committee will continue to propose nominations for Chilean representation on the various ESO Committees. Within this framework, the Committee will communicate

to G. Mathys proposals for OPC member appointments, for consideration by the OPC Nominating Committee at its forthcoming meeting of April 19-20, 2007. In the longer term, the Head of VISAS will inform the Chair of the ESO-Chile Committee in due time of the dates of the meetings of the OPC Nominating Committee.

7. In order to facilitate the access of the astronomers of the Chilean institutions to the ESO premises of Vitacura, a list of these astronomers will be communicated by H. Quintana to F. Mirabel. The guards will be instructed to let the people on this list in without the verification and/or retention of identity documents imposed on regular visitors. F. Mirabel stresses that the entrance control is a safety and security measure that is part of the responsibility of ESO, as an International Organisation, with respect to the Chilean authorities. He emphasises that, in any case, no visitor to the ESO Vitacura office is obliged to leave her/his identity document at the entrance gate.