Summary of Decisions and Conclusions

This document is PUBLIC
149th Meeting of ESO Council
held in Garching on 4 and 5 December 2018

Council convened in the following composition:

**President**
Willy Benz

**Delegates**
Daniel Weselka AT
Christoffel Waelkens BE
Sophie Pireaux BE
Stéphane Udry CH
Xavier Reymond CH
Jan Palouš CZ
Jan Buriánek CZ
Linda Tacconi DE
Martin Thomé DE
Allan Hornstrup DK
René Michelsen DK
Rafael Bachiller ES
Inmaculada Figueroa ES
Jari Kotilainen FI
Anna Kalliomäki FI
Guy Perrin FR
Laurent Vigroux FR
Tom Ray IE
Joseph Moore IE
Nicolò D’Amico IT
Matteo Pardo IT
Amina Helmi NL
Mirjam Lieshout-Vijverberg (day 1 only) NL
Marek Sarna PL
Michał Rybiński (day 2 only) PL
Paulo Ferrão (day 1 only) PT
Hans Olofsson SE
Catarina Sahlberg SE
Isobel Hook UK
Colin Vincent UK

**STC Chair**
Denis Mourard FR

**FC Chair**
Inmaculada Figueroa ES

**AU Observers**
Sue Weston¹ AU
Matthew Colless¹ AU

**Apologies**
João Alves AT
Paulo Garcia PT

**ESO representatives**
Xavier Barcons, Director General
Claudia Burger, Director of Administration
Nikolaj Gube, Deputy Head of Legal and Institutional Affairs
Priya Hein, Executive Assistant
Rob Ivison, Director for Science
Andreas Kaufer, Director of Operations
Elena Llopis, Head of Internal Audit¹
Michèle Péron, Director of Engineering
Adrian Russell, Director of Programmes
Heidi Schmidt, Head of Human Resources¹
Roberto Tamai, ELT Programme Manager¹
Leonardo Testi, Head of the European ALMA Support Centre¹

¹ Attendance topic related
Mauro Tuti, ELT Programme Controller

Council Secretary
Jane Wallace
Summary of Meeting

The Council President welcomed the delegates to the 149th Council meeting. A warm welcome was extended to Joseph Moore who was attending his first meeting as a member of the IE delegation.

The draft minutes from the 147th and 148th Council meetings were approved.

General reports

Council noted the presentations as given by the President and the Director General which gave an overview of the Organisation’s activities over the recent months. The STC and FC Chairs also provided updates on their recent meetings.

ALMA

The status of the ALMA programme was noted. Highlights included the Cycle 5/6 operations status for which the completion rates were significantly better than previous Cycles, Cycle 7/8 preparations, ALMA development programme with the 2030 Roadmap published and the 2019 budget and 5-year plan.

La Silla Paranal

For La Silla, the telescope statistics for P101 were noted for the VLT, VISTA, VST, La Silla and APEX. A special event was to take place on 25 March 2019 to celebrate 50 years since the inauguration of the observatory in 1969.

Regarding the Paranal instruments, it was noted that AMBER was decommissioned in September 2018 after 13 years of operation. The highest number to date for VLTI time requests (for P103) had been received, with the most popular instrument being GRAVITY. Commissioning was continuing with ESPRESSO and MATISSE. Planned instrument moves coming up in the near future included the dismount of SINFONI from UT4 and subsequent move to UT3, and the mount of VISIR on UT4/AOF for NEAR commissioning and 3-week on-sky experiment.

Following the APEX extension 2018-2022, a telescope upgrade had taken place which included new panels, quadrupod, hexapod, wobbler, sub reflector, gearboxes, shutter etc. Additional work was envisaged in Q1/2019 to reach the goal in the surface accuracy of the dish.

ELT

The ELT programme reported significant progress on-site which included the excavation and pouring of lean concrete for the foundations of Dome and Auxiliary Building at Armazones, site preparation, excavation, and pouring of footing for the ELT Technical Facility (ETF) at Paranal. Significant progress was being achieved with regard to the running contracts in Europe. Many review milestones had been achieved with a high workload remaining.

Finance, Administration and Human Resources

Council approved the ESO Budget for 2019 and noted the Forward Look 2020-2022.
Also agreed was the extension of the mandate of the National Audit Office of Finland for the period 2019-2021.

As recommended by the Finance Committee, Council approved the extension of the Progressive Retirement Programme by one year. The initiation of the ESO Regular Review 2019 was also agreed, along with the Terms of Reference.

**Elections**

The Council President, Willy Benz, was re-elected for another term. The next Vice President of Council will be Daniel Weselka from the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research in Vienna who has been a member of the Austrian delegation since 2008. A new Chair, Sirpa Nummila, was elected for the Finance Committee and Jean-Paul Kneib was confirmed as the OPC Chair for the coming year. Denis Mourard’s re-appointment as the STC Chair for 2019 was approved.

**Observing Programmes**

The report from the Observing Programmes Committee was noted by Council, as were the statistics on telescope time distribution.

**Presentation to Sue Weston**

Prior to the commencement of the final agenda item, a presentation was made to Sue Weston, the AU government representative, who was leaving Council. The President, on behalf of Council and ESO, thanked her for her contributions, especially with regard to her role in the finalisation of the AU-ESO strategic partnership agreement, and wished her every success for the future.