



• La Silla
• La Serena
• Santiago

• Munich

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Switzerland, Member of ESO . . .

On March 1, 1982, the Federal Council of Switzerland submitted its signed ESO membership document to the French Foreign Ministry (where the ESO documents are kept). With this act Switzerland's ESO membership becomes effective.

This brings to a happy end a complex development which began sixteen years ago, when the Swiss Council for Science Policy recommended that Switzerland should build its own observatory on Gornergrat above Zermatt. When it was realized that this project posed several unsurmountable problems, Swiss astronomers joined forces to work toward Switzerland's becoming a member of ESO. The momentum in this direction grew through the subsequent recommendation of the Swiss Council of Science Policy (1972) and the erection of the Geneva telescope on La Silla (approved by the ESO Council in 1975, and reluctantly again in 1977).

In 1979, direct talks between Swiss government representatives and the Director-General of ESO, as well as contacts between the Italian and Swiss governments culminated in the acceptance by the ESO Council of Switzerland and Italy as new member countries (March 1980).

The driving forces within Switzerland became more and more the Federal Office for Education and Science and the Foreign Ministry. The latter drew up a message to Parliament, which was approved by the Federal Council in December 1980, and which was adopted by the two Chambers, without an opposing vote, in June and September, respectively, of the following year. After a three-month referendum period, which was not used, the Federal Council put its final signature on the ESO document on February 3, 1982.

Switzerland will pay an entrance fee of about 5 million Swiss francs and an annual contribution of about 2 million Swiss francs. It is planned to use the Swiss entrance fee together with the Italian one for the construction of a new telescope on La Silla to meet the increased demand on the already heavily loaded telescopes.

The Federal Council has named Dr. Peter Creola from the Foreign Ministry and Prof. Marcel Golay from the Geneva Observatory as Delegates to the ESO Council, with Mr. C. Peter from the Federal Office for Education and Science as an advisor. The ESO Council has appointed Prof. G. A. Tammann of the Basel Observatory into the Scientific/Technical Committee. The Swiss members of the Finance Committee, the Observing Programmes Committee, and the User's Committee are still to be named.

Felix, faustum, fortunatumque sit!

G. A. T.

. . . and Italy will Follow Soon

At the moment of going to press we are informed that the Italian Parliament on March 2, 1982 definitely approved the adhesion of Italy to ESO. Italy will become a member of ESO as soon as the document of adhesion is deposited with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We welcome this imminent happy event.

The ESO Scientific and Technical Committee

P. Léna, Observatoire de Meudon, Chairman of the STC

Since 1978, the structure of ESO involves a Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) which advises the Council on scientific and technical matters. This committee meets twice a year, usually at Garching; its members are nominated by the Council and their term is 4 years. The STC has 10 members,

who are as evenly distributed as possible among member countries, although indeed mainly chosen for their scientific abilities. The chairman is invited to attend Council meetings and to report to the members.

In the three past years, the STC has essentially dealt with