

ESO/Cou-869

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**FOR  
INFORMATION**

**COUNCIL**

99<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Garching, December 17 and 18, 2002

**Progress Report #5 on Installation of ALMA in Chile**

## **Progress Report #5 on Installation of ALMA in Chile**

### **1. Overall Negotiations with the Chilean Government**

#### **Status**

At a meeting held on December 6<sup>th</sup> between the Chilean Foreign Ministry Undersecretary C. Barros assisted by the Head of the legal department, C. Troncoso and the ALMA Representatives (P. Vanden Bout, D. Hofstadt and E. Hardy), the Agreements for the ALMA collaboration with CONICYT and Region II were discussed.

C. Barros stated that he had consulted the President of the Republic who had accepted the proposals from ALMA executives. The agreement on the final amount for the collaboration funds will be communicated shortly to ESO and AUI but would be within the range proposed by ALMA, (namely 600-700 K US\$ per annum)

The total amount will include:

- The funds for astronomy development (CONICYT)
- The funds for cultural collaboration in Region II
- The rent of the land concession

### **2. Agreement ESO-Government of Chile**

#### **Status**

The ESO – Government of Chile Agreement signed on 21 October is ready for the ratification procedure at Parliament.

ESO wishes to conclude and implement the Agreement immediately, particularly as its legal counsel does not agree that such an agreement needs to be ratified by Parliament. D. Hofstadt met with Interior Minister Insulza on 11 December to analyze the background of the procedure proposed by Foreign Affairs. Minister Insulza was Foreign Minister at the time the 1995 Agreement was established. He showed that he understood the ESO point of view and committed himself to review the case, first with his advisers and later on he would consult with Foreign Minister Alvear to find out the reasons and rationale for the Foreign Ministry position on Parliamentary ratification.

### **3. Land issue**

#### **Status**

The draft of the land concession Decree has been agreed in its principal outline and substance by the Ministry of Public Assets. The concessionary contract has been drafted for discussion with the Chilean Authorities.

The land appraisal procedure is close to conclusion. Once the commercial value of the land is established, the Minister of Public Assets will proceed with the establishment of the concession Decree.

#### **4. Environmental Impact Study (EIS)**

##### **Status**

So far 6 out of the 14 regional departments involved with the EIS procedure have given their approval to the study.

The most critical issue remains the impact on the fauna of the high elevation area (3000-4500 meters) where the road crosses a wide stretch of vegetation with unique wild life.

Currently the consultation with the authorities focuses on finding the appropriate mitigation and compensation elements to preserve the area.

#### **5. Radio frequency protection**

##### **Status**

See report #4