

Brazil to Join ESO

Tim de Zeeuw¹

¹ ESO

On 29 December 2010, at a ceremony in Brasilia, the Brazilian Minister of Science and Technology, Sergio Machado Rezende and the ESO Director General, Tim de Zeeuw signed the formal accession agreement, paving the way for Brazil to become a Member State of the European Southern Observatory. Brazil will become the fifteenth Member State and the first from outside Europe. Since the agreement implies accession to an international convention, the agreement must

now be submitted to the Brazilian Parliament for ratification. The signing of the agreement followed its unanimous approval by the ESO Council during an extraordinary meeting, by teleconference, on 21 December 2010.

“Joining ESO will give new impetus to the development of science, technology and innovation in Brazil as part of the considerable efforts our government is making to keep the country advancing in these strategic areas,” said Minister Rezende.

“The membership of Brazil will give the vibrant Brazilian astronomical community full access to the most productive observatory in the world and open up opportu-

nities for Brazilian high-tech industry to contribute to the ESO programme, including the European Extremely Large Telescope project. It will also bring new resources and skills to the organisation at the right time for them to make a major contribution to this exciting project,” added Tim de Zeeuw.

The president of ESO’s governing body, the Council, Laurent Vigroux, concluded: “Astronomers in Brazil will benefit from collaborating with European colleagues, and naturally from having observing time at ESO’s world-class observatories at La Silla, Paranal and APEX at Chajnantor, as well as on ALMA, which ESO is constructing with its international partners.”



Figure 1. ESO Director General, Tim de Zeeuw, (right) in discussion with the Brazilian Minister of Science and Technology, Sergio Machado Rezende, during the accession ceremony in Brasilia on 29 December 2010.