

sponding request to the Council of CERN. This met one week later, on June 18 and 19, and agreed to enter into the collaboration.

September 16, 1970: the ESO-CERN Agreement Signed

The contract between the two organizations was signed on September 16 at CERN by the Directors General, Gregory and Blaauw.

Let me quote a few parts from the 21 articles of the contract:

from art. 2.1.a: "*toute la connaissance et l'expérience scientifique acquises par l'une des parties au présent Accord, et susceptibles d'affecter le travail de l'autre, seront librement communiquées et lesdites Organisations mettront à la disposition l'une de l'autre des solutions et méthodes utilisées dans les techniques de pointe de leurs domaines respectifs;*"

from art. 3.2: "*La responsabilité scientifique et technique du projet incombe entièrement à l'ESO, tandis qu'il incombe au CERN de fournir les installations et les services, dans toute la mesure du possible et dans la limite des moyens existant au Laboratoire du CERN.*"

from art. 4.1.b: "*--- le CERN fournit, dans des limites à convenir entre le CERN et l'ESO, les services administratifs nécessaires à l'exécution du projet sur le domaine du CERN, y compris les services des Divisions des Finances et du Personnel, ceux de la Division des Services techniques et Bâtiments qui ont trait à l'exploitation et à l'entretien du domaine et des bâtiments qui s'y trouvent, les services de transport habituels, les services de sécurité du travail et l'utilisation d'installations de caractère général, telles que les cantines, salles de conférence et bibliothèques;*"

from art. 10.1: "*L'ESO nomme un Chef de la Division ESO-TP, dont l'autorité et les compétences, notamment en matière de décisions financières, sont comparables à celles d'un Chef de Division du CERN.*"

Already a month later, in October 1970, the small group of Laustsen – who was appointed to this post of Division Head – and collaborators moved to Geneva and started setting up the Telescope Project Division in a building made available by CERN on its premises. By the end of 1970, the group consisted of 12 people, six of whom were ESO employees. The TP Division was ready to realize the most important one of the instruments for which ESO had been created, the 3.6-m Telescope.

A Few Further Milestones

Whereas a detailed account on the further developments would be beyond the present historian's task, mentioning of a few milestones in the further work of the TP Division seems in order here.

By February 1971 the TP Division had drawn up a new project description, an estimate of the financial implications, and a time schedule for its realization. By the end of 1971 the staff strength of the Division had grown to a total of 22, of whom 13 were ESO staff, 6 CERN staff and 3 belonged to agencies. A drastic decision had been taken in the course of that year, when it was deemed desirable to abandon the original design for the rectangular telescope building and to start from scratch for one adapted to new ideas developed through the IC, in spite of the considerable investments that had been made for the early design.

By the end of 1972 the Division was in a position to award contracts for the major construction programmes – the building, the dome, and the main structure and main gears for the telescope. The staff complement had risen to a total of 29, of whom 17 ESO staff and 6 CERN staff. The year 1973 saw the first assignment of TP Division staff on La Silla for setting up the building site. At the end of that year the staff strength had risen to 40 of whom 30 ESO and CERN staff, and by the end of 1974 still farther, including 36 from ESO and CERN. For the telescope the main sub-

structures had then been completed and tested at the manufacturer; the concrete structure of the telescope building was virtually finished.

The year 1975 saw further shifting of staff from Europe to La Silla and the erection of the dome, and in Europe the successful conclusion of the testing of the telescope with its optics. The mechanical assembly of the telescope on La Silla was completed about August 1976, and finally, in the night of 7 to 8 November 1976 the telescope saw "first light": its first actual performance by presenting astronomers and technicians with its first stellar image in the prime focus. This happened six years and seven weeks after the signing of the contract with CERN. The TP Division had marvelously stuck to the time schedule drafted early 1970.

References and Notes

Abbreviations used:

EHA = ESO Historical Archives (see *The Messenger* of December 1988).

FHA = Files Head of Administration at ESO Headquarters.

EHPA = ESO Historical Photographs Archives.

- [1] I am indebted to Mrs. Helga Schmal, associated with the Council Secretariat of CERN, for providing me with data on the membership of the CERN Council and Finance Committee over the years 1960–1973, and to ESO's librarian Edith Sachtschal for her intermediary in this matter.
- [2] In FHA, Section 1.1.1./1.2.1., Circular Letters Council and FC.
- [3] In FHA, Letter 00/3217/69 in File Cou-2, FC-2.
- [4] Both letters in the author's private archive; copies in EHA-I.C.5.
- [5] According to a note in the author's diary for 1969; no written report is left of this meeting.
- [6] Copy of this letter in EHA-I.C.5.
- [7] FHA-Cou Documents.
- [8] FHA-Cou Documents.
- [9] The letter is quoted in full in the minutes of the meeting, contained in FHA.

"Des Hommes, des Télescopes, des Etoiles"

A book with this title has just appeared at "Editions du CNRS" (15, quai Anatole France, F-75700 Paris, France; ISBN 2-222-04459-6, 528 pages, 220 FF). The author is the well-known French astronomer Charles Fehrenbach, who has been closely associated with ESO from its very early beginnings – as documented in the current series about ESO's history – and to whom younger generations of European astronomers owe a large debt of gratitude. Professor Fehrenbach's memoirs recount the story of French astronomy from the years between the two World Wars and also deal extensively with the early developments of ESO, in Europe as well as in Chile. They contain a wealth of personal anecdotes about contemporaries and will be of interest to all who want to learn more about this decisive epoch for European astronomy. The book has a foreword by Professor Hubert Curien.

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