

**Pretoria Resolutions: First Ministerial Meeting of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA)
African Partner Countries**

Pretoria, South Africa, 26 March 2014

In line with the SKA declarations of the African Union Assembly in 2010 and 2012, we, the Ministers and representatives from the governments of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia met in Pretoria, South Africa on 26 March 2014, to discuss and coordinate positions of mutual interest and identify future directions of institutionalising cooperation in radio astronomy, particularly on the SKA and African Very Long Baseline Interferometer (AVN) projects. We agreed on the following key resolutions:

1. We reaffirm our commitment to the vision of positioning Africa as an emerging hub for astronomy sciences and facilities. We will work together to advance cooperation based on the principles of mutual respect, openness and accountability;
2. We will work towards finalising the AVN/SKA African Readiness Strategy and the Joint Implementation Action Plan by March 2015 to guide the partner countries in preparing to host the AVN and the SKA;
3. We agree to work towards formally constituting the AVN/SKA Ministerial Forum that will be convened on an annual basis from now onwards to provide political and strategic leadership to the African partner countries on the AVN, SKA and other relevant radio-astronomy programmes and initiatives;
4. We agree that the Senior Official Meetings that have been convening since 2006, should continue to meet on a six-months basis to deliberate on strategic and operational matters pertaining to the AVN, SKA and other relevant radio-astronomy programmes and initiatives;
5. We agree to work towards the signing of a joint Memorandum of Understanding by 30 June 2015 amongst the AVN/SKA African partner countries that will define the spirit and scope of the cooperation, as a first step towards a Multilateral Agreement to be acceded to by 1 January 2018;
6. We agree to work towards the establishment of a governance framework for African astronomy initiatives, particularly the AVN project;
7. We encourage each partner country to work towards building the institutional mechanisms and capacities within relevant Government Departments/Ministries, Universities and Research Bodies necessary for the successful implementation and sustainability of the AVN/SKA and other relevant radio-astronomy programmes and initiatives;
8. We encourage each partner country to work towards establishing relevant human capital development programmes and instruments aimed at building a new pipeline of researchers, scientists, engineers, technical skills and expertise for the successful implementation and sustainability of the AVN/SKA and other relevant radio-astronomy programmes and initiatives;

9. We undertake, as SKA African partner countries, to participate effectively in the Joint Africa-EU strategic partnership and African European Radio Astronomy Platform programmes and activities;
10. In pursuit of cooperation in the above areas, we agree to build on existing bilateral synergies and other forms of multi-country frameworks amongst the partner countries.

Signed in Pretoria on 26 March 2014



Botswana



Ghana



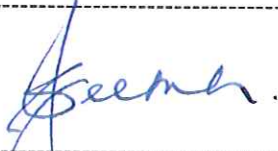
Kenya



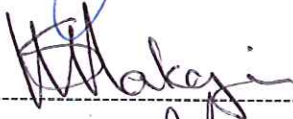
Madagascar



Mauritius



Mozambique



Namibia



South Africa



Zambia