



**NCRST**  
NATIONAL COMMISSION  
ON RESEARCH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

*Established by Section 4 of the Research, Science and Technology Act, 2004 (23 of 2004)*

2 April 2014

**Attention: The News Editor**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### *Namibia and South Africa Cherenkov Telescope Array Task Force Meeting*

The National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (NCRST), together with delegates from South Africa, held a task force meeting today on Namibia's bid for the Cherenkov Telescope Array (CTA).

The CTA will be the world's biggest gamma ray observatory, ten times more powerful than today's instruments. It will consist of two arrays, one in each hemisphere. A decision on where to host it is due to be taken at a meeting in Munich, Germany from 10 - 11 April 2014.

The CTA is a global project that has attracted more than 1 000 scientists from 27 countries. Namibia is competing against potential sites in Argentina and Chile, and hopes to host the southern hemisphere portion of the CTA near the remote railway town of Aus in the south, and would attract about two-thirds of the CTA budget as it will be the larger site.

South Africa will benefit from Namibia hosting CTA and strongly supports Namibia's bid, as the two countries already enjoy a long history of collaborating on gamma ray detection, as Namibia is currently home to a gamma ray observatory called the High Energy Stereoscopic System (HESS).

Hosting the CTA in Namibia will help scientists tackle questions about the origin of cosmic rays and the nature of dark matter, and will potentially assist in developing the host town of Aus and the surrounding area - increasing employment opportunities both directly and indirectly.

"Namibia and South Africa will mutually benefit from hosting the CTA in Namibia. Real scientific advantages will be seen, as well as the further development of the country - assisting Africa in becoming a leader in Astronomy", said Prof Nithaya Chetty, Group Executive for South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF).

Speaking at the meeting, Dr Eino Mvula, Chief Executive Officer of NCRST said, "hosting the CTA will help drive Namibia toward a knowledge-based economy and generate a new breed of scientists from within Namibia, in not only astronomy but other fields of science as well...We are confident that Namibia will receive a positive outcome at next week's meeting in Germany"

**Ends:**

**Issued by:** National Commission on Research, Science and Technology  
Office of the Chief Executive Officer

**Contact Person:** Elzita Beukes  
Head: Corporate Communication and Marketing  
Tel: 061 - 431 7050  
Fax: 061 - 229 928  
Email: [ebeukes@ncrst.na](mailto:ebeukes@ncrst.na)