



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC UNIONS
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES UNIONS SCIENTIFIQUES

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JML/mb/3.30

Jerusalem, 3 November 1992

Dear President,

The Standing Committee on Free Circulation of Scientists of the International Council of Scientific Unions (SCFCS-ICSU) has recently learned with some concern that work on construction of the new Very Large Telescope (VLT) may be suspended or, at least, delayed because of differences between the Chilean Astronomical Union and the European Southern Observatory (ESO) over the involvement of Chilean Astronomers in the work of the ESO observations in the north of Chile.

We recognize that there are strong views, honestly held, by both partners. We make no judgment whatsoever upon them, even less as to the merits or otherwise of any particular argument.

We could ask, however, that the Chilean Government and ESO (who we understand may shortly be in discussion over this issue) both give their full consideration to two matters: first, the importance of maintaining fruitful local scientific links between international faculties and institutes and the regions in which they are located, and second, the potential damage to the advance of astronomy of any slowing down in the construction of the new observatory.

We are confident that negotiations, however prolonged, could be conducted without recourse to any such damage and respectfully seek your assistance and that of your government, the ESO, and the Chilean Astronomical Union to that end.

Yours sincerely,

Professor S. Helmfrid
Chairman, SCFCS

cc: Director General, ESO
Comite Nacional, ICSU
Professor I. Saavedra

**LETTRE
PAR AVION**

**Sr. Patricio Aylwin Azocar
President of Chile
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