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ESO and Italy

Catherine Cesarsky

European Southern Observatory

Abstract. Italy joined ESO in 1982, together with Switzerland. The membership fee of these countries was used to build the New Technology Telescope (1988) for the La Silla Observatory, based on innovative active optics and open dome concepts, with strong intellectual and industrial input from Italy. Now, with the VLT/VLTI at Paranal, ESO operates the leading optical and infrared ground observatory in the world. The construction of ALMA has just started. The participation of Italy in all of ESO endeavours has been and continues to be essential at every step, in all aspects: personnel, telescopes and instruments, technology and industry, software and science.

The slides of the talk given at the meeting may be found at the following address: http://sait.oat.ts.astro.it/MSAIS/3/POST/ESO-ITALY-Cesarsky.pdf