Advances of X-ray Astronomy with XMM-Newton Proceedings of the 2003 EPIC Consortium Meeting

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FOREWORD

XMM-*Newton* has been an outstanding scientific success. In the three years since launch the observatory has made over 3000 observations resulting in around 300 publications and rising. The EPIC instrument has been the prime instrument for the majority of these observations. Members of the EPIC consortium institutes have been active in the scientific exploitation of the data through successful bids for observing time in the AO programmes and the consortium was, of course, allocated a substantial observing budget of 3 Msec in the Guaranteed Time (GT) programme. In 2003 when the GT programme was nearing completion the EPIC consortium decided to organize a scientific meeting, hosted by the INAF - Osservatorio Astronomico di Palermo in Sicily, inviting members of the consortium institutes and other scientists associated to the successful development of XMM-*Newton* to present the XMM-*Newton* results on the astrophysics of the X-ray Universe.

The meeting has been kindly hosted in the magnificent ”Sala delle Capriate” of Palazzo Steri, a superb historical building, recently restored, and now hosting the Rettorato of the Università degli Studi di Palermo.

The meeting has seen the participation of more than 90 scientists coming from several european countries who have shown a series of new exciting results. We wish to thank the local organizing committee and, especially, Laura Daricello whose dedication and effort have made the meeting very successful and pleasant.

S. Sciortino and M. J. Turner