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**22 May 2018**

## **Launch of a new optical telescope to be linked to the MeerKAT radio telescope**

**23 May 2018 | 11:00 – 12:00 | Astronomy seminar room | RW James Building room 5.40  
Upper Campus | University of Cape Town**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) invites members of the media to a discussion ahead of the launch of the MeerLICHT optical telescope in Sutherland on Friday, 25 May 2018.

The MeerLICHT telescope will be permanently linked to the MeerKAT radio telescope, South Africa's precursor to the Square Kilometre Array (SKA).

The fully robotic 0,65m MeerLICHT telescope aims to provide a simultaneous, real-time optical view of the radio (transient) sky as observed by MeerKAT. As such, it provides a uniquely broad contemporaneous view of the southern skies through multiple windows of the electromagnetic spectrum.

MeerLICHT is a custom-built telescope with a 2,7 square degree field of view and a single 110 megapixel CCD camera, and will receive its pointing information from the MeerKAT radio telescope array, matching the radio telescope's observing schedule in real-time (at night time only).

Present at the briefing will be Prof Patrick Woudt (MeerLICHT co-PI and Head of Department: Astronomy, UCT), Dr David Buckley (Astronomer: South African Astronomical Observatory), Dr Ramotholo Sefako (Head, Small Telescope Operations: South African Astronomical Observatory), Dr Fernando Camilo (Chief Scientist: South African Radio Astronomy Observatory) Prof Paul Groot (MeerLICHT co-PI: Radboud University, Netherlands), Prof Rob Fender (MeerLICHT co-PI: University of Oxford, UK) and Prof Ben Stappers (MeerLICHT consortium, University of Manchester, UK)

Some of the MeerLICHT images on the Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy/UCT visualisation wall will be shown at the end of the briefing.

***ENDS***

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

**Aamirah Sunday**

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