

Germany pulling out of SKA disappointing

Science and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor has expressed disappointment at Germany's intention to withdraw from the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Organisation in 2015.



(Image: SKA)

"Minister Pandor has noted with disappointment, the intention by Germany to withdraw from the Square Kilometre Array Organisation (SKA) in June 2015," said the department's Lunga Ngqengelele in a statement on Friday.

On Thursday, Germany officially informed the SKA Director-General of its intention to leave the SKA Organisation. Under the current legal agreements Germany's membership of SKA Organisation will end on June 30, 2015.

The organisation said though the decision is regrettable it was understandable as the decision was driven by difficult national financial circumstances around the funding of large research infrastructures in Germany and Europe and that it by no means reflects a lack of confidence in the SKA project.

While the decision is regrettable, Minister Pandor is satisfied that it is not due to lack of confidence in the SKA project, rather because of "difficult national financial circumstances around the funding of large research infrastructures in Germany and Europe."

The SKA project is an international effort to build the world's largest radio telescope.

The project is taking place in South Africa's Karoo region and in Australia.

The minister will in the coming weeks set up a meeting with her Germany counterpart to further discuss this issue.

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