**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION No. 3424**

**Dr A Lotriet (DA) to ask the Minister of Science and Technology:**

**“3424. Whether any measures have been put in place to ensure that there is further growth of the Southern African Large Telescope and its instruments; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? ˮ**

 **NW4085E**

**REPLY**

The Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) is an international facility with South Africa holding a 33% share. In 2012, the SALT Board resolved to start a R75m Development Fund for the purpose of providing the resources necessary for continued development of the telescope and its instruments. Each of the partners in the telescope consortium had committed to pay a pro-rata share of the fund in proportion to its shareholding in the telescope and the contributions are meant to be made by May 2016. South Africa’s contribution amounts to R25m and this amount has already been paid. To date approximately R33m, both in-kind and in cash, has been received from the SALT partners, and this matter is raised at each meeting of the SALT directors. The DST is using its bilateral inter-governmental engagements with the relevant countries to solicit higher levels of government support to the respective consortium partners so that they may contribute their outstanding share to the development fund. In addition, the DST and NRF are actively seeking new partners to extend and recapitalise the consortium.