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Non-specialist talk: GW170817 - The South African Perspective

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The joint detection of a gravitational-wave event from a binary-neutron-star merger, GW170817, by LIGO/VIRGO and a short gamma-ray burst, GRB170817A, by Fermi-GBM and INTEGRAL, ushers in a new era of true multi-messenger astronomy. It triggered the most intensive, world-wide multi-wavelength follow-up observing campaign ever conducted to date, involving almost 3,700 astronomers around the world. This talk will review the observations of this event, highlighting the contributions by southern African observatories (e.g., H.E.S.S., SALT, MeerKAT). These will be put into the broader context of recent developments in multi-messenger astronomy, including the possible association of high-energy neutrinos detected by IceCube, with flaring gamma-ray sources. Future prospects for multi-messenger astronomy and the Southern African involvement in these exciting developments will be discussed.

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