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The African Light Source Project

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The global science endeavor drives technological development, which has a large impact on socioeconomic development. There are however other benefits: such as the culture of enlightenment, the eradication of ignorance and prejudice, the promotion of large scale boundary-crossing collaborations and a real, fundamental appreciation of all diversity. In this context, large-scale research infrastructures play an important role. Amongst these, one of the most transformative mega-research entities is the modern light source. Research is both fundamental and applied. The former case is a truly universal endeavor, and in the latter case, there will be regional priorities. For all these reasons, research has to be carried out everywhere, by all peoples. The passionate belief in this positive role for science in society has driven the call for the African Light Source. The call was first sounded in 2002, and it has been repeated by many sources on many platforms. African scientists are strongly participating in research exploiting the power of modern light sources, both from within African institutions, and from other institutions, as the exercise of the African science diaspora. In addition, the global science community has also strongly supported the global proliferation of the benefits of access to large-scale research infrastructures, and to extending the collaborative participation totally. This combination of African and International leadership towards an African Light Source is embodied in a fully mandated international committee whose vision and project is a Light Source in Africa. This African Light Source would be supported by extensive local and regional research infrastructure and also local and regional human and industrial capacity. This contribution details the progress on the Roadmap towards the African Light Source, and outlines the future projects, many of which will be discussed further in this meeting.

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