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AFRICA

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Africa is the only habitable continent without a synchrotron light source. Many African scientists use facilities abroad. Even though South Africa has become a member of ESRF, the number of users is limited by distance and travel cost. A light source in Africa would give many more African scientists access to this tool. Momentum is now building for an African light source, as a collaboration involving several African countries. An interim Steering Committee has been formed, with a mandate to plan a conference. SESAME, now nearing completion in Jordan, is a collaboration of 9 countries in the Middle East (www.sesame.org.jo) is an example to follow. UNESCO became the umbrella organization for SESAME at its Executive Board 164th session, May 2002, as it did in the case of CERN in the 1950s. UNESCO's Executive Board described SESAME as a quintessential UNESCO project combining capacity building with vital peace-building through science" anda model project for other regions." It is likely that UNESCO, if asked, would play a similar role as a facilitator for an African light source. An interim Steering Committee has been formed. It is now planning a major conference on November 16-20, 2015 at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) in Grenoble, France to bring together African, policy makers, and stakeholders.

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