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UNIVERSITÄT BERN

Philosophisch-naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät

Astronomisches Institut

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Transitions at the Astronomical Institute of the University of Bern (AIUB)

Dear friends and colleagues

This document is meant to inform you of the succession of Gerhard Beutler as Director of the AIUB. The following events took place in 2011/2012:

- On July 31, 2011, after more than twenty years in office, **Gerhard Beutler** had his last working day as Director of the AIUB and became Professor emeritus.
- On August 1, 2011 **Thomas Schildknecht**, head of the AIUB astrometry team, became the acting Director of the AIUB to stay in office till the end of the year.
- On January 1, 2012 **Adrian Jäggi** became **Director of the AIUB** and Professor of the Phil.-nat.-Faculty of the University of Bern.

The sequence of events was roughly the following: By January 31, 2011 about thirty candidates from all over the world had pronounced their interest for the advertised position; nine of them were invited to present their ideas, research plans, etc. on the occasion of a scientific symposium in the May-June 2011 time frame in Bern, five candidates were identified for review by top academic experts in the field. Eventually Adrian Jäggi was appointed as Professor and Director of the AIUB in December 2011.

Adrian Jäggi received his Ph.D. degree in 2006, became a Carl von Linde Junior Fellow of the Technical University of Munich's Institute for Advanced Study in 2007 to work there primarily in the field of orbit and gravity field determination of Low Earth Orbiting (LEO) satellites. In Bern he was responsible for the scientific aspects of Satellite Laser Ranging (SLR) in Zimmerwald since 2009.

The new AIUB research team with Adrian Jäggi (Director of the AIUB), Thomas Schildknecht (Director of Zimmerwald Observatory), Rolf Dach (Head of GNSS team), and Andreas Verdun (Specialist in the history of natural sciences) will be fit to cope with a wide variety of problems in celestial mechanics, astrometry, satellite geodesy, and history of astronomy.

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Exciting running projects like the search for and the cataloguing of space debris and of Near Earth Orbit (NEO) asteroids, the international collaboration in the CODE (Center for Orbit Determination) Analysis Center of the IGS (International GNSS Service) and EUREF, and of course the activities at the Zimmerwald Observatory will continue. Studies of the Earth's stationary and time-varying gravity field will be intensified, and the step into the planetary system will be sought in observation and analysis.

G. Beutler T. Schildknecht A. Jäggi