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SA space agency one step closer

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Johannesburg - It may be one small step for President **Kgalema Motlanthe**, but it's one giant leap for South Africa. President Motlanthe has signed a Bill on Thursday which will see SA set up its own space agency.

Science and technology department spokesperson Nhlanhla Nyide said the Act could see the pulling together of all space-related activities under one banner.

"The agency will oversee development of space missions, develop technology platforms, and acquire, assimilate and disseminate space satellite data."

Some of the projects it will coordinate include the Square Kilometre Array bid, the Southern African Large Telescope, and the launch of SA's second indigenous satellite, Sumbandilasat.

The agency was approved by the cabinet in December last year to stimulate the country's capabilities among leading nations in the innovative utilisation of space science and technology. The first step will be to form a board.

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