New Millennium in Africa

NASA Provides View of Event

On June 21, the first total solar eclipse of the new millennium will occur in Southern and Central Africa. While the eclipse will not be visible from the United States, it will be made available live from Zambia, Southern Africa, to the rest of the world from NASA Television and internet users who have a high-speed connections.

The eclipse viewing is made possible by the San Francisco Exploratorium, with support from NASA, and is officially endorsed by the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP).

Speaking on the importance of learning science, former astronaut Mae Jemison, M.D., the first African-American female in space said, "Science literacy concerns everyone, not just physicists or engineers or doctors. The goal of science literacy is for everyone to understand an issue, determine how it affects them and respond appropriately."

On eclipse day, scientists, including members of the NSBP will be at select museums to engage and excite young people about space science and technology. According to Dr. Charles McGruder, president of the National Society of Black Physicists, "Our members will be providing basic scientific knowledge pertinent to the eclipse event and generating excitement, wonder, and appreciation for science to underrepresented minorities."

A science team from the Exploratorium will be in Zambia to capture video images of the eclipse using specially equipped telescopes. Besides being streamed live to the rest of the world, these images will be broadcast to about 110 participating museums and other venues.

This year, the event will focus on the themes of solar maximum, habitability of space and living with the Sun. "A total solar eclipse provides great opportunities to engage and inform the public about NASA's Sun-Earth Connection science and the effects of the active Sun in space and on Earth, " added Dr. George Withbroe, Science Director, The Sun-Earth Connection, NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC.

A message from the International Space Station is part of the webcast and includes a conversation with the Expedition Two and Russian Commander Yury Usachev.

To view the eclipse from a high-speed internet connection, visit the World Wide Web at: http://www.exploratorium.edu/eclipse

A complete list of participating museums can be found on the web at:

NASA TV will carry the eclipse from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. EDT. The sun will be entirely eclipsed from 9:05 a.m. to 9:08 a.m. EDT.

NASA TV can be found on GE-2, Transponder 9C, at 85 degrees West longitude, vertical polarization, with a frequency of 3880 MHz and audio of 6.8 MHz.