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Morocco to Host International Science Campaign for the Longest Total Solar Eclipse in Centuries

The North African Telescope Eclipse (NATE) project will deploy a ten-station telescope network across Northern Morocco on August 2, 2027, training local youth as citizen scientists and taking advantage of an exceptionally high solar altitude to study the Sun's mysterious corona.

BENGUERIR, MOROCCO — On **August 2, 2027**, the shadow of the Moon will sweep across Northern Morocco in one of the longest total solar eclipses of the 21st century — and an international team of astronomers, engineers, students, and volunteers will be ready for it. The **North African Telescope Eclipse (NATE) project**, led by the **Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC)** in partnership with **Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique (UM6P)** and the **U.S. National Solar Observatory (NSO)**, today confirmed the full scope of its 2027 observation and outreach campaign.

At the heart of the project is a **coordinated network of roughly ten telescope stations**, stretching nearly 450 kilometers along Morocco's northern coast from Asilah to Saïdia. Each station will capture the solar corona for close to **five minutes at the longest site**, with the Sun sitting favorably high — at roughly **40 degrees above the horizon** — a far more favorable viewing altitude than the low, brief eclipse recently visible from Spain. Because the Moon's shadow reaches each station moments apart, the network's combined, overlapping data will extend continuous scientific observation of the corona to **approximately ten minutes**, a uniquely long scientific window for coronal research.

Training the Next Generation of Scientists

NATE builds on the proven model of the **Citizen CATE Experiment**, which trained volunteer observers to deliver research-grade data during the 2017 and 2024 U.S. eclipses. In Morocco, that same approach will put real instruments into the hands of a trained **field team of 25–30 people** — a mix of secondary-school and university students, teachers, and professional astronomers and engineers from all three partner countries — deployed in small teams across ten community hubs along the eclipse path.

"This is citizen science in its truest form. Students and local volunteers won't just be watching this eclipse — they will be running the instruments that generate genuine scientific data, working side by side with professional astronomers from three continents."

— **Dr. Youssef Moulane, NATE Principal Investigator, UM6P**

Bringing the Cosmos to Local Communities

Each of the ten telescope stations will double as a **public outreach hub**, offering guided solar observation, hands-on workshops, and solar-system model-making activities for local schools and families. A dedicated mobile outreach vehicle, the **SpaceBus**, will circulate between hubs for roughly a month around the eclipse, delivering educational materials, telescopes, and additional trained staff.

"There is currently no coordinated national platform in Morocco that combines rigorous eclipse science with public engagement at this scale. NATE is designed to change that — permanently."

— **Dr. Youssef Moulane, NATE Principal Investigator, UM6P**

A Foundation for the Future

Once the eclipse has passed, the equipment used at every station will be **donated to the host communities**, leaving behind a lasting capacity for astronomy and solar-physics outreach across Morocco. NATE is an open, multi-sponsor initiative, not limited to any single government or country, and continues to welcome new institutional and community partners ahead of eclipse day.

About the Partner Institutions

Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC) is one of Europe's leading astrophysics research institutes, based in the Canary Islands, Spain.

Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique (UM6P) is a leading Moroccan research university with recognized expertise in astronomy, astrophysics, STEM education, and science outreach.

National Solar Observatory (NSO) is a U.S. national research center dedicated to ground-based solar physics, drawing on decades of eclipse-science experience including the Citizen CATE experiments.

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