

Mexico to inaugurate powerful new space observatory

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Perched atop a volcano in Mexico, a new generation observatory capable of detecting exploding stars, black holes and solar flares will begin operating this week, scientists said Tuesday.

The gamma ray High-Altitude Water Cherenkov Observatory, built at an altitude of 4,100 meters in the central city of Puebla, will be the only one in the world with permanent, powerful capacity to detect [electromagnetic radiation](#) from the universe, said Alberto Carraminana Alonso, head of the Mexican National Institute of Astrophysics, Optics and Electronics.

The facility has been operating partially until now but it will go on line fully on Friday, he said.

The first prototypes of the observatory were developed in 2009, and testing began in 2011.

A US observatory called Milagro, or miracle, which was in operation until 2008 in New Mexico, is the closest antecedent to this one.

But the new observatory will be 15 times as powerful, Carraminana Alonso said.

It will allow researchers to study the most violent events in the universe, such as explosions of supernovas.

It will also give scientists an eye on what is happening in the center of the Milky way.

The project has been financed by scientific organizations both in Mexico and the United States.

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