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Cosmic strings and pulsar timing

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Gravitational wave astronomy opens up a new window of exploration in fundamental physics. The recent analysis by the NANOGrav collaboration based on the 12.5-year pulsar-timing data set has shown evidence for a common red process which is compatible with a stochastic background of gravitational waves. In this talk, we will discuss the interpretation of this signal in terms of physics beyond the Standard Model with focus on cosmic strings, highly energetic topological defects arising as a consequence of cosmological phase transitions in the early Universe.

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