



# General Assembly

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
**Scientific and Technical Subcommittee**  
**Forty-ninth session**  
Vienna, 6-17 February 2012

## **Draft report of the Working Group on Near-Earth Objects**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 66/71, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-ninth session, reconvened its Working Group on Near-Earth Objects under the Chairmanship of Sergio Camacho (Mexico). The Working Group held [...] meetings, from 13 to [...] February 2012.
2. In accordance with the multi-year workplan under the item on near-Earth objects (NEOs) (A/AC.105/987, annex III), the Working Group reviewed the following items:
  - (a) Consideration of the reports submitted in response to the annual request for information on near-Earth object activities and continuation of intersessional work;
  - (b) Review of progress on international cooperation and collaboration on NEO observations;
  - (c) Facilitation, for the purpose of NEO threat detection, of a more robust international capability for the exchange, processing, archiving and dissemination of data;
  - (d) Continuation of the work begun during the intersessional period on drafting international procedures for handling the NEO threat and the seeking of agreement on those procedures;
  - (e) Consideration of updated information as presented in an interim report of the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects;
  - (f) Review of progress made in activating the work of the NEO Information, Analysis and Warning Network (IAWN) and the mission planning and operations group.
3. The Working Group noted that during the current session of the Subcommittee, technical presentations were made related to close-approaching asteroids in 2011, to

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the close approach of Apophis in 2029 and risk communications with the media related to NEOs.

4. The Working Group had before it information on research in the field of near-Earth objects carried out by Member States, international organizations and other entities (A/AC.105/C.1/100 and A/AC.105/C.1/2012/CRP.9).

5. The Working Group noted that in 2011, the intersessional work of the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects had been carried out on the margins of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in two workshops and through electronic correspondence.

6. The Working Group noted that the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects had held five meetings on the margins of the forty-ninth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The Action Team, *inter alia*, exchanged information on the close approach to Earth of the asteroid Apophis in 2029, as well as on the current knowledge about an asteroid known as 2011 AG5.

7. The Working Group noted that the Action Team had proposed that a task force be formed to further analyse the asteroid 2011 AG5 and inform the Action Team on its progress by the fifty-fifth session of the Committee.

8. The Action Team, with the support of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Near-Earth Object Program Office, had organized the Workshop on International Recommendations for NEO Threat Mitigation, held in Pasadena, California, United States, on 25 and 26 August 2011. The Workshop, co-organized and co-sponsored by ASE and SWF, addressed key issues related to the required actions and cooperation needed by a mission planning and operations group in preparing for a possible NEO impact threat to Earth. The Workshop had prepared a first draft of the terms of reference for a mission planning and operations group.

9. The Working Group noted that on the recommendation of the Action Team, the NEO Observations Program Executive of NASA and the Space Situational Awareness-NEO Segment Manager of ESA had invited representatives of space agencies to discuss, in particular, the first draft terms of reference for a mission planning and operations group, on the margins of the forty-ninth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in preparation for planning an overall NEO threat mitigation system.

10. The Working Group noted that the NEO Media/Risk Communications Workshop had been organized by SWF under the auspices of the Action Team and held in Boulder, Colorado, United States, on 14 and 15 November 2011. During the Workshop, discussions were held on how best to inform the public of the threat of an NEO impact in a way that would avoid misinformation and on how to provide guidance on the development of an outreach and education plan that fostered accurate and timely information about the possible effects of a potentially hazardous NEO. The recommendations resulting from that Workshop would be incorporated in the final report of the Action Team to the Subcommittee in 2013.

11. The Working Group noted with satisfaction that in the intersessional period, the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects had updated its interim report (A/AC.105/C.1/L.316), which was before the Subcommittee at its current session.

12. The Working Group agreed that the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects should be tasked with continuing its work on the draft recommendations for an international response to the near-Earth object impact threat with a view to finalizing them by the fiftieth session of the Subcommittee, to be held in 2013. The Working Group further agreed that intersessional work to be carried out in the period 2012-2013 could include workshops held under the auspices of the Action Team that would gather experts on various aspects of the draft recommendations made by the Action Team (see A/AC.105/C.1/L.317).

13. The Working Group encouraged member States to participate in the intersessional work on NEOs and submit their research contributions to the Chair of the Action Team. The Working Group also encouraged member States to provide financial support for the facilities and programmes necessary for NEO threat detection and mitigation.

14. The Working Group encouraged member States and their institutions to follow near-Earth object developments on a regular basis, information about which was available on websites such as those of NASA (<http://neo.jpl.nasa.gov> and [www.jpl.nasa.gov/asteroidwatch](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/asteroidwatch)) and IAU ([www.iau.org/public/nea](http://www.iau.org/public/nea)).

15. At its [...] meeting, on [...] February 2012, the Working Group adopted the present report.