



Work of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and of Action Team 14 on NEOs

Sergio Camacho-Lara
Secretary General , CRECTEALC
Workshop on a NEO Mission Planning and Operations Group
27 – 29 October 2010, ESA/ESOC
Darmstadt, Germany



Origin of NEO issue in UNISPACE III

A/Conf.184/6

- The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development, Resolution 1 , para (1) (c)
 - To improve the scientific knowledge of near and outer space by promoting cooperative activities in such areas as astronomy, space biology and medicine, space physics, **the study of near-Earth objects** and planetary exploration;
 - To improve the international coordination of activities related to near-Earth objects**, harmonizing the efforts directed at identification, follow-up observations and orbit prediction, while at the same time giving consideration to developing a common strategy that would include future activities related to near-Earth objects.



Establishment of Action Teams

- Mechanism to implement recommendations of UNISPACE III
 - 2001 STSC, Working Group of the Whole, (A/AC.105/761, annex II, paras. 3-14)
- Establishment of the Action Teams
 - **2001 Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/56/20, paras 44 – 61)**
 - Two types of recommendations
 - (a) *Group 1*. Those recommendations which were considered by Member States as of highest priority as indicated by the results of the survey;
 - (b) *Group 2*. Those **recommendations for which there were States that had offered to be coordinators of action teams to implement recommendations.**



Establishment of Action Teams

- *Recommendations for which an offer to be leader of the activity had been received (A/56/20 , para 55):*

...

14.	Improve the international coordination of activities related to near-Earth objects	United Kingdom
------------	---	-----------------------



Establishment of Action Teams

- Setting the mandates of Action Teams
 - For all ATs - Assessment phase & Implementation phase
- Assessment phase - by open-ended action team consisting of interested countries:
 - (a) examination of the current status;
 - (b) definition of actions to be taken during the implementation phase;
 - (c) preparation of a possible work plan.
- Assessment phase result - important to identify IGOs & NGOs with a strong interest in contributing to and participating in the implementation of the recommendations.
- COPUOS agreed that **Action Teams should actively consider NGOs that could be invited to participate**



Relationships: AT-14, STSC, COPUOS

- AT-14 composed of government and non-government members
 - Works intersessionally
 - Prepares an interim report for STSC
- STSC considers NEOs item (70 Member States; Dec. 2010)
 - in Plenary
 - through its Working Group on NEOs
- COPUOS considers report STSC on NEOs and sets STSC new mandate
 - Set multi-year work plan for STSC (2009 – 2011)



Work of STSC 2009

- NEOs process under a work plan – 2009 to 2011
 - Work carried out by STSC (and its WG) & COPUOS
 - Intersessionally by AT-14
- **STSC 2009** – reports by international organizations, regional bodies, Member States
 - Presentations by ASE, IAA, IAF
 - Presentations by Member States
 - Interim rept - Action Team on Near-Earth Objects (2008-2009)
(A/AC.105/C.1/L.298)
 - Information on research by MS, int'l orgs & others
(A/AC.105/926)



STSC Status as of Feb. 2009 (A/AC.105/933)

- STSC noted with satisfaction that ... international teams ... were currently searching for, investigating and cataloguing near-Earth objects ...
- STSC noted with satisfaction that ... institutions were investigating possibilities for mitigating threats by NEOs
- STSC noted that ... to mitigate such threats would require coordinated international efforts, as well as increased knowledge of the properties of near-Earth objects.
- STSC noted with satisfaction that the ASE PATM had prepared a report ... “Asteroid threats: a call for a global response”, (submitted to AT-14 in 2008).



Working Group on Near-Earth Objects

(2009) The Working Group considered:

- (a) Reports submitted in response to the annual request for information on NEO activities and intersessional work;
- (b) Review of policies and procedures related to the handling of the NEO threat at the international level and drafting of international procedures for handling the NEO threat;
- (c) Activities undertaken within the framework of the International Year of Astronomy 2009 to raise awareness of the NEO threat;
- (d) The interim report of the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects (2008-2009) (A/AC.105/C.1/L.298).



WG agreement on intersessional work

- WG agreed - ASE report is a good basis to continue drafting by the WG, and seeking agreement on, international procedures for handling the NEO threat.
- Action Team - 14 held 4 meetings in February 2009 to discuss its interim report and the report “Asteroid threats: a call for a global response”. On the basis of those discussions, the AT - 14 prepared “Draft recommendations for near-Earth objects threat mitigation” (A/AC.105/C.1/2009/CRP.13), for consideration by the WG.



WG agreement on intersessional work

- WG agreed that AT - 14 should continue intersessional work, under the multi-year workplan, to further review and develop draft recommendations for the international response to the threat of NEO impacts, for consideration at the session of the Subcommittee, in 2010.
- The WG encouraged member States to participate in the intersessional work on NEOs.
- AT-14 met on the margins of COPUOS in 2009 to continue preparation of its interim report for the period 2009 – 2010



Work of AT-14 and WG at STSC 2010

- AT-14 prepared its interim report for the period 2009 – 2010, (A/AC.105/C.1/L.301) for the 2010 session of the STSC
- Interim report, L.301, contains as an annex the revised “Draft Recommendations for international response to the Near-Earth Object Impact Threat “ that resulted from its intersessional work.
- AT – 14 and WG reviewed L.310 and those updates will be incorporated in the interim report of AT – 14 for 2010 – 2011.



Interseasonal Work in 2010

- January, 2010: ASE, SWF and CRECTEALC organized a workshop in Mexico City on to examine and analyze the needed makeup of a near-Earth-object Information, Warning and Analysis Network (IAWN) – Executive summary **submitted to AT – 14 in February 2010**
- Report and Exec. Summary on “Legal aspects of NEO threat response and related institutional issues” - prepared by U. of Nebraska-Lincoln to examine key legal and institutional issues linked to potential future threats by NEOs - **submitted to AT – 14 in February 2010**
- Above Exec. Summaries considered by AT – 14 during 2010 COPUOS; will included in 2010 – 2011 interim report



Intersessional Work in 2010

- Workshop on a NEO Mission Planning and Operations Group (MPOG) - Executive summary to be **submitted to AT – 14 in November 2010**
- Conclusions and recommendations of Exec. Summary will be considered by AT – 14 for its 2010 – 2011 interim report



Thank you

Any questions?

CRECTEALC, Secretaría General
Luis Enrique Erro No. 1
Santa María Tonantzintla
San Andrés Cholula, Puebla
C.P. 72840, México
Tel: + (52 222) 266 3100 Ext. 2317
Fax: + (52 222) 266 3100 Ext. 8302
Web: <http://www.crectealc.org/>