

## **Agenda Item 10: Near-Earth objects**

### **Republic of Korea**

#### **UN COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee,**

#### **Sixty-first Session February 1, 2024**

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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As of January 2024, there are over 34,300 known Near-Earth Objects (NEOs), a concern addressed by the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the global scientific community. The Republic of Korea, along with other UN member states, is actively involved in efforts to discover and study NEOs, assess their potential risks to Earth, and implement mitigation measures. Moreover, the International Asteroid Warning Network (IAWN) and the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG) have contributed to expand these efforts.

While most NEOs are discovered in the Northern Hemisphere due to a lack of dedicated facilities in the Southern Hemisphere, we are utilizing the Korea Microlensing Telescope Network (KMTNet) for ground-based observations in the South. These observations help study NEOs, their rotation, 3-D shapes, and surface properties, enhancing global coverage.

Additionally, the Republic of Korea welcomes the proposal by the IAWN and SMPAG to designate 2029 as the International Year of Planetary Defense (IYPD). In 2029, Apophis, a NEO approaching Earth, will pass less than 20,000 miles from our planet. This close approach will allow observers in the Eastern Hemisphere to see Apophis without telescopes or binoculars. While Apophis is not an immediate threat, this event presents a valuable opportunity to raise awareness about space-

related hazards and explore the application of space-based technology for hazard mitigation.

In this regard, we are actively engaged in the conceptual design study of a flyby mission to Apophis, with the support of the global science community. We are also committed to involving the public in IYPD events and programs, and we are eager to share ideas and resources with fellow Member States.

Mr. Chair.

The Republic of Korea is open to conducting scientific investigations related to Earth-threatening asteroids, their potential impact consequences, and mitigation strategies. We stand ready to collaborate with other Member States participating in the efforts of IAWN and SMPAG to share our experiences with the international community.

Thank you.

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