NEAR-EARTH OBJECT THREAT MITIGATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

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**ABSTRACT**

The paper aims at exploring the legal issues of a near-Earth object (NEO) threat mitigation with a particular focus on the role of international law in disaster prevention and management. Against the background of an ongoing debate on appropriate mitigation strategies (See the UN-mandated Space Mission Planning Advisory Group), the paper aims to analyse the NEO response in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.


The Handbook on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction, released by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and United Nations Development Programme, understands disaster as a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society, involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts that exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. In order to make disaster risk reduction more efficient, international disaster law seeks to improve disaster risk governance as well as disaster risk management.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and aims to
establish international mechanisms for strategic advice, coordination and partnership development for disaster risk reduction. Increasingly ‘trans-boundary’ nature of disaster risk requires establishment of platforms for international cooperation such as the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction as well as regional platforms for disaster risk reduction.

The National Near-Earth Object Preparedness Strategy and Action Plan adopted by White House in 2018 defines NEOs as asteroids and comets that come close to or pass across Earth’s orbit. Since larger objects can cause local damage or even global devastation, a NEO impact hazard implies application of international disaster law. In this context, international, regional, sub-regional and transboundary cooperation are pivotal in supporting the efforts of states to address the hazard of NEO impacts. Coordinated global approach in tracking, characterizing NEO impact threats, preparing to prevent damaging impacts and also in planning planetary defense mission is essential. Giving the transboundary nature of the threat to our planet by hazardous NEOs, international disaster law may play an important role in the NEO threat mitigation.