

**PDC2019
Washington, DC, USA**

- Key International and Political Developments
- Advancements and Progress in NEO Discovery
- NEO Characterization Results
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Legal Questions Of The PDC2017 Scenario Case Study

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ABSTRACT

At the PDC2017, a hypothetical scenario, in which an asteroid was discovered to be on the course to impact the Earth, was prepared and discussed as a table top exercise. A “world leaders” group was charged with making decisions and authorizing actions to be taken based on the advice from various groups representing scientific/technical, emergency response, and other communities. In this process, a number of legal questions arose. The Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG) Ad-Hoc Working Group on Legal Issues, which was established in 2016 with the purpose of advising SMPAG with regard to legal aspects of planetary defence, addressed these legal issues as part of its work. Questions and answers regarding the PDC2017 scenario were attached to the Report of the Working Group in an Annex. These questions included: Who should participate in a decision-making body – the countries in the impact corridor, the countries possibly affected by a tsunami, the countries whose economy might be affected? How should stakeholders deal with international disagreements or with

states refusing to work together or are in armed conflict? Should a nuclear explosive device (NED) be launched as part of the planetary defence mission, which could be cheaper than several kinetic impactors? Does it make a difference from a legal point of view whether the NED would be used as a “last resort” or not? What are other issues with respect to the use of NEDs under international law? How should one choose in which direction to move the impact point and therefore which countries would be exposed to the impact risk? Would the states involved in the deflection action be held responsible for damage, if the applied technologies failed? How could the compensation of victims be envisaged? The answers formulated by the Working Group to the PDC 2017 scenario questions shall be presented and discussed at the PDC 2019 in order to provide legal background information with respect to similar exercises or real case-scenarios in the future.
