

No Way To Stop Asteroids For at Least 3-4 Years

Dr. Natan Eismont is a senior researcher of the Russian Academy of Sciences at the Research Laboratory of Space Research, Technologies, Systems, and Processes in Moscow. In an interview to ITAR-TASS on March 6 on the threat from near-Earth asteroids and comets, he commented on a number of key aspects of this problem.

Asked whether there is international cooperation to develop ways of monitoring and acting upon asteroids, he replied, "There are discussions and some efforts to establish contacts, but nothing has happened beyond talks."

On whether the threat from asteroids is increasing, he stressed that we don't know, because we don't know how many of them there are or where they are. Optimistic estimations say that 10% of those that might pose a danger to Earth have been identified, and pessimistic evaluations say 2%.

Asked whether it would be possible to prevent Earth impact by a dangerous asteroid, he said flatly, "No, there is not. I would say that it will take a minimum of 3-4 years from today to be able to do anything whatsoever."