ASTRO(2006)13
Paris, 6 October 2006

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

ASTRONOMY WORKING GROUP

Recommendation on the status of the CV2015 programme implementation

At its 126th meeting held on 28-29 September 2006 at the Observatoire de Paris (FR), the Astronomy Working Group (AWG) was presented with the current status of the Science Programme and an update on the status of the Cosmic Vision 2015-2025 (CV2015) Call for Mission Proposals. The AWG was informed that the release of the Call for Proposals has been delayed, following a preliminary report by the Science Programme Review Team (SPRT) to the informal SPC meeting held in ESAC on 6-7 September 2006.

The AWG was informed that the SPRT does not consider the current financial situation of the programme compatible with the launch of a new mission prior to 2020, and has concluded that the existing commitments have to be reduced by approximately 200M€ prior to the release for a Call for new missions to be launched in the 2015-2020 time frame. The AWG was further informed that the decision relative to the release of the CV2015 Call for Mission Proposals has been postponed until after the SPC meeting in November 2006.

The AWG notes that the scientific community has developed considerable momentum in the preparation for the Call for Mission Proposals, with projects and proposals that are in an advanced stage of preparation. A delay will have a significant impact on this activity and on European space science and astronomy as a whole.

The AWG urges ESA to explore near term solutions to avoid any further delay in the implementation of the CV2015 programme.