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**SORVEGLIATI SPAZIALI – A UNIQUE COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE IN
PLANETARY DEFENSE AS A POSSIBLE STARTING POINT FOR THE ITALIAN
INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANETARY DEFENSE**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this talk is to present both the project “Sorvegliati Spaziali – looking up to Space to protect our planet”, and the team’s previous experience in the International Year of Astronomy IYA2009.

Sorvegliati Spaziali is a public dissemination project of the Italian National Institute for Astrophysics entirely dedicated to the Planetary Defense, from Near Earth asteroids and comets to space weather, from meteors and meteorites to space debris, and represents one of the first coordinated public outreach initiative on such topics by a research body.

For the IYA 2009 the Italian single Point of contact was the INAF Communication Office, at that time lead by Leopoldo Benacchio, in which two members of the Sorvegliati Spaziali’s team were actively engaged in all the communication process related to the IYA2009 establishment, exploitation and assessment.

The core of Sorvegliati Spaziali is the Italian entirely graphic and multimedia website sorvegliatispaziali.inaf.it available online since October 2021 (translation in English in progress), which is becoming a national point of reference for scientific and cultural information and in-depth content on Planetary Defense through a variety of original state-of-the-art multimedia communication products.

The working team is also engaged in organizing public multimedia events, such as the Italian Asteroid Day 2022 that had a great public success with 30.000 online unique final users.

The project is developed in collaboration with external research institutions and companies and is endorsed by the Outreach Office of the NASA Planetary Defense Coordination Office.

The IYA2009 marked the 400th anniversary of the first astronomical observation through a telescope by Galileo Galilei. It has been, and still is, a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, with a strong emphasis on education, public engagement, and the involvement of young people, with events at national, regional, and global levels throughout the whole of 2009. IAU played the

main role but, as Galileo was Italian, it was requested that Italy submit a request to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

All the national communication was managed by the INAF Communication Office in which the two of us already worked. We curated the realization of all visual identity material, of the website and managed the organizations of all related events such as an extraordinary exhibition in the Vatican Museums of Rome of old astronomical instruments and books that made the history of Italian and Vatican astronomy, from Galileo until today. Another big effort was the successful IYA 2009 Closing Ceremony that was hosted by the University of Padova, co-organized by IAU and UNESCO, under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy and several Italian institutions and academies, particularly the Accademia dei Lincei of which Galileo was one of the first members.