

The CoRoT Mission – Status and Preliminary Results

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Abstract: The CoRoT (Convection, Rotation and planetary Transits) space mission is the first dedicated space mission designed to search for exo-planets akin to our own. It is a joint effort by France, Austria Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Spain and the European Space Agency. It is specifically designed to search for exo-planets much smaller than hitherto discovered. It was launched in December 2006 on a mission lasting not less than 3 years. Verification and first operations have proven the mission to superceed all expectations. This is of course most relevant in the fact that planets as small as our own Earth are detectable.

In this presentation we describe the experiences of the first 6 months of the mission, the actual status of the mission, the supporting ground based program, and what we expect in the near future. After giving examples of data relevant to the topic of this session, we turn to describing the expected impact of the results of CoRoT on future endeavours such as KEPLER, Extremely Large Telescopes (ELT's) and ultimately Darwin.