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Overview of VSOP-2(ASTRO-G) Project

Abstract: VSOP-2 (VLBI Space Observatory Programme 2) is a successor to VSOP/HALCA in which Japan plays a leading role. The space radio telescope (ASTRO-G) will be launched by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and will be operated as a single radio telescope with a 35,000km diameter, combined with ground radio telescopes. VSOP-2 will attain the angular resolution of about 40 micro-arcseconds at 43 GHz, 2,000 times better than the Hubble Space Telescope, and reveal the relativistic phenomena such as jets around super-massive black holes at the centers of galaxies, and the dynamics in galaxies and stars by observations of masers. VSOP-2 project is now proceeding through the cooperation of the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) and universities and institutes in Japan and all over the world, e.g., Europe, USA, Korea, China, Taiwan. NAOJ is expected to play vital roles in organizing the ground VLBI arrays and upgrading the ground facilities in the east-Asian region, East-Asian VLBI Network (EAVN), and construction and operation of science operation center to maximize science output.

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