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Mini-EUSO: Measurement of the Earth's UV background emission from the ISS as a pathfinder for the JEM-EUSO mission

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The key measurement for any experiment which aims to the observe the elusive Ultra High Energy Cosmic Rays (UHECR) from space is related to the UV background in Earth's atmosphere and at the surface. In view of the planned missions (KLYPVE/K-EUSO, JEM-EUSO) bound for the International Space Station (ISS), a small, compact UV telescope, Mini-EUSO, with the aim to the study the UV night emissions from the Earth, is currently being developed by the JEM-EUSO International Collaboration. The Mini-EUSO detector will be placed at the UV transparent, nadir looking window of the Russian Zvezda module of the ISS. The Mini-EUSO mission has been approved by the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and, under the name "UV atmosphere", also by the Russian Space Agency Roscosmos. Scientific, technical and programmatic aspects of this project will be presented.

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