

SPACE EXPLORATION SYMPOSIUM (A3)
Space Exploration Overview (1)

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JAPAN'S INVOLVEMENT IN SPACE EXPLORATION AND PERSPECTIVES FOR GLOBAL
ENDEAVOURS

Abstract

Japan has participated in the International Space Station (ISS) programme since the late 1980s, and through international cooperation, the nation has accomplished technical and scientific developments such as a space laboratory “Kibo”, advanced cargo transportation “HTV”, human spaceflight technologies and management methods, as well as various knowledge in space medicine and human/life research. Japan’s space programme has also accomplished and envisioned various scientific and engineering missions to the Moon, asteroids and other planets by space probes, and achieved numerous results which have been shared by the global community. The Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched its lunar probe (Selene/Kaguya) that gathered a vast amount of lunar data from 15 instruments, making it the largest-scale lunar mission after the Apollo programme. Its successor, a Moon orbiter (Selene 2) is planned for this decade. JAXA’s Hayabusa mission explored the near-Earth asteroid Itokawa and returned collected soil to Earth in 2010. A new asteroid sample return mission Hayabusa-2 is planned for 2014, as the precursor of a human asteroid exploration. JAXA has also engaged in the study of future human space exploration as a member of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG). Today’s world has been facing many issues and difficulties such as economic crisis, environmental problems, and sustainable development. Japan is not an exception. Under such societal climate, there have been many efforts done by JAXA together with the public and private sectors to continue to put efforts for promoting exploration of outer space for the betterment of human beings. In addition, active international dialogues have helped to pave the way to accelerate global endeavour in space exploration. On 9 January 2014, representatives from over 30 countries in Washington D.C. for the International Space Exploration Forum (ISEF), and Japan, as a participating nation in the forum offered to host the next space exploration dialogue as the follow up of the 2014 ISEF. This paper will provide the overview of Japan’s latest developments in space exploration and discuss a future perspective in this arena including the context of global cooperation.