

28th SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
International Space Exploration Policies and Programmes (2)

Author: Mrs. Valérie Zinck-Dasmien
ESA, The Netherlands, Valerie.Zinck@esa.int

FROM STRATEGY TO PROGRAMMES: HOW ESA'S EXPLORATION STRATEGY IS BEING
TRANSLATED INTO CONCRETE PROGRAMMES

Abstract

Throughout 2014, ESA has consolidated its Space Exploration Strategy leading to the adoption by ESA Member States Ministers in Luxembourg at the occasion of Council meeting at Ministerial level (C-MIN) on 2 December 2014 of a Resolution on Europe's space exploration strategy reaffirming overarching strategic objectives for space exploration ("science", "economics", "global cooperation" and "an inspirational dimension") and reconfirming LEO, Moon and Mars, as the three ESA relevant exploration destinations. The Resolution defines an approach towards the preparation of the next ESA exploration activities, building on past investments and heritage as well as on existing programmes. In addition, the ESA States participating in the ISS Exploitation programme supported financially the activities for the next 3 years ensuring European's continued participation in the ISS partnership. Member States decided also to provide a limited funding for activities devoted to lunar exploration in the frame of the ISS Exploitation programme, in order to exploit synergies between current Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and future Moon activities. This approach reinforces the concept that the ISS Exploitation programme, after 2016, might evolve into an "ISS and Exploration programme" and include additional elements and target exploration destinations beyond LEO. Furthermore, at C-MIN 2014, additional contributions were received in the ExoMars programme, thus ensuring the full implementation of the first ExoMars mission and in the Mars Robotic Exploration Preparation Programme-2, allowing for the adequate preparation of future exploration activities. Progress has also been made at international level (in various fora such as ISECG, ISEF, IMWEG) in advancing a common vision on implementing the next steps of the Global Space Exploration Strategy. It is commonly recognized that any significant and sustainable exploration programme, especially with the shared long-term objective of human missions to Mars, cannot be implemented in isolation by a single country. The European strategy strongly relies on the ambitions, capabilities and commitments of ESA Member States as well as on opportunities offered by global cooperation with international partners. The purpose of the paper will be to describe how this complex process, (combining the European space exploration strategy, the strategy of the individual International Partners and the related, collective reflection conducted in international fora) is being translated by ESA into a coherent set of programmes that are proposed to be implemented in a step-wise approach to the ESA Member States (e.g. at the occasion of the C-MIN in 2014 or at the next one end of 2016).