

HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT SYMPOSIUM (B3)
Governmental Human Spaceflight Programs (Overview) (1)

Author: Dr. Thomas Reiter
European Space Agency (ESA), The Netherlands

Mr. Bernhard Hufenbach
European Space Agency (ESA), The Netherlands

ESA'S SPACE EXPLORATION STRATEGY

Abstract

ESA has in 2014 consolidated its strategy for space exploration focusing on three destinations LEO, Moon and Mars. This work has resulted in the adoption of a resolution on ESA's Space Exploration Strategy at ESA's Council Meeting at Ministerial level held in October 2014 in Luxembourg. It invites ESA's Director General to:

- a) Identify opportunities for exploitation of human-tended infrastructures beyond 2020, including through Europe's participation in projects already initiated by international partners;
- b) Identify opportunities for cooperation in robotic exploration of Moon and Mars, space transportation and associated fields;
- c) Conduct complementary activities leveraging synergies in the development of technologies and systems, as well as in operations, while building on the capabilities available in Member States, and
- d) Continue his dialogue with international partners, both in bilateral and multilateral modes, including within the ISS partnership, with a view to pursuing space exploration endeavours in the framework of a global multilateral cooperative effort.

At the same meeting, ESA Member States committed funding for ESA's space exploration programmes. Funding for the ISS programme up to 2017, development of lunar exploration products, ESA's ExoMars missions in 2016 and 2018 and the Mars Exploration Preparatory Programme has been committed.

ESA has in October 2014 taken over the chairmanship of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG). ISECG was established in response to "The Global Exploration Strategy: The Framework for Coordination" developed by fourteen space agencies and released in May 2007. It provides a forum for participants to discuss their interests, objectives and plans; and to promote global interest and engagement in space exploration. ISECG agencies's work currently on expanding the definition of near-term human exploration missions scenario targeting lunar vicinity and lunar surface and resulting opportunities for advancing science. Senior Agency Management (SAM) representatives of ISECG will review progress achieved at a meeting planned for early October 2015.

This paper will briefly outline the ESA space exploration strategy and summarise the outcome of the ISECG SAM-level meeting. It will then discuss perspectives for future ESA roles in the international space exploration mission scenario, consistent with and derived from the strategy.