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Regional cooperation in space: policies, governance and legal tools (1)

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USING INNOVATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS AS MEANS TO A SPACE POLICY WITH PUBLIC
SUPPORT IN LATIN AMERICA.

Abstract

The Mexican Space Agency was created with the support of the Mexican Congress and Government through a five year long lobbying processes carried out by government officials, members of private industry and universities brought together through the President of the Academy of Engineering of Mexico. This adventure was a rocky road with a lot of challenges, but the objective was met. The learning process of those five years, the previous five, and an additional five, have become 15 years of getting to understand what is needed not only to create but to consolidate a space agency in Mexico and in Latin America in general. In this publication I raise the awareness of how Latin American countries can create their own space agency or consolidate it. Collaborating with these Mexicans, other countries in the region can help learn a road and the policies that worked in a complex environment to develop space activities through creation of the Mexican Space Agency. For this road it is very important above all to involve everyone who has ever spoken or pushed in favor of space exploration in your country, without minimizing youth. First of all build trust with lawmakers responsible of national laws, they are the best way to build an institution that will not depend on one person or one line of thought for its survival and creation. The most important policy will always include transparency, honesty, mutual trust, teamwork, leadership, and passion. The bigger a debate can be created through this principles in a national level, the bigger impact and expectations it will have among your fellow countrymen. Once created, your policy should focus on gaining support and the trust of public opinion, without it you will lose support by politicians and stakeholders. The first sign you'll get will be through budgetary support; together with the involvement of high ranking officials on governance boards. The only road to obtain this is through a policy based on early and easy achievements; avoiding the comfortable roads of bureaucracy or of expensive and difficult projects. This means you have to innovate on the use of space technology at a low cost and with high impact results. Achievements made through innovation will give you a spotlight, you have to use that in your favor to generate pressure for further funds. That way you will be able to go for a strategy that includes your flagship projects.