Paper ID: 35702
oral
student

29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
International Space Exploration Policies and Programmes (2)

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U.S. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION BEYOND 2024

Abstract

The question of a successor to the International Space Station (ISS) was raised several times during the 66th International Astronautical Congress in Jerusalem, Israel - this paper examines the stance of the National Space Policy of the United States of America, various other U.S. legislative documents, and NASA policies toward international cooperation with a particular research interest in what these policies may mean for the future of that cooperation beyond 2024 (end of present U.S. commitment to the support of the ISS). Currently, NASA's plan for humans to reach Mars by the 2030s (Journey to Mars) does not include crewed missions to the surface of the moon, though it does include crewed missions to cislunar space. However, ESA's stated goal as an ISS successor is an international village on the surface of the moon. This is an important question to consider because these are salient issues to policy and exploration decisions that are being set currently by the nations and agencies involved in human space exploration, exploration that is difficult without extensive international partnerships. This paper explores how these policies may specifically affect the future of international cooperation in new endeavors in human space flight.