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COOPERATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SPACE EXPLORATION PROGRAM IN THE
LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGION.

Abstract

Last 70 years have been marked by the development of the space age, leading humanity to unprecedented technological advance in the history of our planet. Humans are the first species to leave the roots of their mother planet, to get into the corners of the solar system. Exploration and conquering of the environment beyond Earth's orbit has captivated people of all ages, regardless of nationality, race or sex. Today, a handful of developed countries are at the forefront of space exploration on Earth's orbit, and only a few countries through national and regional agencies are actively pursuing planetary exploration programs. Nevertheless, developing nations, such as the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), continues without a structured program to enable the region to maintain a consistent and long-lasting space exploration agenda, even though some countries have developed satellite technology (Argentina and Brazil). This is mainly due to the lack of knowledge and interest by governments on the educational and development benefits of investing in the space sector. GRULAC countries have concerns in common regarding to research, tech development and capacity building. Therefore, with the dawn of the space exploration era, region might see that space is the answer for many of these concerns. The key issues for space exploration by GRULAC Countries, as discussed above, will be analyzed next to the key collaborative issues such as capacity building, national-regional efforts and goals, transparency-building, bilateral and multilateral agreements to access and transfer knowledge from one state to another. This paper will discuss the opportunities behind a regional space program, and using it as a driving force for regional development through cooperation. In this vein, the research question is stated as such: How cooperation in the Latin American countries is the key for the development of a strong Space Exploration Program? First will be a general overview of the region in terms of what technology development means in relation to space exploration. Then the paper will provide a short background of what is being done at the national level, regional level and the international level. This paper will analyze taken steps, such as rocketry and satellite development, and the cooperation stages that need to be addressed, it will also suggest possible policy solutions. Finally, there will be a few potential policy suggestions for regional purposes based on the key issues, collaborative issues and how things have been developed up until now.