

IAF HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT SYMPOSIUM (B3)
Governmental Human Spaceflight Programmes (Overview) (1)

Author: Dr. Renato Krpoun
Swiss Space Office (SSO), Switzerland, renato.krpoun@sbf.admin.ch

SWITZERLAND IN SPACE EXPLORATION

Abstract

The starting point of the Swiss ambitions in the exploration of space started during the Moon landings during the Apollo programme with scientific instruments. In the 1990s, Swiss astronaut Claude Nicollier participated in four Shuttle mission, two of which were dedicated to service the Hubble Space Telescope. Switzerland is one of 11 ESA Member States participating in and contributing to the International Space Station ISS, a cornerstone programme of ESA and a shining example of international collaboration between many spacefaring nations. These highlights underline the important link between science and exploration that is today reflected in the Swiss space policy: the development and utilization of space infrastructures to the benefit of society. A founding member of the European Space Agency ESA, Switzerland implements its space policy mainly through its participation in the ESA programmes. In the last decade, Switzerland strongly supported the development of a coherent space exploration strategy in ESA, which culminated in the Resolution on Space Exploration, adopted by Ministers in 2014. The European Exploration Envelope Programme (E3P) as a new ESA programmatic framework to implement its strategy. Through the participation in this programme Swiss actors have access to the procurements, scientific data and international collaboration in the different ESA missions and campaigns. Recently, Switzerland became a member of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG), joining others in the elaboration of the Global Exploration Roadmap (GER) that provides objectives and scenarios for international efforts towards the next steps in space exploration. The Gateway project, the return of humans to the Lunar surface and the start of the campaign to return samples from Mars are the next milestones on the horizon that Switzerland supports and will contribute to with the expertise of our scientific and industrial communities. Switzerland will participate in these projects because we believe that these endeavours will not only inspire the public, but also help improve our understand of our place in the Universe, as well as simultaneously deliver tangible results in science and technology, which are directly applicable on Earth.