

International Space Station Multilateral Coordination Board
June 24, 2010 Meeting Joint Statement

Senior representatives from the five International Space Station (ISS) cooperating agencies unanimously reaffirmed their determination to maximize the benefits from utilization of the ISS while reducing operations costs during a meeting of the ISS Multilateral Coordination Board (MCB) on June 24, 2010. The MCB noted the benefits to future exploration beyond low-Earth orbit through enhanced ISS research, technology development and utilization opportunities.

Working together, the ISS partners have nearly completed assembly of the Station and are operating the ISS for near- and long-term scientific and technological advancement, each contributing with outstanding success in differing but complementary ways. The European Space Agency (ESA), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos) maintain operational laboratories staffed by an international on-orbit crew of six. The Canadian Space Agency (CSA) provides robotic support with the Canadarm-2, the Special Purpose Dexterous Manipulator (Dextre) and the Shuttle's Canadarm-1. Roscosmos provides ISS crew transportation and logistics support with the Soyuz and Progress vehicles; ESA and JAXA provide cargo transportation with the Automatic Transfer Vehicle (ATV) and the H-II Transfer Vehicle (HTV); and NASA provides logistics and cargo transportation with the Space Shuttle as well as overall Program Management. The planning and coordination of these visiting vehicles arriving or departing every two weeks is remarkable.

Looking to the future, the MCB reviewed efforts underway to increase efficiency and further enhance the use of the ISS through standardization of interfaces (such as docking and berthing mechanisms), definition of common transportation requirements, and cost reduction strategies.

The MCB was pleased to learn that the Japanese Space Activities Commission has completed its interim report recommending to the Government of Japan the continuation of ISS operations beyond 2016 emphasizing streamlined operations costs. The Government of the Russian Federation has similarly given its initial approval. In all, the ISS Partners expect to secure, by the end of 2010, final authorization from their governments to continue ISS operations to 2020. Technical analysis on the continuation of the ISS past 2020 is well underway.

The MCB is also working together to develop mechanisms to increase outreach to non-traditional users to fully exploit the ISS for science, engineering, technology development and education. In support of this effort, the MCB approved ESA's request to extend the utilization of its Columbus Laboratory to all member countries of the European Union.

This unparalleled laboratory facility will deliver benefits to humanity while preparing the way for future international space exploration missions.