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President Bush Announces New Vision for Space Exploration Program

Fact Sheet: A Renewed Spirit of Discovery

Renewed Spirit of Discovery

Today's Presidential Action

- Today, President Bush announced a new vision for the Nation's space exploration program. The President committed the United States to a long-term human and robotic program to explore the solar system, starting with a return to the Moon that will ultimately enable future exploration of Mars and other destinations.
- The President's vision affirms our Nation's commitment to manned space exploration. It gives NASA a new focus and clear objectives. It will be affordable and sustainable while maintaining the highest levels of safety.
- The benefits of space technology are far-reaching and affect the lives of every American. Space exploration has yielded advances in communications, weather forecasting, electronics, and countless other fields. For example, image processing technologies used in lifesaving CAT Scanners and MRIs trace their origins to technologies engineered for use in space.

Background on Today's Presidential Action

America's history is built on a desire to open new frontiers and to seek new discoveries. Exploration, like investments in other Federal science and technology activities, is an investment in our future. President Bush is committed to a long-term space exploration program benefiting not only scientific research, but also the lives of all Americans. The exploration vision also has the potential to drive innovation, development, and advancement in the aerospace and other high-technology industries. The President's vision for exploration will not require large budget increases in the near term. Instead, it will bring about a sustained focus over time and a reorientation of NASA's programs.

- NASA spends, and will continue to spend, less than 1 percent of the Federal budget. Our Nation's investment in space is reasonable for a tremendously promising program of discovery and exploration that historically has resulted in concrete benefits as well as inspiring Americans and people throughout the world.

President Bush's Vision for U.S. Space Exploration

The President's plan for steady human and robotic space exploration is based on the following goals:

- First, America will complete its work on the International Space Station by 2010, fulfilling our commitment to our 15 partner countries. The United States will launch a re-focused research effort on board the International Space Station to better understand and overcome the effects of human space flight on astronaut health, increasing the safety of future space missions.
 - To accomplish this goal, NASA will return the Space Shuttle to flight consistent with safety concerns and the recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board. The Shuttle's chief purpose over the next several years will be to help finish assembly of the Station, and the Shuttle will be retired by the end of this decade after nearly 30 years of service.
- Second, the United States will begin developing a new manned exploration vehicle to explore beyond our orbit to other worlds -- the first of its kind since the Apollo Command Module. The new spacecraft, the Crew Exploration Vehicle, will be developed and tested by 2008 and will conduct its first manned mission no later than 2014. The Crew Exploration Vehicle will also be capable of transporting astronauts and scientists to the International Space Station after the Shuttle is retired.

- Third, America will return to the Moon as early as 2015 and no later than 2020 and use it as a stepping stone for more ambitious missions. A series of robotic missions to the Moon, similar to the Spirit Rover that is sending remarkable images back to Earth from Mars, will explore the lunar surface beginning no later than 2008 to research and prepare for future human exploration. Using the Crew Exploration Vehicle, humans will conduct extended lunar missions as early as 2015, with the goal of living and working there for increasingly extended periods.
 - The extended human presence on the Moon will enable astronauts to develop new technologies and harness the Moon's abundant resources to allow manned exploration of more challenging environments. An extended human presence on the Moon could reduce the costs of further exploration, since lunar-based spacecraft could escape the Moon's lower gravity using less energy at less cost than Earth-based vehicles. The experience and knowledge gained on the Moon will serve as a foundation for human missions beyond the Moon, beginning with Mars.
 - NASA will increase the use of robotic exploration to maximize our understanding of the solar system and pave the way for more ambitious manned missions. Probes, landers, and similar unmanned vehicles will serve as trailblazers and send vast amounts of knowledge back to scientists on Earth.

Key Points on the President's FY 2005 Budget

- The funding added for exploration will total \$12 billion over the next five years. Most of this added funding for new exploration will come from reallocation of \$11 billion that is currently within the five-year total NASA budget of \$86 billion.
- In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 budget, the President will request an additional \$1 billion to NASA's existing five-year plan, or an average of \$200 million per year.
- From 1992 to 2000, NASA's budget decreased by a total of 5 percent. Since the year 2000, NASA's budget has increased by approximately 3 percent per year.
- From the current 2004 level of \$15.4 billion, the President's proposal will increase NASA's budget by an average of 5 percent per year over the next three years, and at approximately 1 percent or less per year for the two years after those.

President's Commission on the Implementation of U.S. Space Exploration Policy

To ensure that NASA maintains a sense of focus and direction toward accomplishing this new mission, the President has directed NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe to review all current space flight and exploration and direct them toward the President's goals. The President also formed a Commission on the Implementation of U.S. Space Exploration Policy to advise NASA on the long-term implementation of the President's vision.

Space Technology Affects the Lives of Every American

More than 1,300 NASA and other U.S. space technologies have contributed to U.S. industry, improving our quality of life and helping save lives.

- Image processing used in CAT Scanners and MRI technology in hospitals worldwide came from technology developed to computer-enhanced pictures of the Moon for the Apollo programs.
- Kidney dialysis machines were developed as a result of a NASA-developed chemical process, and insulin pumps were based on technology used on the Mars Viking spacecraft.
- Programmable Heart Pacemakers were first developed in the 1970s using NASA satellite electrical systems.
- Fetal heart monitors were developed from technology originally used to measure airflow over aircraft wings.
- Surgical probes used to treat brain tumors in children resulted from special lighting technology developed for plant growth experiments on Space Shuttle missions.
- Infrared hand-held cameras used to observe blazing plumes from the Shuttle have helped firefighters point out hot spots in brush fires.
- Satellite communications allow news organizations to provide live, on-the-spot broadcasting from anywhere in the world; families and businesses to stay in touch using cellphone networks; and the simple pleasures of satellite TV and radio, and the convenience of ATMs across the country and around the world.

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