

THE NECESSITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL SPACE AGENCY

IN THE ABSENCE OF LENGTH, CONSIDER THE ENTIRE PAPER AN ENLARGED ABSTRACT.
KEY WORDS: INTERNATIONAL, COOPERATION, SPACE

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While those nations actively involved in the exploration of space may have their own priorities and agendas, they are not the sole inhabitants of this world. Nor are they the usual source of natural resources necessary for the construction of space platforms, support equipment, launch sites or other variables needed to perform the task of space travel.

Now that the arms race and the cold war debacle are over and most of the surviving arms manufacturers are attempting to retool their machinery towards peace, much of that existing and newly developing technologies can be utilized for the peaceful exploration of our own solar system and beyond. A few scattered nations and a couple of consortiums are all of the international representation the entire world has in the direction of going off world and exploring beyond our own atmosphere. In deference to a particular television program, space is not the final frontier. We may have traveled over most our little planet, but compared with the rest of the

universe, we've barely begun the journey.

What is needed is some form of unity that can only come from equality in order to acquire a significant quantity of the world's population for this plan to work. If those with a program would begin by supporting a country or two at the beginning, then others may (one hopes) become interested and express a desire to join.

I believe an idea such as this should be evaluated by those in the field. Someone from NASA External Affairs had replied and stated that I should take this idea to the politicians; however, politicians aren't the ones who would be implementing the project. There's undoubtedly more to it than this, but the idea is to make the suggestion to those who would be amenable to the prospect of such an undertaking. A copy of this paper has been sent to the European Space Agency (ESA) and others.

Actively participating member nations within this 'International Space Agency' would have voting rights dealing with the direction of research, development and whatever their particular contribution they have to offer. Many of the lesser developed nations may hesitate to join into this type of venture since their history tends to show that whenever more developed nations moved in, the colonial power took everything they could and left the newly colonized peoples with virtually nothing. It may have been a thing of the past, but unfortunately, some cultures possess extremely long memories and are very capable of retaining grudges for hundreds if not thousands of years.

That is why all participating nations must be on equal footing. History can not be changed, the idea here is to show that certain aspects will not be repeated. History can not be eradicated, but some would require assurance that certain aspects would not be repeated.

Call me a dreamer, but it's been my observation that most people would prefer a job with a steady income versus a civil war with the accompanying strife, and perhaps a daily artillery barrage. It is far more difficult to incite riots when a population is fairly content. If this project works, it could create employment in countries where the economy has a reputation for being at the lower end of the economic scale. Much of the lower technology jobs could be performed in developing nations, which could give them a head start in becoming a developed nation. On a global economic scale, when the lower end improves, it tends to reflect on the higher end. Isn't it strange how human nature plays into the picture?

Barring any incidents where civilization must be rebuilt from ground zero, given the current rate of technological advancements, something called high tech today will be considered child's play in the near future. This would require a fairly massive educational effort, but the benefits would far outweigh continuous fighting. If only those who constantly fight amongst themselves would cease hostilities while off planet. Living in orbit or on the moon and farther out is far more tenuous and performe requires considerable cooperation for all concerned.

The more persons and nations actively involved in a project of this magnitude, the easier it would be for it to take on a life of it's own. Those individuals who would otherwise migrate towards a developed nation in search of better conditions may be tempted to remain home, which would be a relief to their own families, their own government and the country they would have relocated. Life would be so much easier if it could be separated from such perversities as economics, but unfortunately it doesn't seem to work that way. It is also realized that while some governments tend to behave somewhat more reprehensible by some, and those truly capable of running them would not choose to for love nor money. This could be a prime consideration for entry into the program. Some may require inducement to change some of that particular behavior.

People have been sailing the oceans of Earth ever since the first person floated down stream on a log, and probably didn't even know how to swim. If we are to survive as a species, then the very least we can do is to try to set petty grievances aside and endeavor to behave like civilized creatures and attempt some form of international cooperation.