

# Russians Propose Moon-Mars Program, Arctic Development, with U.S.

Jan. 27—Vladimir Popovkin, chief of the Russian Federal Space Agency Roscosmos, on Jan. 20, proposed that the United States and Russia collaborate on a mission to Mars, beginning with establishment of a permanent colony on the Moon. Thus, while President Obama proceeds with the British empire's agenda of taking down the U.S. manned space program, and racing toward thermonuclear confrontation with Russia, the Russians are not only resisting the war moves, but offering joint collaboration on the frontiers of science.

"We don't want man to just step on the Moon," Popovkin asserted. "We are now discussing how to begin the Moon's exploration with NASA and the European Space Agency ... either to set up a base on the Moon or to launch a station to orbit around it."

The Voice of Russia coverage, titled, "Russians are ready to live and work on the Moon," begins by stating: "Russian scientists will settle down on the Moon because a manned station is to be established there soon." It then elaborates plans for a research colony to be built under the lunar surface, both for the purpose of protection from the deadly cosmic radiation which saturates the Moon's surface, and as a way of overcoming the challenges of low-level gravitation.

Igor Mitrofanov, the head of the Space Research Institute at the Russian Academy of Sciences, is quoted, saying that a station on the Moon is necessary, because it will provide the opportunity to develop and test new systems for flights to Mars and other planets. He describes how mankind will use lunar resources for industrial purposes, extracting minerals, building factories, and constructing a lunar cosmodrome from which to launch space vehicles to the remotest parts of the galaxy.

"In the future it may become cheaper and more practical to launch space vehicles, say, to Mars from a lunar cosmodrome, because assembling these apparatuses in the Earth orbit, and overcoming the Earth's gravitational field will be more difficult than sending such expeditions from the Moon."

Mitrofanov reports that it was the recent discovery of the evidence of water on the Moon which has shown that plans for long-term lunar habitation are practicable.



RT.com via LPAC-TV

*Vladimir Popovkin, head of the Russian space agency Roscosmos, proposes that his country and the United States work together to establish a colony on the Moon, as a base for exploration of Mars and beyond.*

"We are planning to carry out experiments which will enable us to go ahead with the exploration of the Moon and its resources. Conditions on the lunar poles differ considerably from those on the equator and moderate latitudes where Soviet and U.S. expeditions landed in the past. Evidence of water has been discovered on the lunar poles and this important fact opens new perspectives for us."

Alexander Alexandrov, advisor to the president of the Energia Rocket and Space Corporation, also highlighted the importance of the polar regions, and stressed that the Moon must be the base from which we expand outwards into the Solar System:

"A base on the Moon is our strategic target. We began to study the Antarctic with building stations as well, and we will study other planets in the same way, paying short visits there and building the required infrastructure. This is a useful thing to do and we will build a station on the Moon by all means."

## NASA's Response

In response to Popovkin's proposal, NASA spokesman Michael Brokus confirmed that in fact American and Russian space experts have already been discuss-

ing plans for lunar exploration, in the framework of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group. “NASA researchers have been meeting with representatives of Russia and nine other foreign space agencies in order to implement coordinated plans for space exploration,” Brokus reported. “The International Coordination Group for the past year has developed a long-term strategy for human exploration of outer space. This ... provides for the expansion of a human presence in the Solar System, focusing on, eventually, the implementation of manned missions for the task of the examination of the Martian surface.”

He added: “The Moon is seen as the ideal place to teach people how to live and work on the surface of other planets. The Moon also contains information about how our Solar System was born, and the potential resources on the Moon can play an important role in expanding the human presence in space. This scenario develops the capabilities necessary to explore and begin to understand how to live self-sufficiently on a planetary surface. . . . When humans arrive on the Moon, they will perform scientific investigations of the polar regions . . . which will improve technology and techniques that are needed for Mars exploration.”

### Arctic Development

Former Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, now a senior voice in Russia’s foreign policy establishment, has proposed that the Obama Administration’s new ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul, would be better off thinking about Russian-American cooperation in the Arctic, than continuing his initial confrontational conduct.

McFaul has a reputation as author of the so-called “reset” of U.S.-Russian relations, Ivanov noted. But he added that the reset is extremely “fragile” at the present time. Therefore, Ivanov proposed an agenda that



NASA

*“The Moon is seen as the ideal place to teach people how to live and work on the surface of other planets,” responded NASA spokesman Michael Brokus to the Russian proposal. Shown: an artist’s concept of astronauts on the Moon, drilling into the lunar surface.*

McFaul should concentrate on, to improve those relations.

1. The first area would be strategic military relations. While expressing confidence that escalation to a “new Cold War” could be avoided, Ivanov warned that “the absence of progress on the missile defense problem is very serious.”

2. Potential trade expansion between the two nations: “The growing problems of the world economy are also nudging us toward closer Russian-American collaboration.”

3. Most striking, Ivanov called for more cooperation in the Pacific region and the joint development of the Arctic, where both the U.S. and Russia have special interests:

“It is necessary to endeavor to expand the geography of our cooperation with the United States. Collaboration on the problem of Afghanistan or North Korea is undoubtedly very important, but such collaboration still does not create a stable and positive basis for bilateral relations. It seems that this year there are two additional strategic opportunities for joint work at a regional level. There is cooperation between the two countries in the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the Russian chairmanship of APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation], and the potential of bilateral (and equally, of multilateral) projects in the Arctic zone, where both countries have extremely substantial interests.”