

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020

Message on Space Exploration Day

July 20, 2020

Today our Nation celebrates the essential role that American space exploration plays in the history and character of our country. We honor our brave astronauts and space industry professionals—both past and present—and we pledge to continue to lead the world in pioneering deeper into space, the stars, and beyond.

This year's observation of Space Exploration Day comes as we commence a new era of human space exploration. Following a 9-year hiatus, American astronauts once again launched into space from American soil on rockets proudly built by American workers. Furthermore, SpaceX Demonstration Mission 2 was the first crewed launch of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Commercial Crew program, marking the first time in history that a commercial company sent humans into orbit.

These monumental feats the past year are tremendous strides forward in bringing our country's space exploration efforts to remarkable new heights. To build on this momentum and reaffirm America's position as the global standard bearer for innovation and as the world's greatest spacefaring nation, my administration has directed NASA to return to the Moon, this time to stay and to build a base of operations to get humans to Mars. Through NASA's Artemis program, the United States will send the next man and the first woman to the surface of the Moon by 2024. Soon, the rover *Perseverance* will launch from Kennedy Space Center, bound for the Jezero Crater on Mars, lighting the way for our brave American astronauts to one day follow. Along with the helicopter *Ingenuity*, we will test powered flight on another world for the first time, unlocking the mysteries of the Red Planet in order to one day plant our great American Flag to proudly fly as a beacon of liberty and American creativity throughout the galaxy.

On Space Exploration Day, we pause and pay tribute to the Nation's legacy of leadership in space and to those who came before us, remembering those who have sacrificed so much for our country's successes and vowing to honor their achievements by continuing the noble pursuit of space exploration and understanding in the 21st century.

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