Remarks of John H Gibbons
Assistant to the President for Science and Technology
on
National Space Policy
before the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics
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Thank you, Skip, for that kind introduction

First, I want to thank the AIAA for working so hard to arrange for this event today

I also want to thank Mary Good from the Department of Commerce, Bob Davis from the Pentagon, and General Jack Daily from NASA, for joining us today

Before I begin, I'd like to take a moment to recognize an individual who has done so much for this Administration and for this country's space program, the Honorable Lionel S (Skip) Johns, Associate Director for Technology, Office of Science and Technology Policy. Over the last three and half years, he has served as a tireless advocate for space in the White House and has made a tremendous difference in affecting the policy process as it relates to space Next month, we will be losing this person to the call of the sea as he begins his retirement and sets off on a year-long sailing adventure that's been some forty years in the making Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in recognizing and thanking Mr Skip Johns for all of his efforts Thank you Skip

When the Clinton Administration took office in January 1993, we were faced with a civil space program that was in need of direction The space station was in jeopardy of cancellation Previous Administration plans to return humans to the Moon and send people to Mars could never be rationalized with the reality of the budget Many thought NASA, as an organization, was adrift with no clear notion of its mission or priorities

The new Administration made an immediate decision to get the space station program on track and realign the management and organizational functions at NASA with budget reality NASA Administrator Dan Goldin (in Cleveland today), more than any single individual, deserves much of the credit for this process Because of the difficult decisions taken at this time, NASA and the space station program have come to symbolize what we meant by the term "reinvention" of federal agencies Moreover, the space station played an important role in advancing our relationship with an old adversary and now, new partner Russia By adding Russia to the space station, we are able to take advantage of their capabilities and expertise, reduce operational risk and save development costs Other actions followed, including convergence of civil and defense functions (later)

Over the past year, OSTP and the NSC, in cooperation with NASA, Department of Defense Department of State Department of Commerce and the intelligence community have conducted a broad interagency review of national space policy The review encompassed at least seven National Space Council directives and related national security directives from previous administrations, some of which had not been revised since 1989 The policy that we are discussing today (a Presidential Decision Directive, or PDD, signed by the President a few days ago) reflects the results of the review, and provides us a single statement on our priorities in the civil, national security and commercial space sectors

Let me mention a few of the important elements of the policy

First of all, the policy restates our commitment to completing the international space station as a laboratory for conducting new and exciting research, as a testbed for supporting future decisions on the feasibility and desirability of further human exploration into the solar system, and as a powerful symbol of what nations can do when they combine their talents for the common good

The policy also restates our commitment to make real progress in improving this nation's capabilities in space transportation In 1994, the President issued a space transportation policy defining a lead role for NASA in reusable launch technology and a lead role for DoD in expendable launch vehicles I think this is an area where the results also speak for themselves Today, Lockheed-Martin is developing the X-33 flight demonstrator, the nation's first major new launch vehicle program in almost two decades DoD is also off and running with the Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program which will aim to dramatically improve ELV's Both of these programs are aimed at dramatically reducing the cost of launch to space The President's space policy is a continuing commitment to these roles and investment responsibilities to provide key options for the future

The President's policy also speaks to one of the most exciting traditions of our space program, exploration and discovery Since Apollo, we have been distant observers of our solar system The President's policy establishes the basis to take the next step, directing a sustained program for measurements from the surface of Mars as well as a program to obtain in-situ sample returns from other planets and celestial objects in our solar system This will take us to a new level of exploration, from long-distance observation to close-up examination and touching

And what better time to rededicate the nation to a clear course of discovery and exploration With the fascinating discovery of possible life on ancient Mars, the missions we will undertake to the red planet and to other destinations will reveal new secrets of the solar system, e g , Galileo/Europa While much remains to be done to conclusively prove the recent Mars findings I think everyone in the scientific community agrees on one thing We want to know more, and to know more we must go further in our exploration efforts beyond Earth

Our strategy for a systematic, step-by-step robotic exploration of Mars will begin with two launches this year The first one--the U S Mars Global Surveyor--will be launched in November Its mission will be to provide a detailed global map of the surface of Mars The second mission--the Mars Pathfinder--will be launched in December with the goal of deploying a small rover on the surface of Mars to explore its terrain and analyze rock composition The lessons we learn from both of these missions, from follow-on Mars missions, and from our experience on the International Space Station, will serve as the basis to determine both the feasibility and desirability of human missions to Mars

The policy also underscores our commitment to continue to serve as an advocate for the commercial space sector This means continued assurance of access to federal facilities on a stable and predictable basis as well as increased uniformity in pricing guidelines for government goods and services, on both the NASA and DoD sides It also means preserving the U S. government's role as a facilitator for, not competitor to, the commercial sector in space.

In addition, the policy directs the USTR to develop a strategy to implement a transition from a quota-based system of managed trade in launch services to a trade environment characterized by free and fair trade Let me dwell on this aspect of the policy for a moment. Over the past five years, the space launch industry has taken on an almost entirely new character Today, we have joint ventures between U S and foreign companies on both the satellite and launch vehicle side that are opening all sorts of new opportunities for business and commerce What we have tried to do is strike the right balance between these competing interest, giving satellite manufacturers and some U S launch companies increased access to foreign capabilities while continuing investments--through the RLV program and EELV program--in U S. launch capability Our agreements with the Ukraine, Russia and China have been structured to accomplish this

While much of what I've said to this point is focused on civilian and commercial space activities, there can be no doubt that access to--and use of-- space is fundamental to our national security. Our use of space is critical to preserving peace and supporting U S national security objectives That is why the policy establishes as key priorities. (1) the need to improve our ability to support military operations worldwide, (2) to monitor and respond to strategic military threats, and (3) to monitor arms control and non-proliferation agreements and activities. That is also why the policy directs relevant national security agencies to develop and maintain the capabilities necessary to ensure our freedom of action in space, and that we will use a range of activities -- to include diplomatic, legal and technological measures -- to ensure our access to space Furthermore, the policy acknowledges the Administration's efforts to develop prudent and cost-effective programs for providing an enhanced theater missile defense capability later this decade and national missile defense program that serve as a hedge against the possible future emergence of long-range ballistic missile threats to the United States

The policy also acknowledges the imperative of improving the coordination and integration of DoD and intelligence community space activities and architectures Based on the broad principles outlined in this policy, the Department of Defense and intelligence community are developing the next level of detail to provide further integrated national security space architectures to take us into the next century

It also recognizes the importance of improving cooperation between the national security sector and the civil space sector You can see this in our strong record of support for the Earth observations activities that provide us the objective information we need for environmental research and management, national security, and sustainable development. This support has been combined with an ongoing commitment to improve the coordination and efficiency of government efforts

DoD, DoC/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DoC/NOAA), and NASA polar-orbiting weather satellite activities are being converged to save taxpayer dollars and our restructuring of the Landsat program has assured the continuation of an accurate long-term land surface data record

We streamlined regulations governing the entry of U S firms to a growing commercial remote sensing marketplace, and we are applying our national security assets to environmental science and natural hazard mitigation, including declassifying some of the historical national security data sets

Our new policy continues this record It directs civilian agencies to plan their future activities within the context of an integrated earth observing strategy that includes the space and surface-based efforts of our international partners It emphasizes continuing the fruitful collaboration between civilian and national security agencies, seek sensible opportunities for further convergence of programs, and encourages technological and procurement innovation. Overall, it establishes a clear policy framework within which the relevant agencies can apply their creativity to program improvement.

This process is underway. NASA is pursuing new science approaches, advanced technologies and innovative procurement mechanisms that hold significant promise for reducing long-term costs for the space program The national security agencies are examining new innovative architectures for their systems DOD, DOC/NOAA, and NASA are identifying options for increasing savings through cooperation We are confident that the policy described released today provides a firm foundation for the future

In commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Apollo landing, President Clinton had these words to say

> By advancing a program in robotic exploration using smaller, less costly spacecraft, we can further expand our understanding By renewing our commitment to human space flight in concert with other nations, we can strengthen the bonds of international friendship, while fostering the technological development that holds the key to long term economic growth By completing our "Mission to Planet Earth," we will gain unique insight into our planet's dynamic environment We have one chance to keep our covenant with generations to come--safeguarding the thin blue shield that sustains all of earth's inhabitants "

The policy we've released today is the blue-print for expanding our understanding of the universe, encouraging technical innovation, and strengthening our national security and international science and technology cooperation, all of which will ensure that we can keep the covenant we have with future generations for years to come

Thank you very much