



## *Washington DC 11-12 October, 2005*

### **First announcement**

In January 2004, the President of the United States G.W. Bush Jr. launched the idea of a major space programme oriented towards the human exploration of the Solar System, with a return to the Moon as a first step, this time to stay.

The Aldridge Commission report: "A Journey to Inspire, Innovate and Discover", recognised that this ambitious plan will significantly help the United States to protect its technological leadership economic vitality and security. The same vision is valid also for Italy and Europe. What is more, we feel that it is also of major cultural and historical importance, as a human presence outside the Earth is a crucial passage for all of mankind. Italy, which in the past made courageous choices with regard to space (it was the third country, after Russia and the USA to launch its own satellite) emphatically welcomed the prospect.

And so a working group was set up by the Solidarietà e Sviluppo Association (Italy) and High Frontier, Inc (USA), involving participants from industry, associations, institutions and research institutes to analyse the national capabilities and expertises with a view to participating in the realisation of a permanently manned lunar base.

It was on these premises that the International Conference Moon Base: a Challenge for Humanity project was conceived, consisting of two workshops: the first of which was held on 26th and 27th May 2005 in Venice, Italy while **the second will be held in Washington DC, USA, on 11th and 12th October 2005.** The aim is an important and ambitious one: to define the operative, programmatic and legal scenario in which to develop a bilateral USA-Italy agreement, aimed at the realisation and utilisation of a permanently manned Lunar Base.

The event is aimed at all those players who operate in this field, and is an opportunity to verify the feasibility of the Moon Base programme and divide the bilateral vision which is the keystone of the project, also on institutional levels, so that through discussions with the technical-scientific community, it can be possible to incorporate the programmatic content, and assess the opportunity which is being offered. The Congress held in Venice in the International Academy of Environmental Sciences on the island of S. Elena, which was an initial opportunity for comparison and discussion on the programmatic points, was a starting point for the implementation of this project. Its main function was that of defining all the issues related to the realisation of a complex programme such as a permanent presence of humans on the Moon, rightly considered as humanity's foremost adventure in the decades ahead.

At the various sessions the fundamental scientific-technological issues (feasibility, possible operative scenarios, opportunities for the development of qualifying technologies) were discussed, national superiority in the field of manned orbiting systems, of the relative sub-systems and of support logistics were presented, and both technological innovations and the implementation of initiatives aimed at scientific literacy among the younger generation were illustrated. The contributions from the speakers and the related discussions resulted in some important objectives:



- The convergence of the various participants in considering the realisation and utilisation of a manned Lunar Base as a fundamental element of future space activities was confirmed;
- The capacity of the Italian socio-economic system to play an efficacious integrated and complementary role in future scenarios of development and in the operation of the Lunar Base was demonstrated;
- The philosophy behind the project itself, which is the idea of realising a “Condominium of Observatories” in which resources and knowledge are provided on commensurate levels by the various partners, was defined.

The event was also an opportunity to underscore the political desire in Italy and in the United States to bring bilateral cooperation to evolve also in the context of Human Space Exploration, receiving, among other things, important recognition at the highest levels of Italian and American institutions.

The Washington Congress is backed by the Italian government (the Presidency of the Council of Ministers), by the Italian Embassy in the United States and by the American government (the State Department). It is the natural next step in the Moon Base project and is aimed at defining the guide lines of a common US and Italian vision within which answers can be supplied to the questions raised in Venice, in particular by:

- proposing methods of solutions to the critical points on the programme that had been identified during the Venice Congress, which is to say by verifying the feasibility of the project;
- defining, with regard to the “Condominium”, the possible users of the resources for scientific and technological ends (observation of the universe, observation of the earth, energy production, biological and physiological research, etc.);
- identifying the possible technological advantages, in terms of the products and/or services, derived from the inevitable spin-offs generated by so ambitious and far-reaching programme;
- discussing the legal and diplomatic aspects which could guarantee the involvement of the international community (in the first place the ISS community), so as to arrive at an open and coordinated participation.

With this in mind the aim is also to provide a significant opportunity for industry players and decision makers from both nations to meet and contribute to a strategy of bilateral cooperation aimed at Human Exploration of Space, first the Moon – this time to stay. With the aim of attaining these goals the preparation of the Congress provides for the setting-up of five working groups with the aim of probing the issues which are held to be of greatest interest in the various fields and to provide descriptions and models for solutions to the public:



- The design(s) of the Moon Base and its deployment;
- The varied activities, uses and applications of the Moon Base, starting with the deployment and operation of a Condominium of Observatories;
- Space Transportation Infrastructure and Back-up;
- Economic/political/legal aspects and institutional aspects: the Rules of the Road for the development and uses of the resources of the Moon and beyond;
- RDT&E Technology Testbeds for enabling Space exploration technologies and missions support in Cis- and Trans-Lunar Space;

The Congress will be organised in four sessions, which will be modelled on the working groups, at which the results obtained by the groups will be presented, together with contributions from invited speakers.

The conclusion of the Congress will be the production of an analytical and summary document (Moon Base Report) which will be distributed through the various information channels and made public on the official web site. In order for it to be a valid help in the development of bilateral agreements, it will be sent to all the institutions which showed appreciation for the Venice and Washington DC workshops and for the initiative in general.

During the preparatory stage the Congress is open to new collaborations and participation on various levels:

- Organisational contributions inside the existing working groups;
- Contributions to discussions open to all, through the presentation of articles and material which will be published in the proceedings of the Congress under the miscellanea section.

It is obvious that the Washington, DC workshop is of an institutional rather than of a technical/scientific character and it is therefore aimed at members of executive and legislative institutions. It is therefore expected and hoped that Congressmen, members of parliament, governors and heads of public institutions involved in the specific field will attend the event.

Detailed information as well as documents and contributions relating to the Congress will be published on the official web site:

[www.moonbase-usa.org](http://www.moonbase-usa.org)