

Why a Space Program for Latin America is an Enterprise to Advance Society

A Space Program is a social advance because space is an enterprise that requires the finest and highest human values to succeed, every society with a space program has reaped benefits from it.

A Space Program needs education, science, technology, leadership, entrepreneurship, courage, valor, ingenuity, financial wisdom, dedication, perseverance, faith in oneself. But in contrast to other fields, the space gods are unforgiving, they do not tolerate the slightest mistake, nor do they consider a margin for error: This is a field where you have to get it right at the first try.

This is why a Space Program challenges us to overcome our shortcomings, to be ruthless in the search of the scientific truth, to think in the unthinkable, to be disciplined, stark and even ascetic in our words as they are what bounds and compromise us, serious and responsible in our work, careful, punctual, because a launch waits for no one, to deliver exactly what our word, written or spoken had promised, cause the laws of nature abhors lies. This, and more, is what it takes to defy the unthinkable and to conquer the impossible, because 'unthinkable' and 'impossible' are the fences that hold mankind bound to earth while its true destiny lies among the stars, that is why a space program is a duty for mankind.

And if it has been said that mankind's ultimate destiny lies among the stars and it is its duty to reach for them, then space is for mankind and We, Latin Americans, are mankind too.

It is not the goal, is the road: Because only the highest challenge bring forth in us the best and the sublime, because it is through hardship that the human soul achieves the shiniest bright, because societies are made of people, and when those peoples face the greatest challenges there is when they grow and move forward, and when one society advances, the whole world moves forward, cause their effort becomes example and inspire other peoples in other nations.

And maybe the most important result is the image of the Latin American citizen in the mirror of his soul, to know him or herself capable and worthy of the same feats that other great nations have conquered, to believe in him or herself, because only the one who believe in oneself dares, and only who dares achieve and we always hear that Latin America has many shortcomings and has a lot to achieve first, then much it needs first to believe that it can.

But doing is needed to demonstrate and one has to demonstrate in order to believe, and on that, nothing beats astronautics, because it is the highest challenge, the final frontier, because the sky will forgive no mistake, because the heaven favors the strong and the bold, because there is nothing higher than the sky and if our work, ingenuity and passion can touch the sky, everything beneath it will be just waiting there for us to take it.

Ronnie Nader, Cdr. - 1st Ecuadorian Cosmonaut - Head of the Ecuadorian Civilian Space Program
IAF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Group - Vice President