

Russia to exhibit new Clipper spaceship

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Russian officials said Wednesday their country's new Clipper spaceship will never become an alternative to the U.S. space shuttles.

The Novosti news agency Wednesday quoted Anatoly Perminov, director of the Russian Space Agency, as saying: "Clipper will not be able to become an alternative to the shuttles neither by amount of astronauts transported by the ship, nor by loading capacity. That is why the assumption made by the media that with Clipper, Russia will be able to stop using Space Shuttles is not true."

Russia will exhibit a full-scale model of Clipper during the MAKS international airspace show opening in Moscow next week, Perminov added.

Officials said Clipper is to replace the disposable Soyuz spacecraft that is currently used to supply the International Space Station.

The main difference of the Clipper from the U.S. space shuttle project and the Russian shuttle Buran is that it is made of two parts and only the piloted compartment is capable of multiple uses.

The hardware compartment is disposable, just as are current Russian spaceships. One Clipper spacecraft will be capable of 25 space missions, MosNews reported.

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