

Russia planning new space platform

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Russia is developing a space platform from which missions to the moon and Mars could be launched, the Russian space agency said Tuesday.

Space agency head Anatoly Perminov said the project is expected to be up and working after 2020, with the first moon mission slated for 2025, the Russian information agency Novosti reported.

Perminov said any Mars mission, projected after 2035, is seen as an international effort because of the costs and technical expertise involved.

Once the International Space Station is decommissioned between 2016 and 2025, Russia plans to deploy a low-earth-orbit platform to be used to assemble spacecraft, Perminov said. He said Russia plans to continue using the ISS as a laboratory complex until 2020 although the United States says the facility should be scrapped by 2015.

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