

China plans first spacewalk in 2008

1 March 2008

A Chinese space official said China is preparing for the manned space program's first spacewalk later this year.

Xinhua, China's state-run news service, said Chinese astronauts would be aboard the Shenzhou VII spacecraft when it is launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the northwestern province of Gansu. Along with the spacewalk, the mission will include the release of a small satellite.

China's manned space program, started in 1999, successfully sent its first astronaut into orbit in 2003.

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