

Russia considers interplanetary travel

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Russian Space Agency officials say they are considering preliminary planning for a new space station and the advent of interplanetary travel.

The International Space Station, an international effort of which Russia is part, is to be dismantled after 2015 and replaced with a new orbital station, the official Novosti news agency reported.

"It is necessary because at present we can monitor less than 10 percent of Russian territory, but with a new station the coverage will be increased tenfold," said Vitaly Davydov, deputy head of the agency.

He said such a new space station would be used to produce materials that are impossible to manufacture on Earth and to improve the methods of remote monitoring of the Earth.

Davydov also announced Russia plans to test technologies for space travel to the moon and Mars in 2015-25.

"And," he added, "after 2025 we are planning to start the preparation for interplanetary missions."

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