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Statement by

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National Aeronautics and Space Administration

*On the cooperative agreement between the United States and
Russia on Space, Aeronautics and Science.*

The joint statements on space, aeronautics and scientific cooperation signed today by Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin signal a new era for NASA and a new direction for space flight.

For the first time since the dawn of the Space Age, the conditions that gave rise to space exploration have changed. Our presence on the space frontier began as a product of the Cold War, but that ideological struggle is now over. Cooperation will replace competition, and a new partnership in space between two former adversaries offers considerable economic advantages for both countries. The cross pollination of ideas between our two spacefaring nations will be healthy and potentially profitable. Russian participation will not have a significant impact on U.S. jobs. There will be areas where we rely on proven Russian systems. But joint developments will provide enhanced technology to U.S. companies and will lead to new jobs.

The development of a common space suit and a common environmental control and life support system, for example, represent new industrial opportunities for American and Russian companies. In developing a solar dynamic power system, a new way to generate power in space, the engineering expertise that will be brought to bear by both countries is robust and wide ranging.

These are just some of the examples of new opportunities that will come with this new partnership. We will be investigating additional opportunities for

joint ventures between Russian and American industries in concert with the Department of Commerce.

We must have a long-range vision of the prospects of joining with the Russians. While there may be minor dislocation of people working on the space station program, we must lift our view to the benefits that will come to future generations. Our children's future should dominate our thinking, not our near-term concerns.

Both the United States and Russia have significant experience and maturity on the space frontier. Through closer cooperation, our shared capabilities as explorers will only improve, and by pooling resources, we can keep costs down.

The cooperative ventures now under study represent an advantageous blend of Russian and American capabilities. The program baseline for the space station will be based on the designs already developed by the U.S. and our partners in Europe, Japan and Canada. Russian participation in the space station program could be readily accommodated with the modular redesigned space station that we have been working on.

The results of the Russian study and the benefits of Russian participation will be incorporated into a design that will evolve in consultations between all the international partners over the next two months. We expect to present a formalized program that provides for full agreement with our partners and consultations with and approvals by our respective governments by November 1, 1993. This new approach will make a better space station that can provide more robust science and technology and is infinitely more capable and safer to operate.

In a larger sense, a truly international space program could signal a new era of peace and cooperation among nations. I believe the possibilities inherent in these agreements hold special promise, not just for the U.S. space program, but for all of the space exploration efforts of the people of Earth. Our ability to study the Earth, to improve our talents as space explorers, and to ply the seas of space is improved dramatically by this new cooperative adventure. It is our common human heritage as explorers, as seekers of knowledge and pathfinders to new horizons that will benefit. As a hallmark of international collaboration, our work in space can truly point the way to a bright and exciting future.