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Humans should first go to Mars and then on the Moon
NASA

[First Mars, Then Moon, Claims Planetary Society](#)

Mars and near-Earth asteroids should be our primary space targets

While one of our [previous articles](#) stated the exact opposite of what you've just read, now, NASA is advised otherwise by experts from the Planetary Society (a team of space experts and enthusiasts from more than 125 countries). In a recent [report](#), they claim that the plans made by president Bush, which saw a manned mission back to the Moon by 2020, should be widened, and the focus of space missions taken beyond Earth and Moon.

As such, they believe that the first target should be the small near-Earth asteroids, in order to test and prove the prowess of the new technology and to properly get accustomed to the harsh laws of the outer space. When ready, the next big step is that of finally putting humans on Mars, an ambitious old dream that never came true. This, believe the society's officials, would be achieved after the replacement of the current space shuttles is up and running, in 2015, as they strongly oppose the idea of postponing the retirement of the current spacecraft.

"We'd like to see a human exploration program with specific milestones that gets people out above low-Earth orbit, out to other destinations," shared to [New Scientist](#) the president of the society, Jim Bell from the Cornell University. "We're not against going to the Moon, but there's perhaps a more logical flow that could be developed. Going to the Moon may make sense at the right time," since Mars is "new and different and exciting. Scientifically, it also has the potential to be very rewarding," added Bell.

Also, Bell suggested that an international joint effort in funding, expertise and manpower might make this whole idea more likely, especially with the new nations that take to the space stage, such as China, India, South Korea, Cuba and Brazil. "Some nations may choose to participate, some may not. Let's get it out there and leave the door open to those possibilities. Pragmatically, it may save NASA some money," admits Bell, also indicating that an effort of this magnitude "can also be applied to other problems like climate change."