



European Astrobiology Network Association

**Stockholm Astrobiology Declaration
to the national representatives in the Council of ESA**

The European Astrobiology community has gathered during their annual assembly in Stockholm October 15-17, 2012.

The ExoMars Programme is the first ESA mission addressing Astrobiology, the quest for habitability and life on other planets, a topic of profound scientific and public interest. It is the logic follow-up action of ESA's successful Mars Express mission, which has enabled an in-depth revisiting of Martian history and, in particular, of the role played by water in the most ancient times. Specifically, the mission demonstrated that Mars once harbored environmental conditions of potential habitability. These key discoveries paved the way for further Mars exploration. With ExoMars the next steps towards the discovery of life beyond Earth will be within reach.

We are writing this declaration in the name of all European scientists working in the field of Astrobiology and interested in maintaining Europe's capabilities and aspirations on Mars exploration, as well as reaping the fruits of 10 years of efforts to establish European pre-eminence in this field. As our national representatives in the Council of ESA we plead that you take the necessary steps to reinforce the ExoMars Programme and support the coming decision of ESA to commit launching the astrobiology ExoMars rover mission in 2018, as planned.

Robotic exploration of the Solar System has been endorsed by the European Commission Space Advisory Group SAG, with Mars as the ultimate destination. It has been recommended that a comprehensive Robotic Mars Exploration Programme under European leadership should become an essential element of a coordinated international space research programme.

There is a need for a consolidated shared vision for robotic exploration of Mars and other Solar System objects consistent with an international vision, while retaining the European leadership in essential elements of those programmes. In the name of the scientific community we ask you to kindly support the European spirit of progress and make the ExoMars programme a reality.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gerda Horneck', is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Gerda Horneck
President of the European Astrobiology Network Association EANA
(on behalf of the members of the Executive Council of EANA)

Annex

Members of EANA Executive Council and European astrobiology scientists supporting this declaration:

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