



**REPORT**  
**PANEL: LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON LUNAR EXPLORATION**  
**RELACA EVENT**  
**BRASÍLIA - BRAZIL**  
**MAY 22, 2026.**

**OPENING**

The panel was officially opened with an institutional video message delivered by Giuseppe Reibaldi, President of the Moon Village Association, who congratulated both ReLaCa and the Brazilian Space Agency (AEB) for the organization of the event.

During his address, Giuseppe Reibaldi also officially announced that the *International Moon Day Main Event* will be held for the first time in Latin America, in Bogotá, Colombia, on July 20, 2026.

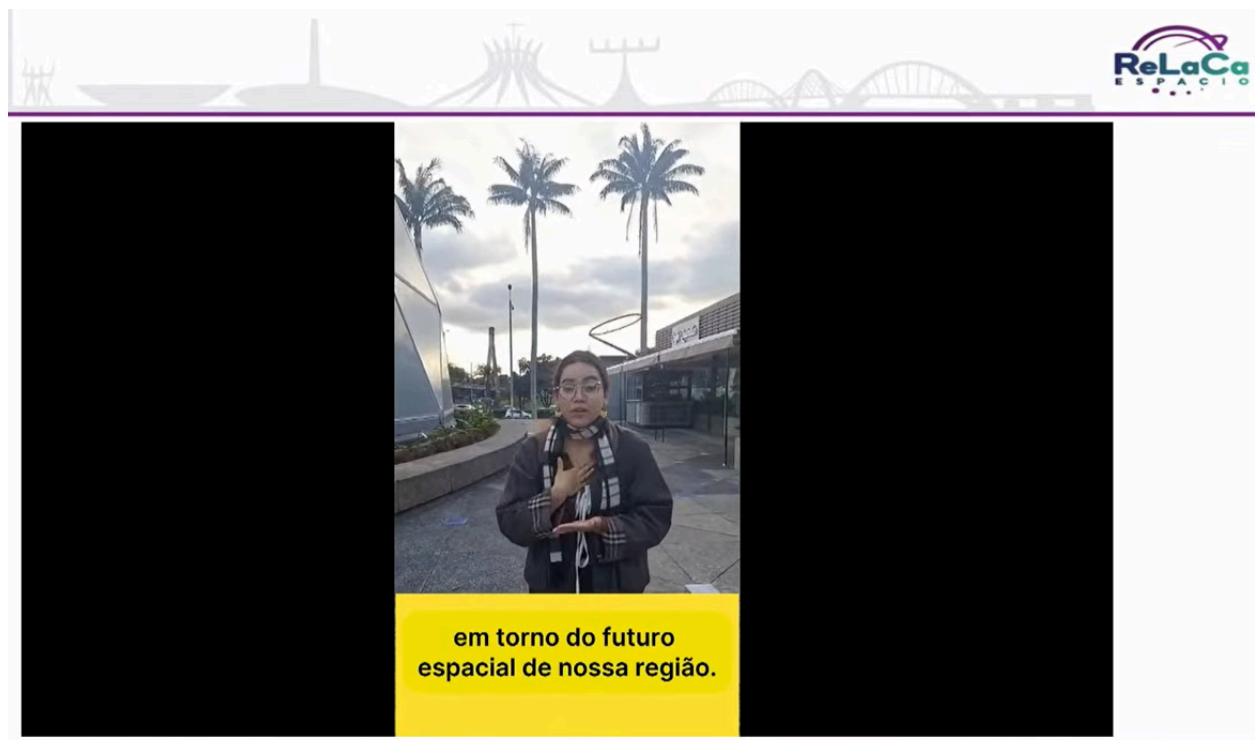
He further emphasized the importance of strengthening Latin American participation in lunar exploration initiatives and highlighted the creation of the *Latin American Lunar Exploration Working Group* of the Moon Village Association, whose official launch took place precisely during the panel session.





Additionally, the Colombian National Coordination, through a video presentation delivered by Co-Coordinator Gabriela Cárdenas Ortiz, introduced the **International Moon Day Main Event** to be held in Bogotá, Colombia, on July 20, 2026.

The presentation highlighted the significance of hosting the event in Latin America for the first time, emphasizing Colombia's commitment to international cooperation, space education, and the strengthening of regional participation in lunar exploration initiatives.



## GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE PANEL

The panel discussed the challenges and opportunities related to Latin America's participation in the new era of lunar exploration, especially in light of the advancement of international initiatives such as the Artemis Program and other space governance architectures. The participants repeatedly emphasized several central themes:

- the need for Latin American regional cooperation;
- institutional and educational strengthening;
- a balanced role between the State and private initiative;



- building social legitimacy for space investments;
- human capital development;
- academic integration;
- the use of the region's own capabilities;
- the importance of multilateral mechanisms such as ALCE and RELACA.

The debate also officially marked the launch of the Moon Village Association's Latin American Lunar Exploration Working Group.

## SUMMARY OF EACH PARTICIPANT'S REMARKS

### RODRIGO VESULE FERNANDES (MODERATOR)

Rodrigo Vesule opened the panel by contextualizing the historical importance of hosting the International Moon Day Main Event in Latin America, especially in Bogotá, highlighting that discussions on lunar exploration are beginning to gain regional prominence.

**He officially presented the launch of the Latin American Lunar Exploration working group, dedicated to Latin American lunar exploration, explaining that its objectives would include:**

- **assessing the level of space development in the region;**
- **identifying opportunities for Latin American participation in lunar exploration;**
- **integrating the public sector, private sector, and academia;**
- **fostering regional cooperation.**





Throughout the panel, Rodrigo guided the debates by connecting different themes:

- New Space;
- political legitimacy;
- space education;
- international cooperation;
- regional governance;
- Latin American participation in lunar programs.

In his concluding remarks, he reinforced:

- the importance of multilateralism;
- regional integration;
- strengthening space education;
- the invitation to participate in the Latin American working group.



## RODRIGO LEONARDI (BRAZILIAN SPACE AGENCY – AEB)



### Question by the moderator:

“Considering the advancement of international initiatives such as the Artemis Program and future lunar exploration programs, what pathways could Brazil and Latin America develop in order to strengthen their participation as relevant players in these initiatives?”

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Rodrigo Leonardi emphasized that Latin America must actively participate in the new phase of lunar exploration, and not merely as a symbolic observer.

Main ideas:

- Current lunar exploration has a strong geopolitical dimension.
- Latin America must act multilaterally.
- The region must identify its own strategic capabilities.

Leonardi argued that Latin American participation does not depend solely on “classical” space technologies (rockets, astronauts, spacecraft), but also on capabilities already mastered regionally.

The main example presented was:

- space agriculture.



According to him:

- Brazil possesses enormous agricultural expertise;
- agricultural technologies will need to be reinvented for lunar environments;
- this creates real opportunities for Latin American participation.

He also highlighted:

- the use of regolith for lunar construction;
- the adaptation of simple technologies to lunar environments;
- the importance of listening to scientists, engineers, and local industry before defining national strategies.

In conclusion:

- he defended ALCE;
- stated that Brazil may eventually integrate regional mechanisms;
- stressed that the Brazilian Space Agency's current priority remains addressing terrestrial societal needs;
- argued that the leading Artemis countries must concretely demonstrate how the rest of humanity will be included in lunar exploration.

## **JAIRO BECERRA (UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE COLOMBIA)**





**Question by the moderator:**

“Today we live in the era of New Space, characterized by the growing participation of the private sector. However, especially in emerging countries, favorable conditions for investment in the space sector do not always exist. In your view, does the State play a fundamental role in creating this environment, or can this development occur predominantly through private initiative?”

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Jairo Becerra focused his remarks on the relationship between the State and the private sector within the context of New Space.

Central argument:

No emerging country will be able to develop its space sector relying solely on the State or solely on the private sector.

He defended:

- a balanced combination between both;
- the State as coordinator and regulator;
- the private sector as an economic and innovation driver.

Main points:

- the private sector legitimately seeks profit;
- public interests must be protected by the State;
- regulation does not mean prohibition, but organization.

As a practical example, he presented the case of the Colombian Ocean Commission:

- limited public budget;
- articulation among stakeholders;
- international cooperation;
- subsequent development of the Colombian Antarctic Program.

Becerra argued that:

- space policies require institutional coordination;
- the private sector cannot adequately self-regulate;
- artificial intelligence was used as an analogy for the risks of the absence of regulation.



His intervention had a strong institutional and political focus.

### CAROLINA CATANI (CONAE – ARGENTINA)



#### Question by the moderator:

“In contexts marked by urgent social demands, what are the challenges involved in building political and social legitimacy around public investments and long-term policies aimed at space and lunar exploration?”

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Carolina Catani mainly addressed:

- social legitimacy;
- public investment;
- the cultural construction of space activities.

She highlighted that, in developing countries, the following question frequently arises:

“Why invest in space when there are urgent social problems?”

Her response was based on two concepts:

- the difference between “spending” and “investing”;
- the need to transform science and technology into social development.



Main arguments:

- space activities reduce inequalities;
- connectivity and information are essential;
- space technology impacts agriculture, health, and education;
- society needs to understand the purpose of the space sector.

She criticized the perception that space exploration would be merely:

“an expensive friends’ club.”

She also emphasized:

- job creation;
- the development of national capabilities;
- the need for public-private ecosystems;
- the importance of multidisciplinary space education.

She used examples from Argentine agriculture and the use of space data for agricultural monitoring and productive development.

### **HEBE ROMERO (PARAGUAYAN SPACE AGENCY)**





**Question by the moderator:**

“In countries where the space sector is still undergoing institutional consolidation, what is the importance of human capital development, education, and the construction of a space culture in enabling sustainable participation in future lunar exploration initiatives?”

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Hebe Romero focused her remarks on:

- human capital development;
- building a space culture;
- education as the structural basis of the space sector.

She presented the case of Paraguay as an example of a country in the early stages of consolidating its space institutions.

Main points:

- the Paraguayan Space Agency is less than 10 years old;
- the initial focus was on education and training;
- the priority was not sophisticated infrastructure, but human development.

She highlighted initiatives such as:

- Geolab and SpaceLab laboratories;
- workshops;
- conferences;
- internships;
- courses;
- artistic competitions for children.

Her central idea was:

“without space culture and without human talent, there can be no sustainable participation in lunar exploration.”

She also emphasized:

- the multidisciplinary character of space activities;
- the importance of bringing society closer to the benefits of space;
- the need to begin with basic education.



## OLAVO BITTENCOURT NETO (UNISANTOS)



### Question by the moderator:

“Within the context of education, what is the importance of international academic cooperation for the training of professionals in the space sector, considering this new era of lunar exploration?”

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Olavo Bittencourt Neto addressed:

- international academic cooperation;
- regional integration;
- strengthening Latin American space research.

He argued that:

- the region's challenges are concrete;
- there are structural difficulties in funding, research, and education;
- academic cooperation is essential to overcome national limitations.

Main ideas:



- avoiding duplicated efforts among researchers;
- sharing data and sources;
- creating regional synergies;
- developing common agendas.

Olavo observed that:

- Latin American space policies pursue similar objectives;
- space is regionally viewed as an instrument for economic and social development.

He also highlighted:

- the importance of transforming academic contacts into lasting relationships;
- the need for concrete results;
- the strategic role of events such as RELACA.

His conclusion was summarized in the phrase:

“Together we will always be stronger.”

## **JUAN MANUEL DE FARAMIÑÁN (UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN)**





**Question by the moderator:**

“What lessons from the European experience are most relevant for guiding Latin American participation in a future space — and eventually lunar — economy?”

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Juan Manuel de Faramiñán analyzed the European experience as a potential model for Latin American space integration.

Main arguments:

- ESA demonstrates that different countries can cooperate effectively;
- Latin America needs to build a common vision;
- regional multilateralism is essential.

He presented ALCE as:

- a possible Latin American equivalent to ESA;
- a strategic instrument for regional integration.

He also observed:

- historical political difficulties in Latin American integration;
- economic differences;
- institutional instability;
- frequent governmental changes.

Faramiñán partially criticized the logic of Artemis:

- he warned about risks of dependency;
- he compared the program to “sirens” capable of attracting countries without guaranteeing real autonomy.

He defended:

- regional strengthening;
- greater Brazilian leadership;
- Latin American technological cooperation.

His conclusion used a quotation attributed to Marcus Aurelius:

“What is good for the hive is good for the bee.”



Applying the idea to Latin American space integration.

## **MAIN CONSOLIDATED THEMES OF THE PANEL**

### **1. Regional Cooperation**

There was general consensus that:

- no Latin American country will be able to advance alone;
- regional integration is strategic.

### **2. Space Education and Space Culture**

A recurring theme throughout nearly all remarks:

- talent development;
- public awareness;
- social legitimacy.

### **3. Multilateralism**

The participants defended:

- international cooperation;
- strengthening regional mechanisms;
- active Latin American participation in lunar governance.

### **4. Lunar Exploration as Development**

The Moon was treated:

- not only as a scientific objective;
- but also as a technological, economic, and political opportunity.

### **5. The Need for Indigenous Capabilities**

The region must:



- identify its strengths;
- develop local capabilities;
- avoid excessive external dependence.

**Broadcast Information:**

- **YouTube Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctahLFcu4Ww&t=1300s>
- **Duration:** 51 minutes
- **Languages Spoken:** Portuguese and Spanish

