

August 24, 1990

Cable from Brazilian Foreign Ministry to Embassy in Washington, 'Outer space. Complete Brazilian spatial mission. Launching of Brazilian data gathering satellite by foreign rocket.'

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Summary:

In this cable addressed to the Brazilian embassy in Washington, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry summarizes the main goals and activities of the Brazilian space program. It reports the shortage of funds and personnel that the program suffered during the 1980s and indicates that they were the main cause of delay in the development of the Brazilian space launch vehicle (SLV) in tandem with the restrictions imposed by the MTCR.

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Translation - English

CONFIDENTIAL

To: Embassy in Washington'

DMAE/DCA/DCTEC/DCS/

Outer space. Complete Brazilian spatial mission.

Launching of Brazilian data gathering satellite

by foreign rocket.

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Date: 24-08-90

For information. As Your Excellency already knows, the progress achieved by the Institute of Space Research - INPE (linked to the Secretariat for Science and Technology) and by the Institute of Space Activities - IAE (subordinated to the Ministry of the Air Force) has permitted the Brazilian Commission of Space Activities (COBAE) to start in 1979 an ambitious space program involving the active participation by those two institutions. On that occasion the Complete Brazilian Space Mission came into being. It envisaged the construction of two small data gathering satellites for environmental purposes (of the SCD series) and two small remote sensing satellites, as well as the development of the Satellite Launching Vehicle (VLS) stemming from the SONDA rocket family, previously utilized by the Ministry of the Air Force. INPE was responsible for the conception of the project and the carrying out of the construction and integration of the "SCD-1".IAE was tasked with the elaboration and construction of the VLS. The main purpose of the MECB was the technological capacitation of the centers of research, industry and Brazilian technicians through an integrated project.

2. Both projects were delayed as a result of recurring budget cuts. The program of development of the VLS also suffered, starting in 1987, from the consequences of embargoes on foreign sales of materials and technology transfers imposed by the member countries of the Missile Technology Control regime (MTCR) and particularly by the United States of America.

3. According to the Brazilian aeronautic authorities, the original project of the launching vehicle contemplated wide use of parts and systems manufactured in other countries, chiefly France and the USA, since the use of the scarce human and financial resources in the total elaboration and manufacture of the VLS did not seem justified. After the advent of the MTCR, however, the American government started to follow attentively the external attempts at acquiring materials and consultant services, and has been able to abort them successfully.

4. Consequently, the technicians from IAE turned to tasks that had not been foreseen at the start of the project, such as the conception of electronic and inertial components - responsible for the steering of the rocket - the elaboration of control systems for the bearings of the engines and the development of materials to be used in the propulsion tubes. The end of the VLS project, initially envisaged for 1989, was continually postponed. It is contemplated now that the rocket could be ready only at the end of 1993. The construction by INPE of the first data satellite, however, did not meet these obstacles and the SCD-1 is already in the stage of assemblage tests.

5. Acknowledging these facts and in the interest that the launching of the Brazilian data satellite launching is not delayed, the Ministry of the Air Force requested COBAE the creation of a subcommittee, in which Itamaraty participates, charged with studying the technical and economic feasibility of the use of a foreign launcher to put SCD-1 into orbit.

6. As a result of the meetings of said subcommittee, it was decided to send to several foreign companies or entities a letter for the preliminary presentation of proposals for the launching. In this country, that communication was addressed to the following companies: LTV Aerospace, Space Vector Corp., TRW Space Orbital Science Co. and Space Commerce Corp.

7. The text of the letter is the following:

"Federal Public Service

Brasilia, DF, August 3 1990.

Letter no. 1/90

Dear Sirs,

The Brazilian Space Program has scheduled to launch a data collection satellite with total mass less than 115 kg in a circular orbit of 750 km and 25 degrees on inclination on the first semester of 1992.

We are looking for an external commercial satellite launch service, preferentially using our launch site at Alcântara, in the North-East coast of Brazil, (latitude 02o. 18' S,) presently under construction.

Alternatively, another site of your convenience will also be contemplated.

In order to support our space program we will appreciate to receive proposals including cooperation in the following areas:

- Preparation, checkout and integration of the satellite to launch vehicle;
- . training of engineers in launch concept, tracking and safety requirements, launch operations(preparation and integration at the launch pad);
- . activities in the launch campaign;
- . Mission analysis;
- . Supply of technological elements for our launch vehicle such as: components for pyrotechnic network, inertial guidance systems, onboard computer for navigation and guidance components, etc.

□□

Please, if you have the capability and intend to offer us these services, we ask you to reply to the address of contact below no later than August 08th 1990.

A complete setoff data with 95 pages concerning all information about the satellite, the launcher and the launch site is available and can be sent to you.

We will be considering proposals to this request until September 28th 1990.

Yours faithfully,

(Air Brigadier-general José Marconi de Almeida Santos)

Vice-director of DEPED

For contact;

Attention: Brigadeiro do Ar José Marconi de Almeida Santos

Vice-diretor do DEPED

Ministério da Aeronáutica

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(Signed) EXTERIORES