



ARISTOTELEION UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI
SCHOOL OF PHYSICS
DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS, ASTRONOMY AND MECHANICS
GR-541 24 THESSALONIKI, MACEDONIA, GREECE

TEL.: +30-2310-998047
TELEX: 412181 AUTH GR
FAX: +30-2310-995384

TEL.: +30-2310-998181

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Dr Simonetta di Pippo
Director
ESA/Human Spaceflight (HSF) Directorate
European Space Research and Technology Centre
Keplerlaan 1
Postbus 299
2200 AG Noordwijk
THE NETHERLANDS

E-mail: simonetta.di.pippo@esa.int

Subject: *Naming ATV-4 as "Aristarchos of Samos".*

Dear Dr di Pippo

It is well-known that the "Automated Transfer Vehicles" (ATVs) are the key-spacecrafts in the International Space Station's logistics and operations. They are an excellent demonstration of Europe's ingenuity and vision, its capability in science, technology, and space infrastructure for human spaceflight and exploration. As a consequence, the ATV spacecrafts are the pride to Europe, and, clearly, are recognized" as such within Europe and internationally. **It is therefore important and natural to associate the names of the ATVs with historical characters who are recognisable at both European level and international level.**

The above philosophy underlying the naming of the ATVs is, so far, interesting, correct, and justified and has to be continued. Thus, in the first place, it is taken into account that science, technology and research are rooted in European history and have been a driver for its development and current wealth and living standards. Similarly, human spaceflight and exploration is to be regarded as a driver for research and development and for innovation in support of Europe's sustainable growth and enrichment of its human capital. There is, therefore, a close relation

between, on the one hand, European scientists and visionary intellectuals and, on the other hand, today's successes in human spaceflight and exploration. For such reasons, ATV-1 was named after the visionary French science-fiction writer Jules Verne, ATV-2 was named after the German mathematician, astronomer and astrologer Johannes Kepler, and ATV-3, recently, has been named after the Italian physicist "Edoardo Amaldi", on the basis of his contributions to nuclear physics and particle physics, and his, as a scientist's, key-role in establishing the foundation of the European Space Research Organisation (ESRO) and the formation of ESA.

During the PB-HME Nr 24 (Paris, 02-03 March 2010, Item 7.3: *Proposal for the naming of the ATV 3* (e-CPB Document: ESA/PB-HME(2010) 11)), the National Delegate of Greece to PB-HME made the following statement:

"I agree absolutely with both the philosophy and the justification of the proposal in the document by the Italian Space Agency for the naming of the ATV-3. Also, I grasp the opportunity to repeat an earlier suggestion by the Greek Delegate last year for ATV-4 to be given a name originating from the extremely rich ancient Greek history with the well-known contributions of many ancient philosophers-astronomers to science and technology, and, of course, to Cosmology and Astronomy, and specifically to our Solar System. After all, it was the Director who just reminded us that the last year 2009 has been celebrated worldwide as the International Year of Astronomy. Official propositions to the HSF Director will soon be sent by space and astronomy authorities in Greece".

The above statement has been included in the official *Record of Decisions* of PB-HME Nr 24 (...The Executive (Piero Messina) introduced the document. Delegations took note of the ASI proposal to name ATV-3 "Edoardo Amaldi". Greece announced that it will send an official proposal for naming ATV-4).

A similar statement was also made by the same National Delegate during the PB-HME Nr. 20 (Paris, 17-18 February 2009, Item 8.6), when, among others, the Delegate of the Czech Republic said that the name of *Copernicus* should be given to one of the future probes. That statement was:

"I agree with the Czech Republic that the name of Copernicus should be given to one of the future probes. However, keeping in mind that 2009 is the International Astronomy Year and considering the historical truth concerning the real contribution of Copernicus and others to the astronomical-cosmological science, I wish to recall that there is a huge variety of ancient Greek names used in current Astronomy, and to suggest that one of them be given to one of the future ESA probes".

With this letter, I, **on behalf of Greece**, wish to officially suggest and justify that the ATV-4 be given a name originating from the extremely rich ancient Greek history with the well-known contributions of many ancient philosophers-astronomers to science and technology. **Specifically, I suggest that ATV-4 be named after the ancient Ionian philosopher, astronomer, geometer and mathematician “Aristarchos of Samos”.**

My suggestion, as I will describe in detail below, is based on the fact that ***the ancient philosopher-astronomer-geometer-mathematician Aristarchos of Samos is the introducer, crier, and supporter of the radical in his time heliocentric theory. The paternity of the heliocentric theory, exclusively and originally, belongs to Aristarchos of Samos, who founded Astronomy on the logical reasoning. His contributions, a couple of millenia ago, to science and technology, and, of course, to Cosmology and Astronomy and, especially, to our Solar System have shaped contemporary science. All these contributions and, particularly, the heliocentric theory and the dynamics and physics of the Solar System are obviously in line with the interests of and of importance to the ESA/HSF Directorate.***

Therefore, Aristarchos of Samos, with his great contributions, really, is a historical character easily recognisable at both the European level and the international level.

For all the above reasons, we all in Greece find important and natural to associate the name of the ATV-4 with *Aristarchos of Samos*, and we officially suggest this naming to you, as the Director of ESA/Human Spaceflight .

Let me tell you, that my suggestion is strongly, warmly and enthusiastically supported by

- 1) “The General Secretary for Research and Technology of Greece” as the official representative of the Greek State,
- 2) The Prefecture of Samos, as the official representative of the people of the island of Samos, the birthplace of Aristarchos,
- 3) “The National Committee of Astronomy of Greece”, as the official Advisory Council to the Greek State on matters of Astronomy,
- 4) “The Hellenic Astronomical Society”, as the official representative of the Greek astronomers worldwide,
- 5) The Rector of the Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki, as official the representative of the university I serve since 1970,

Therefore, my suggestion is unanimously supported by all the political, academic, space and astronomical authorities of Greece, and by the Greek astronomical community worldwide.

*Finally, **at a quite personal level** and as a necessary completion of the above arguments, I wish to say that I belong to those University teachers, who have devoted a lot of effort, time and sentiment in teaching, at both the under- and post-graduate levels, about, among others, the necessity of the scientific truth and the imperative necessity of its recognition in our life. So, in this context also, I emphasize that I strongly believe that it is always **our obligation** to the younger generations to give to them the correct example of the meaning of the real recognition of contribution to, at least, the science, by always acknowledging and promoting the real scientific truth worldwide, and, as a natural consequence of all the above, I consider the anticipated approval of our suggestion as a **rewarding** for my life-long teaching effort towards this direction.*

I thank you for your attention,

Yours sincerely

Nikolaos K. Spyrou
Professor of Astronomy
Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki
ESA/PB-HME National Deleagate of Greece

E-mail: spyrou@auth.gr, spyrou@astro.auth.gr

Encls:

1. Justification of the Suggestion (Number of pages: 13)
2. Supporting letter by the General Secretary of Research and Development of Greece ((Number of pages: 3)
3. Supporting letter by the Prefecture of Samos (Number of pages: 3)
4. Supporting letter by the National Committee of Astronomy of Greece (Number of pages: 3)
5. Supporting letter by the Hellenic Astronomical Society (Number of pages: 2)
6. Supporting letter by the Rector of the Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki (Number of pages: 2)