



PRESS INFORMATION

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**STS-130 Launches on First Mission of Final Year, Will Provide Station
Crew with a Panoramic View**

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FL (February 8) –Space Shuttle Endeavour successfully lifted off from Kennedy Space Center early this morning, marking the first flight of 2010 and the beginning of the Shuttle’s final year of operation.

During the 13-day mission to the International Space Station, Endeavour’s crew will deliver two new components for the station. Once installed, the station assembly will be 90 percent complete.

“This 130th Space Shuttle mission is testament to the remarkable capabilities of the Space Shuttle and the human space flight team that supports it,” said Howard DeCastro, Space Shuttle Program Manager for United Space Alliance (USA). “The Shuttle is performing better than ever and is supported by a trusted, experienced, highly skilled workforce that is focused on successfully flying out the manifest this year and leaving the ISS in position to continue providing cutting edge science through 2020.”

The Shuttle’s prime payload is Node 3, known as Tranquility, which will provide additional room for crew members and many of the Station’s life support and environmental control systems. Attached to the node is the seven-windowed cupola that will serve as a robotic control station and provide panoramic viewing opportunities.

USA, NASA’s prime human spaceflight contractor, processes and prepares each Space Shuttle for launch. On average, a Shuttle processing flow requires 750,000 man hours and involves thousands of tasks aimed at preparing the orbiter, the two solid booster rockets and the external fuel tank for launch. USA also provides planning, training, and on-orbit support for the Shuttle and ISS crew missions.

Along with payload and maintenance tasks, STS-130 crewmembers will participate in science investigations focused on vaccine development, sleep studies, atmospheric research, and plume studies to improve the safe arrival and departure of current and future spacecraft.

Space Shuttle Atlantis also will return to Earth with scientific samples from current Station science studies including experiments studying bone loss, heart disease, immunology, nutrition, and metallurgical solidification.

“This mission signals the start of a robust and critical year in human space flight,” said DeCastro. “After STS-130, we have four more scheduled Space Shuttle missions left to complete assembly of the Space Station and prepare it for an extended operational life.”

About United Space Alliance:

United Space Alliance is a world leader in space operations with extensive experience in all aspects of the field. Headquartered in Houston, USA has more than 8,000 employees working in Texas, Florida and Alabama. Currently, USA is applying its broad range of capabilities to NASA's Space Shuttle, International Space Station and Constellation programs as well as to space operations customers in the commercial and international space industry sectors.