

Our Speaker



Dumitru-Dorin PRUNARIU

Current Position & Organization

Romanian cosmonaut, Aerospace Engineer and the only Romanian citizen to travel into space

Educational & Professional Background

Dumitru-Dorin Prunariu graduated with a degree in Aerospace Engineering from University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest and later earned a Ph.D. in space flight dynamics. His professional career spans over four decades in the aerospace and diplomatic fields. Selected for the Interkosmos program, he completed his historic spaceflight in 1981. Following his active time as a cosmonaut, he held various high-level national and international consultative and executive positions, including serving as the President of the Romanian Space Agency (1998-2004), the Ambassador of Romania to the Russian Federation and the Chairman of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Key Achievements or Career Highlights

Historic Milestone: The first and only Romanian to ever fly in space, spending nearly 8 days aboard the Salyut 6 space station during the Soyuz 40 mission in 1981.

Global Recognition: Asteroid '10707 Prunariu' was named in his honor to recognize his contributions to space exploration.

Awards: Highly decorated, including being awarded the titles 'Hero of Romania' and 'Hero of the Soviet Union'

Hobbies & Personal Interests

Prunariu has had a lifelong fascination with flight, heights and the natural world. Since high school, he has been an avid mountaineer and alpinist, having climbed the highest peaks of the Făgăraș Mountains, the High Tatras, the Pyrenees and the Alps

Motivation

Prunariu is deeply driven by the 'Overview Effect', the profound cognitive shift experienced when viewing the Earth from space. He believes that from cosmic heights, the planet reveals itself as a unique, unified entity that supersedes the political differences and borders on its surface. He is motivated by the desire to promote peaceful international cooperation, viewing manned space exploration as a transformative experience, both technologically and spiritually, that fosters innovation and encourages humanity to think globally about its shared future