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The Hope of Japan

This photograph from October of 2017 captures the Japanese Experiment Module (JEM), the largest of the International Space Station's 16 pressurized modules, as it passes 250 miles above the western coast of Italy. The module's nickname, Kibo, means "hope".

Both Japan and Italy are important contributors to the ISS program. In addition to Kibo, Japan also operates the H-II automated cargo transfer vehicle. This and many other images presented in our Perspectives of Earth series were captured through the Cupola window, an earth-facing observation module designed and built in Italy.

It took the imagination and commitment of 16 nations to turn sheet metal and silicon wafers into the sophisticated orbiting science platform that today serves all of humanity. The International Space Station's greatest legacy may be the proof that impossible goals become possible when we set aside our differences and work together.

