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Havana, April 12 (RHC) - The Cuban Academy of Sciences congratulated this Wednesday Araldo Tamayo Méndez, the first Cuban and Latin American to ascend into outer space, on the occasion of the worldwide celebration of the International Day of Cosmonautics and Aviation.

Tamayo Méndez began his preparation in 1978, when he was selected to join the Intercosmos Program, and moved to Villa Estelar, in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) to complete the training. Two years later, on September 18, 1980, he took off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome with Soviet engineer Yuri V. Romanenko.

The Cuban Academy of Sciences also highlighted the celebration of the International Day of Cosmonautics and Aviation, on April 12. On that date, in 1961, the pilot-cosmonaut of the USSR, Yuri Gagarin, made the first flight into space in the Vostok spacecraft. (Source: ACN)

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