



Italian Astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti Tweets to Support Earth Hour

Emily Hayes (March 27, 2015)



Samantha Cristoforetti, the first female Italian astronaut, tweeted her support for Earth Hour from space where she is conducting her "Futura" mission. The mission was named to signify the scientific and technological research she is running to help shape our future.

Samantha Cristoforetti, Italy's first female astronaut, was born in Milan on April 26th, 1977. She attended high school at Liceo Scientifico in Trenta, Italy, and spent a year as an exchange student in the United States. In 2001 she graduated from the Technische Universität in Munich, Germany with a master's degree in mechanical engineering and specializations in aerospace propulsion and lightweight structures.

After graduating, Cristoforetti joined the Italian Air Force Academy in Pozzuoli, Italy, and graduated in 2005. During her time there, she was class leader and awarded the Honor Sword for best



academic achievement. As part of her training, she completed a bachelor's degree in aeronautical sciences at the University of Naples Federico II, Italy, in 2005.

Cristoforetti was based at Sheppard Air Force in Texas, USA for a year. While there she completed the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training, and became a fighter pilot. She was assigned to the 132nd Squadron, 51st Bomber Wing, based in Istrana, Italy.

A year later, in 2007, she completed Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals training, flew the MB-339 and served in the Plan and Operations Section. By 2008 Cristoforetti had joined the 101st Squadron, 32nd Bomber Wing, based at Foggia, Italy. This was where she completed operational conversion training for the AM-X ground attack fighter.

Cristoforetti is a Captain in the Italian Air Force. She has logged over 500 hours flying six different types of military aircraft, such as the SF-260, T-37, T-38, MB-339CD and AM-X.

In May 2009, Cristoforetti was selected as a [European Space Agency](#) [2] (ESA) astronaut. She immediately joined in September of that year and completed basic astronaut training in November of 2010. In July of 2012 she was assigned to an Italian Space Agency mission on the International Space Station.

On the 23rd of November in 2014, Cristoforetti was launched on a Soyuz spacecraft from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on the second long-duration ASI mission and the eighth long-duration mission for an ESA astronaut.

Cristoforetti is now living and working on the International Space Station as part of her [Futura](#) [3] mission. The name "Futura" was chosen to highlight the science and technology research she will run to help shape our future.

While on the International Space Station, she enjoys communicating with fellow space enthusiasts on Twitter as @AstroSamantha. On Thursday, she tweeted her support of Earth Hour, a [World Wildlife Fund](#) [4] mobilization against climate change. It asks that everyone around the world turn off their lights on Saturday from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

Cristoforetti tweeted "Join us at #EarthHour" with a picture of herself holding a sign that says "Change climate change."

Join millions around the globe and across time zones by turning off your lights on Saturday, March 28th from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm as a symbolic gesture against climate change.

Source URL: <http://iitaly.org/magazine/focus/life-people/article/italian-astronaut-samantha-cristoforetti-tweets-support-earth>

Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/cristoforetti1427555692jpg>

[2] <http://www.esa.int/ESA>

[3] http://www.esa.int/Our_Activities/Human_Spaceflight/Futura

[4] <https://www.worldwildlife.org/>