

Russian Spacecraft Fails to Dock With Space Station

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 24, 2012



A view of Progress and Soyuz spacecraft orbiting the Earth.

An unmanned Russian cargo vessel failed to dock with the International Space Station early Tuesday morning due to technical complications.

The Progress craft had separated from the space station Sunday to perform a series of engineering tests and was due to try out an upgraded docking system that will facilitate future Russian missions to the station, U.S. space agency NASA said in a statement on its website.

NASA scientists said two separate docking attempts had failed, the first at around 4:30 a.m. Moscow time and the second at 6 a.m., and that the failures appeared to be caused by the new Kurs-NA docking system.

The system, which transfers to microprocessors the function of processing certain signals,

replaced the Kurs-A and is twice as light and uses three times less electricity than its predecessor.

A source in the Russian Mission Control Center told Interfax that its scientists were analyzing the problem, adding that the Progress craft was at a safe distance from the station when it automatically aborted the docking process.

The Progress M-15M craft will reattempt docking Sunday and will not interfere with the Friday arrival to the space station of a Japanese Harmony cargo ship, since mission control in Moscow has moved its supply vessel about 400 kilometers from the station, the Federal Space Agency said in a statement.

Out of a team of six, there are currently three Russian astronauts living and carrying out tests on the space station: Gennady Padalka, Sergei Revin and Yuri Malenchenko.

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