

Russia Confirms Space Weapon Test, Dismisses 'Hypocritical' U.S. Concerns

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NASA

The Russian military [confirmed](#) Tuesday that it tested a space weapon and brushed off U.S. concerns of endangering astronauts at the International Space Station as “hypocritical.”

Russia’s Defense Ministry said it “successfully conducted a test on Nov. 15, hitting the non-operating Russian spacecraft ‘Tselina-D,’ which had been in orbit since 1982,” the state-run TASS news agency reported.

Russia has previously [dismissed](#) U.S. accusations that it tested an anti-satellite weapon in outer space as “propaganda.”

The destroyed target is believed to have been a Soviet signals intelligence satellite that has been defunct for several decades, according to space industry analysis company Seradata.

Related article: [U.S. Slams Russia for 'Irresponsible' Space Missile Test](#)

Monday's test of a direct-ascent anti-satellite missile marks the fourth-ever instance in which a spacecraft was hit from the ground.

The ISS crew was forced to take shelter in their return ships Monday after the missile test put more than 1,500 pieces of debris into Earth's orbit.

After NASA and the U.S. State Department decried its "dangerous and irresponsible" space missile strike, the Russian military [hit back](#) with accusations that Washington is testing its own space weapons.

"[The U.S. Defense Department] is actively developing and testing, without any notification, various types of advanced strike and combat weapons in orbit," RIA Novosti quoted the Russian Defense Ministry as saying.

"The American side's actions are viewed as a threat incompatible with its stated goals of the peaceful use of outer space," it said, and added that Russia is working on "eliminating the likelihood of sudden damage to the country's defense capability in space and on earth."

The Russian military also denied that the space debris threatened the four American, one German and two Russian cosmonauts aboard the ISS.

"The U.S. knows for certain that the fragments formed during the tests did not and will not pose a threat to orbital stations, spacecraft and space activities," the Defense Ministry said, according to RIA Novosti.

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