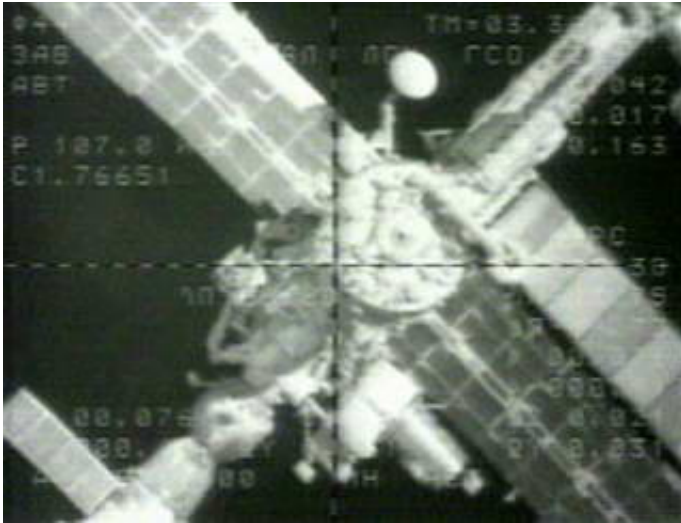# Progress Cargo Craft Safely Docks With ISS

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An unpiloted Russian Progress cargo ship with more than two tons of supplies and equipment, including food, water and fuel, docked early Sunday with the International Space Station (ISS).
Interruption of communications between the mission control and the craft forced Russian Station Commander Sergei Krikalyov to dock the Progress manually.

Image above: The International Space Station is viewed from the arriving Progress moments before docking to the Zvezda Service Module. Credit: NASA

The ISS Progress 18 spacecraft docked at 8:42 p.m. EDT to the aft port of the Station's Zvezda Service Module. The docking was controlled by Station Commander Sergei Kirkalev using the Telerobotically Operated Rendezvous Unit (TORU). The automated Kurs docking system was not used because a problem with a Russian ground station prevented uplinking a command for Progress to begin the final approach. Krikalev was helped by NASA Science Officer John Phillips in the manual docking operation, which went flawlessly.

Progress 18 lifted off Thursday at 7:10 p.m. EDT from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. It reached orbit in less than 10 minutes, and moments later, automatic commands successfully deployed its solar arrays and navigational antennas.

The ISS Progress 17 cargo ship, which had been at the Station since March 2, was undocked on Wednesday, clearing the aft port of Zvezda for the new Progress. Filled with trash and discarded items, Progress 17 was commanded to deorbit by Russian flight controllers. It re-entered the atmosphere and was incinerated about four hours after undocking.

Source: NASA