

Discovery Separates From Space Station

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After more than a week of working together in space, the Space Shuttle Discovery and International Space Station crews bid each other farewell tonight.

Space Shuttle Discovery undocked from the International Space Station at 3:24 a.m. EDT. Pilot Jim Kelly flew the orbiter in a loop around the Station, allowing the Shuttle crew to photograph the orbiting outpost before a final separation burn moved Discovery away from the Station.

Image above: Space Shuttle Discovery undocks from the International Space Station. Credit: NASA TV

During a farewell ceremony before closing the hatches at 1:14, STS-114 Commander Eileen Collins thanked the Station crew for being "such great hosts."

"We thank them for being part of such a successful mission," she said. "These are memories we'll have forever."

During more than a week of joint operations, the two crews worked together to transfer tons of supplies and equipment to and from the Station, conduct three spacewalks and experiment with techniques for repairing the Shuttle's heat shields.

Together they paid tribute to the astronauts and cosmonauts who have given their lives for space exploration.

Discovery and its seven-member crew will continue to orbit the Earth until early Monday, when they are scheduled to land at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Source: NASA

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