

Expedition 16 Ready for Launch

October 9 2007



The Soyuz TMA-11 spacecraft was transported by railcar to its launch pad at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan Oct. 8, 2007 for launch Oct. 10. Credit: NASA/Bill Ingalls

The Soyuz rocket that will launch Expedition 16 to the International Space Station was placed at its launch pad over the weekend.

Commander Peggy Whitson, Flight Engineer Yuri Malenchenko and spaceflight participant Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor will launch from the Baikonur Cosmodrome Wednesday at 9:22 a.m. EDT. Two days later the Soyuz TMA-11 vehicle carrying the new crew will dock to the Earth-facing port of the station's Zarya module.

The Expedition 15 crew continues readying the station for its new residents. Flight Engineer Clay Anderson has been resizing U.S. spacesuits for Whitson and Malenchenko. Commander Fyodor Yurchikhin and Flight Engineer Oleg Kotov set up a work space in the Zvezda service module that will allow the visiting Shukor to perform several experiments over nine days. The current station crew has also been holding space-to-ground teleconferences with Expedition 16 to assist with handover activities.

Yurchikhin and Kotov are scheduled to leave the station on Oct. 21 officially ending the Expedition 15 increment. Shukor will go home with the two cosmonauts. Anderson will remain onboard with Expedition 16 and return to Earth next month aboard Discovery on its STS-120 mission.

Source: NASA

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