

Whitson Breaks Space Record, Expedition 16 Set to Come Home

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Expedition 16 Commander Peggy Whitson (far right) officially hands over command of the International Space Station to Expedition 17 Commander Sergei Volkov (far left). Credit: NASA TV

Expedition 16 Commander Peggy Whitson officially handed over command of the International Space Station to Expedition 17 Commander Sergei Volkov. Thursday's ceremony took place inside the U.S. Harmony Node.

The station crews have shifted their sleep schedules in preparation for Saturday morning's Soyuz TMA-11 undocking. Whitson and Flight Engineer Yuri Malenchenko will return to Earth with South Korean spaceflight participant So-yeon Yi.

Whitson broke Michael Foale's cumulative time-in-space record on Wednesday. She will have accumulated 377 days in space by the time she lands in Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, the station occupants continue their normal activities as they resize U.S. spacesuits, work on science experiments and stow gear for Expedition 16's return home. Whitson and Malenchenko also are proceeding with their increased exercise routines to condition their bodies for their return to Earth's gravity.

Source: NASA

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