

Astronauts Check Out Japanese Robotic Arm

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The STS-124 and Expedition 17 crews have their group portrait taken inside the International Space Station's Destiny laboratory. Photo credit: NASA

With the third and final spacewalk completed Sunday, the Expedition 17 and STS-124 crews are heading into the home stretch of their joint mission.

The crew members maneuvered the newly activated robotic arm on the Kibo laboratory to its stowed position today. They also performed a checkout of the arm's brakes.

The crews also will work in the Quest airlock of the International Space Station to replace battery charger modules. The modules charge the batteries that provide power to U.S. spacesuits during spacewalks. Flight

managers elected to replace the modules, which have shown slightly increased toxicity levels due to their age.

The shuttle and station crews are scheduled to take a break from their activities at 5:02 p.m. EDT for the traditional joint crew news conference.

Source: NASA

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