

Farewells for space crews: Discovery set to undock

March 6 2011, By MARCIA DUNN , AP Aerospace Writer



In this March 3, 2011 photo provided by NASA, inside the U.S. lab Destiny, 12 astronauts and cosmonauts take a break from a very busy week aboard the International Space Station to pose for a joint STS-133/Expedition 26 group portrait. The STS-133 crew members, all attired in red shirts, from left, are NASA astronauts Nicole Stott, Alvin Drew, Eric Boe, Steve Lindsay, Michael Barratt and Steve Bowen. The dark blue-attired Expedition 26 crew members, from left, are European Space Agency astronaut Paolo Nespoli, along with Russian cosmonauts Oleg Skripochka, Dmitry Kondratyev, below, and Alexander Y. Kaleri and astronauts Scott Kelly and Cady Coleman, below. Serving the STS-133 and Expedition 26 missions as commanders were Lindsay and Kelly, respectively. (AP Photo/NASA)

(AP) -- The space shuttle and space station crews will soon say goodbye.

Astronauts will close the hatches between their [spacecraft](#) Sunday afternoon. Then on Monday morning, shuttle Discovery will undock for

the final time from the [International Space Station](#).

Discovery is on its final flight. When it returns to Earth on Wednesday, it will be retired and sent to a museum.

The shuttle and its crew of six have spent more than a week at the space station. They delivered and installed a new storage compartment, along with a humanoid robot.

Mission Control gave the shuttle astronauts two extra days at the orbiting outpost. They took advantage of the bonus time to empty the storage unit of all the gear that was carried up.

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