

Russia cancels manned space launch over 'technical' issues

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From L: US astronaut Shane Kimbrough and Russian cosmonauts Sergey Ryzhikov and Andrey Borisenko, pictured during preflight training at the Gagarin Cosmonauts' Training Centre in Star City, outside Moscow

Russia on Saturday cancelled a planned manned space launch expected in one week due to "technical reasons," giving no explanation or a new launch date.

"(Russian space agency) Roscosmos has decided to move the launch of Soyuz MS-02 ship planned for September 23 due to technical reasons after holding tests on the Baikonur cosmodrome," the agency said in a statement.

"The date of the space launch will be announced later," it said.

The next space crew to blast off to the International Space Station includes American astronaut Shane Kimbrough and Russian cosmonauts Sergei Ryzhikov and Andrei Borisenko.

The crew is already in final training stages at the Russian Baikonur launchpad in Kazakhstan and preparations had been proceeding on schedule, with NASA still flagging the launch next Friday.

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