

Russian cargo ship docks with space station

February 24 2017



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A Russian cargo ship carrying food and equipment for astronauts docked successfully with the International Space Station on Friday after a similar craft crashed back to Earth in December.

Russia's space agency said the unmanned Progress freighter carrying 2.5 tonnes of supplies including air, food and fuel "successfully docked"

with the orbiting station at 0830 GMT.

It had blasted off from Russia's Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan aboard a Soyuz rocket on Wednesday.

In December, the previous Progress ship lost contact with Earth minutes after blast-off and burnt up in the atmosphere over Siberia.

A commission appointed to investigate the malfunction concluded in January that it was caused by the break-up of the Soyuz third stage rocket engine, either due to "foreign materials" getting inside or an "assembly fault".

The Progress cargo ship docked at the ISS less than a day after the arrival of a SpaceX [cargo ship](#) that was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

The next manned launch to the ISS is set for April 20 from Baikonur, after being postponed from late March.

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Russia's space industry had suffered a string of setbacks and launch failures in recent years, while corruption scandals have plagued its new Vostochny space port in the country's far east.

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Citation: Russian cargo ship docks with space station (2017, February 24) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-02-russian-cargo-ship-docks-space.html>

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