

Russia's space agency aborts launch of 3 astronauts to the International Space Station; all are safe

March 21 2024



In this photo released by Roscosmos space corporation, NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, centre, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos, bottom, and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus wave as they board to the space ship at the Russian leased Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan, Thursday, March 21, 2024. Russia's Roscosmos space agency has aborted the launch of three astronauts to the International Space Station about 20 seconds before they were scheduled to lift off. Officials say the

crew is safe. The Russian Soyuz rocket was to carry NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. Credit: Roscosmos space corporation via AP

Russia aborted the launch of three astronauts to the International Space Station moments before they were scheduled to lift off Thursday, but the crew was safe, officials said.

The [Russian Soyuz rocket](#) was to carry NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus from the Russian-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan.

The launch was aborted by an automatic safety system about 20 seconds before the scheduled liftoff at 1321 GMT. Russia's Roscosmos space corporation and NASA said the crew was safe, and Roscosmos chief Yuri Borisov said the next launch attempt is set for Saturday.

Borisov told reporters that experts quickly pinpointed the cause of the launch abort, saying it was triggered by a voltage drop in a power source

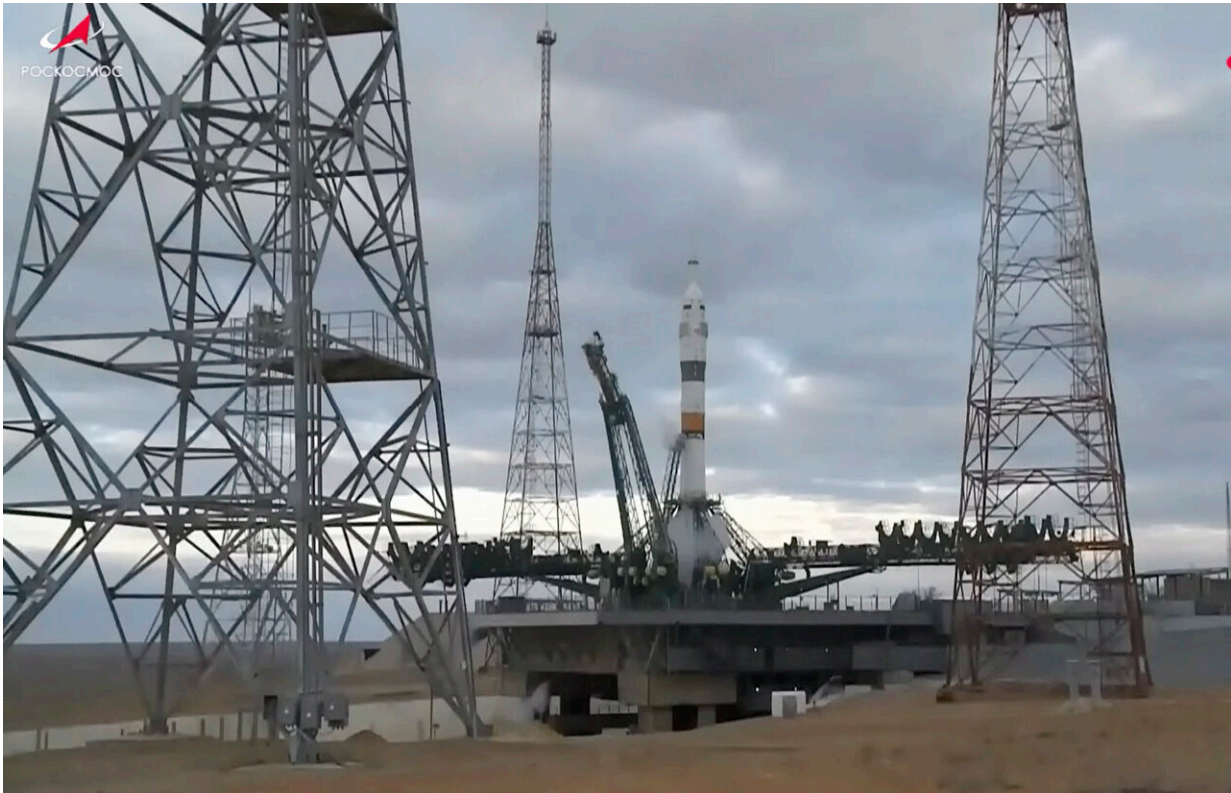
The space station, which has served as a symbol of post-Cold War international cooperation, is now one of the last remaining areas of collaboration between Russia and the West amid tensions over Moscow's military action in Ukraine. NASA and its partners hope to continue operating the orbiting outpost until 2030.

For Dyson, it was to be her third trip to the orbital complex, where she was due to spend six months. Novitsky, who was to make his fourth flight to the orbiting outpost, and Vasilevskaya, on her first space mission as her country's first astronaut, were set to return to Earth after

spending 12 days in orbit.



In this photo taken from video released by Roscosmos space corporation, the Soyuz-2.1a rocket booster with Soyuz MS-25 space ship carrying a new crew to the International Space Station, ISS, stands at the launch pad after cancellation of the launch at the Russian leased Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan, Thursday, March 21, 2024. Russia's Roscosmos space agency has aborted the launch of three astronauts to the International Space Station about 20 seconds before they were scheduled to lift off. Officials say the crew is safe. The Russian Soyuz rocket was to carry NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. Credit: Roscosmos space corporation via AP



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In this photo taken from video released by Roscosmos space corporation, NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson sits in the Soyuz MS-25 space ship prior to cancellation of the launch at the Russian leased Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan, Thursday, March 21, 2024. Russia's Roscosmos space agency has aborted the launch of three astronauts to the International Space Station about 20 seconds before they were scheduled to lift off. Officials say the crew is safe. The Russian Soyuz rocket was to carry NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. Credit: Roscosmos space corporation via AP



In this photo taken from video released by Roscosmos space corporation, Oleg Novitsky, cosmonaut of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya, cosmonaut of Belarus sit in the Soyuz MS-25 space ship prior to the cancellation of the launch at the Russian leased Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan, Thursday, March 21, 2024. Russia's Roscosmos space agency has aborted the launch of three astronauts to the International Space Station about 20 seconds before they were scheduled to lift off. Officials say the crew is safe. The Russian Soyuz rocket was to carry NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos and Marina Vasilevskaya of Belarus from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. Credit: Roscosmos space corporation via AP



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In this photo released by Roscosmos space corporation on Thursday, March 21, 2024 Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Novitsky, centre, Belarus' crew member Marina Vasilevskaya, right, and NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, left, all members of the main crew to the International Space Station (ISS), wave to their relatives as they walk to a bus prior to the launch of a Soyuz-2.1a rocket at the Russian leased Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan. Credit: Roscosmos space corporation via AP



Expedition 71 NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson, left, Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Novitskiy, and Belarus spaceflight participant Marina Vasilevskaya, right, wave as they depart the Cosmonaut Hotel to suit-up for their Soyuz launch to the International Space Station, Thursday, March 21, 2024, in Baikonur,

Kazakhstan.Credit: Bill Ingalls/NASA via AP



Expedition 71 NASA astronaut Tracy Dyson has her Russian Sokol suit pressure checked as she and Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Novitskiy and Belarus spaceflight participant Marina Vasilevskaya prepare for their Soyuz launch to the International Space Station Thursday, March 21, 2024 in Baikonur, Kazakhstan. Credit: Bill Ingalls/NASA via AP

The three astronauts were to join the station's crew consisting of NASA

astronauts Loral O'Hara, Matthew Dominick, Mike Barratt, and Jeanette Epps, as well as Roscosmos cosmonauts Oleg Kononenko, Nikolai Chub, and Alexander Grebenkin.

Russia has continued to rely on modified versions of Soviet-designed rockets for commercial satellites, as well as crews and cargo to the space station.

While the crew wasn't in danger, Thursday's aborted launch was a significant mishap for the Russian space program.

It followed an October 2018 launch failure, when a Soyuz rocket carrying NASA astronaut Nick Hague and Roscosmos' Alexei Ovchinin to the International Space Station failed less two minutes after the blastoff, sending their rescue capsule into a steep ride back to a safe landing.

Hague and Ovchinin had a brief period of weightlessness when the capsule separated from the malfunctioning Soyuz rocket at an altitude of about 50 kilometers (31 miles), then endured gravitational forces of 6-7 times more than is felt on Earth as they came down at a sharper-than-normal angle. The 2018 launch failure was the first such accident for Russia's manned program in over three decades.

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