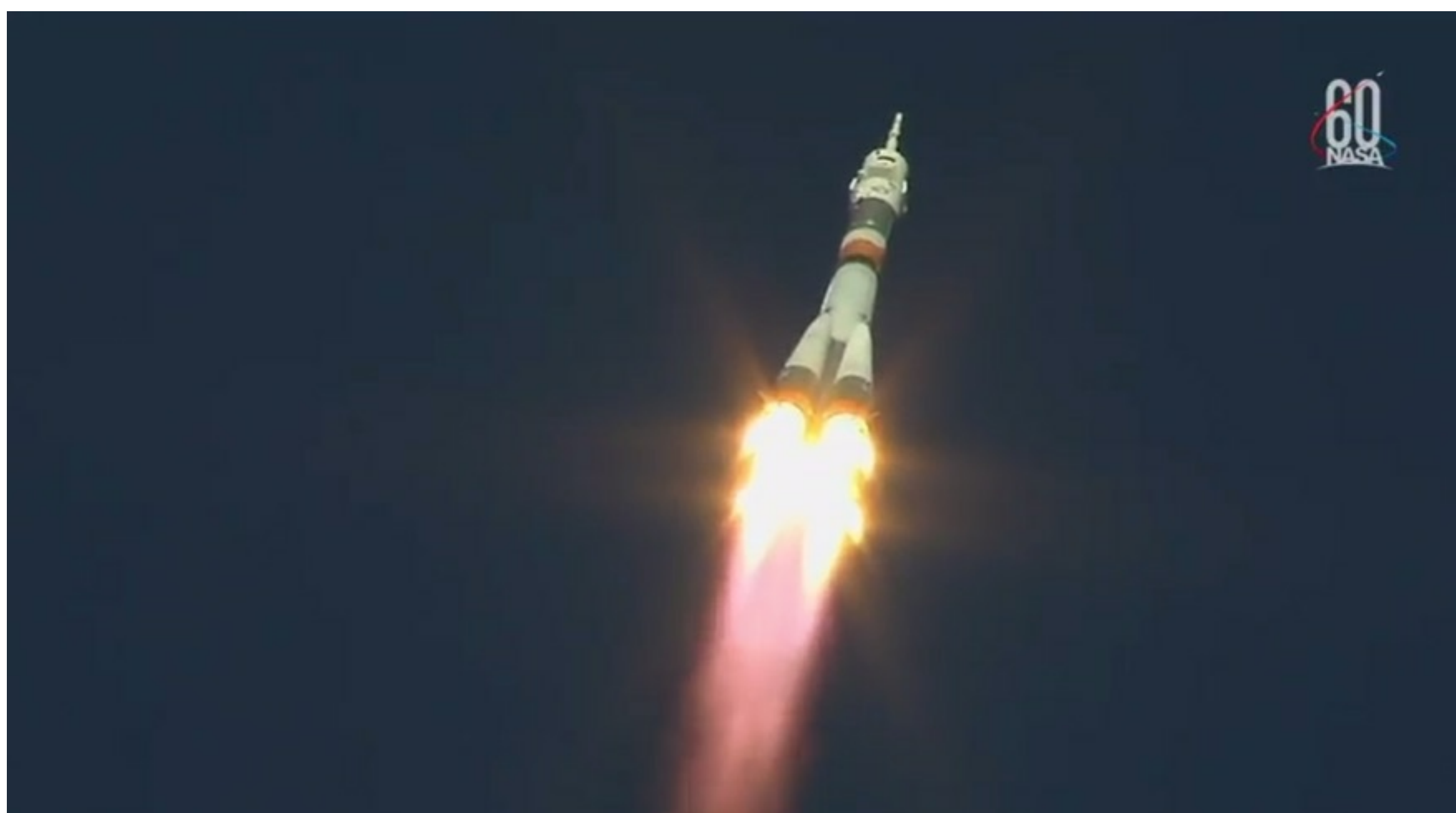




BREAKING: Soyuz launch to ISS aborted after booster failure

by [Jeff Foust](#) — October 11, 2018



Liftoff of the Soyuz rocket carrying the Soyuz MS-10 spacecraft Oct. 11. Credit: NASA

Updated at 5:25 a.m. Eastern.

LAS CRUCES, N.M. — An incident took place during the Oct. 11 launch of a Soyuz spacecraft carrying two men to the International Space Station, forcing an abort and ballistic landing of the spacecraft but with the crew onboard said to be in good condition.

A Soyuz rocket carrying the Soyuz MS-10 spacecraft lifted off from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 4:40 a.m. Eastern. The launch appeared to be normal until around first stage separation, when the crew reported a “failure” with the booster and feeling weightlessness.

NASA Television reported that the spacecraft was in a ballistic descent after apparently separating from the Soyuz rocket, making a return to Earth rather than heading to the International Space Station. No information about the projected landing location or status of the crew were immediately available.

NASA said about 40 minutes after launch search and rescue crews were en route to the projected landing site 20 kilometers east of the Kazakh town of Dzhezkazgan, expecting to arrive about 90 minutes after liftoff. They were in contact with the Soyuz spacecraft and reported that the two people onboard were in “good condition.”

The Soyuz was carrying NASA astronaut Nick Hague, making his first spaceflight, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Alexey Ovchinin, making his second. The two were to arrive at the ISS about six hours after liftoff for a half-year stay.

A Soyuz failure could jeopardize continued operation of the International Space Station. Soyuz is currently the only means for crews to travel to and from the station, with commercial crew vehicles by Boeing and SpaceX not expected to be ready to enter service before the middle of 2019. The current Soyuz on the ISS, Soyuz MS-09, launched in June and has an orbital lifetime of about 200 days.

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