

MIRNEWS.050 6 JUNE 1990

DOCKING OPERATION KRISTALL (MODULE-T) ON 6 JUNE 1990 CEASED AND SUSPENDED:

PLAN: Kristall should aim for MIR at 0930UTC. The operation had to last 3 hours. So docking should take place at 1230UTC.

EXECUTION: Between 0948 and 0953UTC in orbit 24641 over a short pass with low elevation. However some radiotraffic could be heard and this revealed that the approach was about to start. At 0949UTC Kristall was in a distance of 39KM from MIR. And TsUP expected the reception of certain signals at 101230UTC. Balandin spoke with TsUP while he still was in the Basic Block; Solovyov was already in the Soyuz-TM9.

PASS IN NEXT ORBIT: CHTO TO NE TO:
(something not as it has to be)

During the pass in orb. 24642, 1120-112935UTC there was no approach traffic at all. In the contrary: Balandin programmed the computer as to change the attitude of the MIR complex. There was no indication that an approach operation was about to begin: radiotraffic from the Basic Block and the functioning of the gyrodines (reported by Balandin) changing the attitude of the MIR complex. Balandin communicated with TsUP; Solovyov kept quiet.

During the pass in orb. 24643, 1300-1305UTC, the 'chto to ne to' was confirmed: no open radioconversations, but 'scrambled radiotraffic'. This from TCA to LOS 5 minutes later (so before TCA no contact with trackingship.) I was sure: operation discontinued.

Radiotraffic during the next passes and some scarce announcements from Moscow also confirmed that the approach operation had been postponed. A unit in the stabilisation system of Kristall stopped to function and this made the malfunction of an attitude control engine possible. During the rest of the day it was obvious that experts were still involved in analysing the received data. Solovyov informed about an eventual decision. TsUP answered that there was no decision at all. The 1st deputy chief constructor (Moiseyev) stated that he was optimistic and he expected the next attempt on 10 June 1990.

POSITION KRISTALL TOWARDS MIR: Not far away from each other. During the suspension of the docking of Module-D in December 1989 after 1 day Module-D passed 10 minutes before MIR.

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