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## 10 breakups account for 1/3 of cataloged space debris

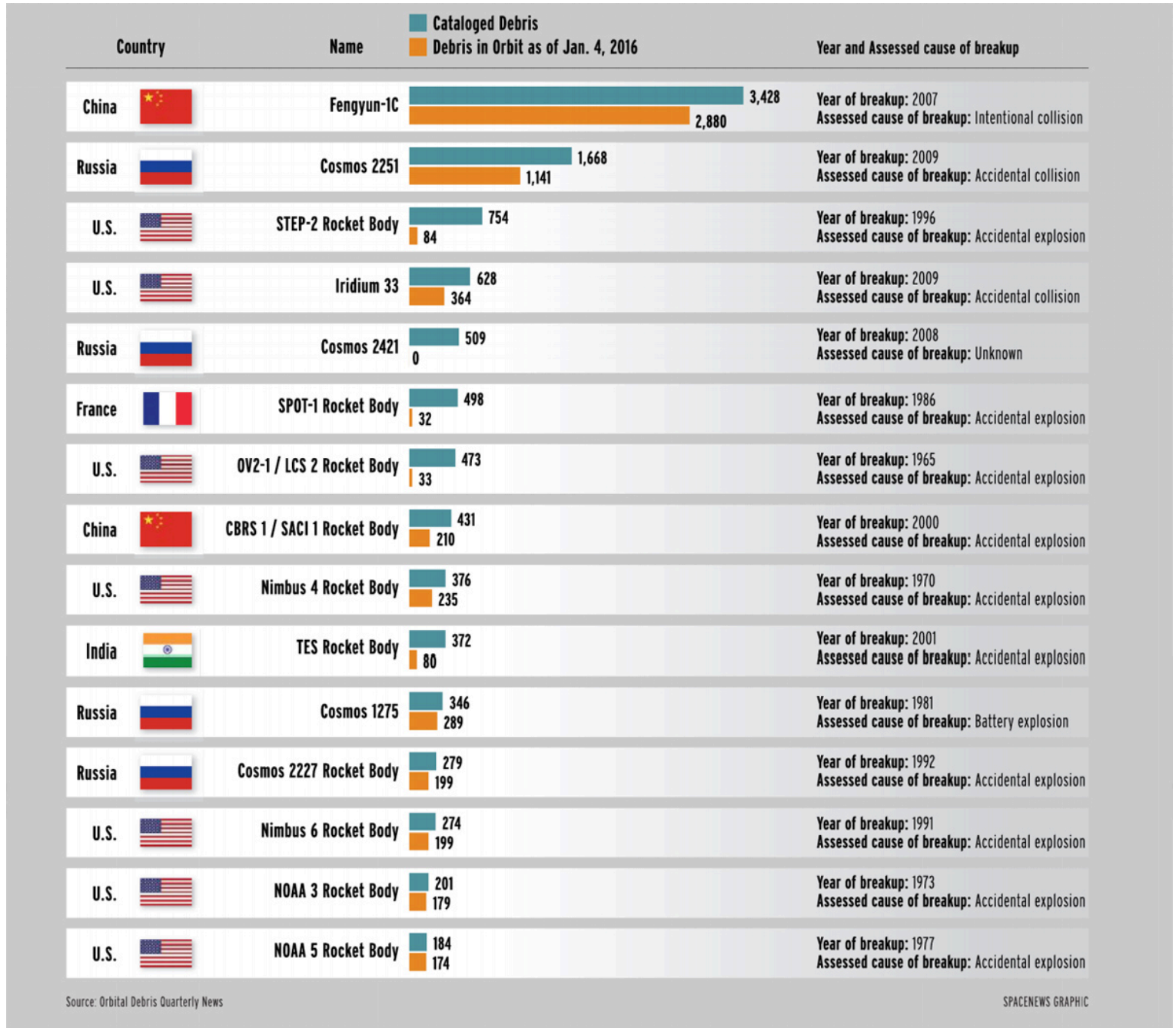
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**S**ome 5,000 space missions have been conducted worldwide since the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957.

Of the 17,400 cataloged objects still in orbit — including intact spacecraft and debris as small as a baseball — most are from the more than 200 so-called fragmentation events (ranging from accidental explosions to intentional collisions) over the last 60 years. Ten breakups produced a third of all cataloged debris still in orbit as of January, according to NASA's April issue of *Orbital Debris Quarterly News*.

Below are the 10 biggest breakups of all time, plus several smaller fragmentation events that produced especially stubborn debris that's been lingering in orbit for decades.



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