

A New Strategy for New Challenges in Space

Remarks to the National Space Symposium

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New Challenges in Space

Last year from this podium, Secretary Bill Lynn, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, spoke of the increasing challenges we encounter in space. He spoke of a domain that is increasingly characterized by what he called the three Cs:

- congested with increasing amounts of space debris;
- contested by a growing range of foreign counterspace capabilities; and
- competitive as more and more countries and companies operate in space.

These challenges are not theoretical or set in the future. These challenges are real and today.

- Space is demonstrably more congested: Just last week, space debris caused the crew of the International Space Station to take shelter.
- Space is demonstrably more contested: During ongoing unrest in the Middle East, both Libya and Iran resumed jamming of commercial satellites.
- And space is demonstrably more competitive: Over the last decade, U.S. industry's share of worldwide satellite manufacturing dropped precipitously.

Secretary Lynn warned that the changing space environment threatens to erode our overwhelming advantage in space. But he offered that the changes also present opportunities to strengthen our security and show leadership in new ways.

A New Strategy for the New Challenges

One year after Secretary Lynn spoke at this forum; the Department now has a new strategy to confront these new challenges. The new National Security Space Strategy, released in February, is significant in three respects:

- it is the first-ever space strategy signed by a Secretary of Defense;
- it was co-signed by the Director of National Intelligence, meaning that it covers the totality of national security space; and, most importantly,
- it signals that – just as the space environment has changed – we in the national security space community must change too.

The strategy establishes three broad objectives. One is obvious and enduring – to maintain and enhance the strategic advantages that we derive from space. The other two are new but equally important:

- to strengthen safety, stability, and security in space; and
- to energize our industrial base.

In short, in addition to protecting the advantages we derive from space, we must also protect the domain itself and the industry that provides our capabilities. Once, we could take space and our space industry for granted. We cannot any more. To meet these three overarching objectives, the strategy establishes a series of strategic approaches. I urge you to read these in detail in the unclassified summary available on the DoD website.

Allow me now to touch briefly on three:

- promoting responsible use of space;
- partnering with other countries; and
- deterring attacks on our space systems.

Promoting Responsible Use of Space

Promoting the responsible, peaceful, and safe use of space is one of the new strategy's key approaches. A more cooperative, predictable environment enhances our national security and discourages destabilizing behavior. The United States is leading by example. We will soon begin to provide pre-launch notification of our space launches, just as we have notified ballistic missile launches in the past. And, already, STRATCOM, a command first established for the sole purpose of delivering nuclear weapons, is now delivering warnings of potential collisions in space. It has signed agreements with some twenty satellite operators across the world to share space data and conjunction analysis.

The United States is also looking to promote international transparency and confidence building measures for space. With that in mind, we are currently evaluating the European Union's proposed international Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. We are also using our dialogues with countries like Russia, China, and India to urge them to consider such rules of the road. The Administration has not made a final determination on EU proposal, and the Department is assessing its operational impact. However our preliminary assessment finds it a positive approach to promoting responsible behavior in space, enhancing our national security in the process.

Partnering with Other Countries

Partnering with other countries is another key approach of the new strategy. Partnerships allow us to benefit from the growing space capabilities of allies and others, to make our space capabilities more diverse and resilient, and to improve our ability to operate in coalition. We

routinely operate in coalition in conducting air, maritime, and ground operations. Space is a domain where we have tended to operate on our own, in part because few allies had capabilities to offer. As more of our allies deploy space capabilities, and as coalition operations in other domains become increasingly dependent on space, we must bring a coalition approach to space operations. As an important step in that process, we are looking at transitioning STRATCOM's Joint Space Operations Center to a Combined Space Operations Center. This will require us to engage in the "unprecedented level of sharing" mentioned yesterday by General Kehler. It will also require our allies to join us in committing space capabilities to a coalition approach.

Improved space situational awareness is one of several mission areas that can benefit from international cooperation. Secretary Gates recently signed statements of principles on sharing space situational awareness with his counterparts from Australia, Canada, and France. These are allies whose capabilities and geography can contribute importantly to tracking and characterizing the many objects in space. Another good example of partnership is Wideband Global SATCOM, or WGS. Australia has bought into the constellation, and the Air Force is negotiating with other allies to become part of this partnership. International participation increases the number of satellites, adds coverage and resiliency, and shares the cost, a welcome benefit at a time of budget constraints.

Deterring Attack

The new strategy also reflects a new, multi-layered approach to deterring attack on our space systems. This is important as we monitor countries like China developing a wide range of counterspace capabilities. But our concern is not focused on only one country. Jamming of satellites is becoming all too routine, and jammers aimed against BBC or Voice of America can be readily turned against the military communications carried by many of the same satellites. This approach to deterrence builds on aspects of the strategy that I have already described. In brief:

- The first layer of deterrence is the establishment of norms of responsible behavior, thus separating responsible space-faring countries from those who act otherwise.
- The second layer of deterrence is the establishment of international coalitions, thus forcing an adversary to contemplate attacking the capabilities of many countries, not just one.
- The third layer of deterrence is increasing our resilience and capacity to operate in a degraded environment, a key point from General Shelton yesterday, thus reducing the incentive to attack our space capabilities.
- The fourth layer of deterrence is a readiness and capability to respond in self-defense, and not necessarily in space, thus further complicating the calculus of a government considering an attack on our space assets

We should not think only about deterrence in space, but also about space in deterrence, including how a robust space posture can help deter conflict, but also how vulnerabilities in space can cause instability in crisis.

Conclusion

Developing the strategy was a complex undertaking, but the real challenge is in implementation. As Secretary Lynn said here a year ago, confronting the changes in the space environment requires more than changing plans and programs. It also requires changing the way we think. Everyone at this symposium will be partners in implementing the changes required by the new strategy. Thus, I'd like to conclude with several challenges.

- First, to the strategists and operators: Help formulate rules of the road and cooperative approaches to safeguarding a domain that is vital to the interests of our nation and also the world.
- Second, to industry and the acquisition community: Think creatively about how to leverage new commercial opportunities and to increase the resilience of the capabilities we acquire, all at a time of shrinking resources.
- Third, to our allies and partners: Think about how best to operate in coalition and what capabilities you have to offer. Also think about how to use organizations like NATO to better exploit our collective space capabilities to support future coalition operations, whether countering insurgents, combating piracy, or supporting humanitarian relief.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to your questions and advice on implementing the new strategy.