



Statement by Chris Williams on Secretary of the Air Force Troy Meink's Comment on Weapons in Space

According to various news reports, yesterday Secretary of the Air Force Hon. Troy Meink publicly declared, "Today, we continue to ensure we remain ready to meet the challenges of evolving threats wherever they exist. This is why the United States now has on-orbit space control weapons, capable of defending the Joint Force against hostile adversary action." He later stated, "It is critically important that we maintain our dominance not only in the air, but in space, and so we've had to take steps to make sure that when we're threatened, we can take care of that [threat]...."

In response, Chris Williams, Chair of the Moorman Center for Space Studies, the independent think tank within the National Security Space Association, issued the following statement:

Secretary Meink's declaration is an entirely appropriate acknowledgement that reflects 21st century realities. The statement enhances deterrence by making clear that America has the means to defend critical space systems upon which U.S. national security relies.

Critics will falsely accuse the Space Force of "inciting an arms race". In fact, America's adversaries are developing, testing and fielding numerous ground- and space-based anti-satellite (ASAT) systems. For example, according to press reports, Moscow is developing for deployment a nuclear ASAT that could destroy most or all satellites in various orbits, thereby causing massive and global economic damage. And China is fielding a broad range of space control systems to threaten U.S. military and commercial space assets in all orbits.

Secretary Meink's statement makes clear that the Space Force has begun fielding the systems needed to protect and defend U.S. satellites and the global economy against growing threats. Indeed, the Space Force's primary obligation – its' raison d'être – is to defend the Joint Force and the nation against attacks on U.S. space systems. Deploying a range of effective space control systems is essential to the nation's ability to deter such attacks or defend against them, should deterrence fail.

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Chris Williams serves as the Chair of the NSSA Moorman Center for Space Studies. The views expressed herein are solely those of the author and do not reflect the views of the National Security Space Association or its member companies.