

Transcript

Media Roundtable with U.S. Space Command Commander Gen. John Raymond

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General John Raymond, Commander, U.S. Space Command; Steve Kitay, Deputy Assistant Secretary Of Defense For Space Policy; Colonel David S. Westover Jr., Director Of Public Affairs, U.S. Space Command



STAFF: All right. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Colonel David Westover, Space Command director of public affairs.

Thank you for joining us today for this media engagement with Gen. Jay Raymond, the commander, United States Space Command, and Mr. Steve Kitay, deputy assistant secretary of defense for space policy.

We're here today to discuss the establishment of U.S. Space Command.

First, I'd like to set a few ground rules.

Today's engagement is embargoed until approximately 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, or at the conclusion of the establishment ceremony at the White House. This will be a 30-minute, on-the-record, off-camera engagement. General Raymond will start with a brief opening statement and then we'll open the floor to questions.

If you have a question, raise your hand, please, state your name and affiliation; limit yourself to one question and a follow on to give everyone a chance to ask a question.

The roundtable will end promptly at 11 o'clock. If there are questions that can't be answered, we'll be happy to take them and follow up accordingly.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's my pleasure to introduce Gen. Jay Raymond.

Sir, the floor is yours.

GENERAL JOHN RAYMOND: Good morning. Thank you very much for joining me and DASD Steve Kitay on this really exciting day as we establish United States Space Command as our nation's eleventh warfighting combatant command.

Let me first say there's unprecedented alignment in our nation today that space is a warfighting domain just like air, land, sea and cyber. Our National Security Strategy clearly states that access to and freedom to maneuver in space is a vital national interest. With this alignment, we have accelerated our efforts to meet the near-term imperatives of this new warfighting domain.

The scope, scale and complexity of the threat to our space capabilities is real and it's concerning. We no longer have the luxury of operating in a peaceful, benign domain, and we no longer have the luxury of treating space superiority as a given.

You may wonder how this new command is different from the original United States Space Command that existed from 1985 to 2002.

The United States Space Command of today shares the same name as the original command. However, it is designed for a different strategic environment. Today's U.S. Space Command has a sharper mission focus on protecting and defending our critical space assets, a stronger unified structure with our intelligence partners, a strengthened relationship with our allies, and a closer connection to our joint warfighting partners and other combatant commands.

Although space is a warfighting domain, our goal is to actually deter a conflict from extending into space. The best way I know how to do that is to be prepared to fight and win if deterrence were to fail.

We are the best in the world at space today and we are even better as we establish a new United States Space Command with a singular focus on the space domain.

Finally, it's truly a privilege to lead the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines that make up United States Space Command. They will answer the calling of our new national imperative to ensure we maintain space superiority for our nation and our allies alike.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today and I greatly

appreciate it. And I look -- look forward to your questions.

STAFF: Yes, sir? (Inaudible).

Q: Hi, Travis Tritten with Bloomberg Government.

Sorry, I actually had a related question about Space Force and this -- maybe a question for Mr. Kitay.

Could you talk about the importance and significance of including Space Force in Title 10 of the U.S. Code in any congressional authorization?

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE STEVE KITAY: Sure. Do you want to go first?

Including it in Title 10 -- Title 10 is -- is the law for -- that -- that governs national security activities and that's what, to establish a new branch of the armed forces, which is what our proposal is, and we believe that we have a strategic imperative to establish the Space Force as a sixth branch of the armed forces, Title 10 is where that would be captured. Title 10 is what has the United States Air Force and the other branches of the armed forces and updating that would provide the necessary authority to the Department of Defense to actually establish that sixth branch.

Q: And then just to follow up, are there any specific capabilities that being in Title 10 would allow a Space Force that it wouldn't have if it wasn't included in that statute?

MR. KITAY: Really, Title 10 is where we get our authorities in the Department of Defense, for the most part. And updating that, as I have mentioned, would provide the Department of Defense the authority and -- depending on how it's written. And what we are asking for and requesting Congress is to establish a sixth branch of the armed forces, the United States Space Force.

Our proposal is to do it within the Department of the Air Force, so this is similar concept, insofar as how the United States Marine Corps is a separate branch of the armed forces, however, it's within the Department of the Navy. The Department of the Navy has two branches underneath it, the United States Marine Corps and the United States Navy. And in our proposal, and what we are requesting, and believe that there's a strategic imperative to establish in the F.Y. '20 National Defense Authorization Act, by amending Title 10, as you say, the United States Space Force within the Department of the Air Force, separate and equal to that other service.

STAFF: Yes, ma'am. First row.

Q: Thank you, good morning. Sandra Erwin, SpaceNews.

Gen. Raymond, you said Space Command is going to focus on protect, defend, deter. What about offensive operations? What do you think would be the role of Space Command in offensive type of operations?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah.

So, Sandra, it's clear that, as I mentioned up front, that space is a warfighting domain. And again, as you mentioned -- I mentioned, our missions actually fall in four different areas. The first one is to deter. The second one is to defend. The third one is to deliver space combat effects to our joint warfighting partners around the globe. And the fourth one is to develop joint warfighters to be able to operate in this contested domain.

Our goal, our desire is to not have that conflict extend into space. We're prepared to defend today, and we'll be prepared to defend tomorrow. But it's a warfighting domain.

Q: The capabilities of the fourth thing that you mentioned, is that going to be part of the joint task force that you're going to be setting up? One in California and the other one in Colorado Springs?

(CROSSTALK)

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, so if you'll -- let me just lay out, kind of, the structure real quick. So the United States Space Command is a geographic combatant command that's going to have a singular focus on -- on the space domain.

It's organized with a headquarters, a traditional headquarters staff, if you will. And then there's going to be service components. The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines will have a service component to U.S. Space Command.

And then there's going to be two operational components. The two operational components, one is called the Combined Force Space Component Command.

Today, in my current hat until 4:00 this afternoon, I am the Joint Force Space Component commander. We're going to -- we're going to elevate that to a combined command, to help us integrate with allies more effectively. That command is going to be focused on integrating space capabilities around the globe, throughout all of our -- for our joint and coalition partners. They're focused on integrating space.

The Joint Task Force for Space Defense, which is a new organization, is the organization that's going to be focused on protecting and defending that domain, putting that sharper focus on that mission set, as outlined in the UCP-assigned missions by the president.

Q: Thank you.

STAFF: Mr. Martin?

Q: Dave Martin with CBS.

One of the fact sheets that was put out earlier this week said Space Command will consist of -- and then there was a very small number; I think it was like 260.

Obviously, there are more than 260 people involved in space operations. So could you explain that?

And then as a second question, what will -- what will be the role of

Space Command in relation to NRO?

GEN. RAYMOND: Absolutely.

So to get started, today, when we establish the United States Space Command, there will be 287 folks assigned to the headquarters and on the headquarters staff.

And that largely is made up of -- of personnel that were currently assigned to the Joint Force Space Component Command, and also those that today are part of U.S. Strategic Command that are doing space -- conducting the space mission out of U.S. Strategic Command. So we'll combine those folks together into -- and, again, 287 is what we start with.

There's also five operational centers that are located around the world. You've been to the Combined Space Operations Center out at Vandenberg, the CSpOC. We also have a National Space Defense Center out at Schriever Air Force Base. We have a Missile Warning Center in Cheyenne Mountain. We've got a Joint OPIR Planning Center at Buckley Air Force Base in Denver. And we have a Joint Navigation and Warfare Center at Kirkland. So all of those five centers also become part of U.S. Space Command as well.

We are currently going through the manpower validation process to determine what the eventual size is. But we're going to start today with what we have in both the Joint Force Space Component Command and the pieces of STRATCOM.

As for the relationship with the National Reconnaissance Office, our relationship with the National Reconnaissance Office has never been better. And we -- we have a shared concept of operations, we have a shared vision and a shared concept of operations. We train together, we exercise together, we man the same C2 center, if you will, at the National Space Defense Center.

And just recently, we've come to an agreement with the National Reconnaissance Office that in higher states of conflict, they will respond to the direction of the U.S. Space Command commander as it relates to protecting and defending those capabilities.

So it's an even strengthened relationship than what we already currently enjoy.

Q: So day-to-day operations, you don't -- you don't control NRO satellites --

GEN. RAYMOND: Day to day, we don't. We operate at a unity of effort. We share information, we train together, we exercise together. We're in lockstep together.

But in higher states of conflict, when it comes -- when it's critical to protect and defend, then NRO has agreed that they will respond to the direction of the United States Space Command commander.

Q: Is it like DEFCON? I mean, when you change your DEFCON, you go do this relationship?

GEN. RAYMOND: Just higher states of readiness, and we'll leave it at

that.

STAFF: Yes, right here.

Q: Thank you so much. Kristina Wong with Breitbart News.

Now that Space Command is stood up, what are your top priorities?

GEN. RAYMOND: Sure.

Q: And what are the top priorities for the nation when it comes to space?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, so my priorities are, obviously, consistent with the priorities of the department. But what we have outlined initially, as we get started, is kind of five -- five things.

The first thing is, we're going to seamlessly transition the responsibilities for space from U.S. Strategic Command to U.S. Space Command. That has already begun. We've been working very closely with U.S. Strategic Command over the last year as we plan this, and we're going to continue to work that.

We're also -- today, we're going to establish the command. And we're going to build towards initial operations capability and full operations capability. We want to do that with a sense of urgency. And so that would be priority number two.

Priority number three, one of the critical pieces of standing up -- the reasons why we want to stand up this command is to strengthen the relationships that we have the other combatant commands around the world. So we're going to focus on that integration of space throughout our geographic -- our combatant command partners.

Now fourth, we want to continue to expand that allied cooperation. We view -- view this as really critical. We have made some significant strides over -- towards that end over the last couple of years. As we stand up the combined command, we think there's greater opportunities ahead.

And -- and then fifth, we're going to continue to develop those joint warfighters. And that's -- that's two -- a two-part challenge. That's developing space operators that have a deeper understanding of joint warfighting, and it's also developing more traditional joint warfighters that have a deeper understanding of space.

Q: And if you could just talk about the importance of standing up Space Command now, you know, and -- for the nation and what -- what sort of challenges the nation faces in -- when it comes to space and adversaries.

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, I -- I really believe we're at a strategic inflection point where there's nothing that we do as a joint and coalition force that isn't enabled by space, zero.

At the same time, our adversaries have had a front row seat in our many successes of integrating space and they are developing -- and they don't like what they see, cause it provides us such great advantage. And they're developing capabilities to negate our access to space.

It's an imperative that we stand up this command today. We are the best in the world at space today and with this command and with the Space Force that will -- that is also an extremely important imperative for us, we will stay ahead of that threat into the future.

STAFF: Yes, sir.

Q: Thank you. Jeff Schogol with Task & Purpose.

Can you say what is the timeline for selecting Space Command's permanent headquarters?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, so there's a process underway today. The Air Force is -- is running that process. They have -- have identified six candidate bases. Those bases are being evaluated. Once those -- that -- that work is done and the analysis is done, the secretary of the Air Force will make that decision.

Q: And my colleague's question about offensive operations. Can you talk about what offensive space operations might look like? Do they involve destroying enemy satellites, blinding them, jamming enemy communications?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, so I talked a little bit about the threats that we see with scope, scale and the complexity of the threat that we see today. We see everything -- you know, there's a full spectrum of threats. You can have everything, from a -- on the lower end of that spectrum, reversible jamming of communication satellites and -- and GPS satellites, for example, all the way up to the very destructive kinetic strike of a ground-based missile that can blow up a satellite, like China did in 2007.

And so there's a full spectrum of -- of -- of threats and we're concerned about all of those threats.

STAFF: Yes, sir, here?

Q: Thank you, I'm Lalit Jha from PTI Press, Trust of India.

Which are the major challenges you face in the space domain? And which are the challenges you think poses a threat to the U.S. in the space domain?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, there -- there are challenges in the space domain. As I said, there's a -- there's a growing threat, a -- that's scope, scale, complexity is concerning.

Q: Can you please explain those threats?

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, so as I just mentioned, there's reversible jamming of GPS and communications satellites, there's directed energy threats, there's missiles that can be shot from the ground and -- and blow up a satellite, like was demonstrated by China in 2007. So there's a full spectrum. We're concerned about all of those threats.

Q: Countries which are a concern?

GEN. RAYMOND: Primarily the countries that have -- that have the more significant threats are China and Russia.

Q: Thank you.

STAFF: Second Row.

Q: Vivienne Machi with Defense Daily.

I was wondering if you -- either of you, can lay out how the budget planning for F.Y. '21 and beyond has already been impacted by the Space Command's establishment and will be once it is formally established.

GEN. RAYMOND: I -- I can tell you, to get started, the -- the U.S. Space Command's budget was \$83.8 million. And of that, \$75.6 million was just the shifting and transferring from one organization to another because the forces existed. You know, for example, the forces that were at STRATCOM.

So there's only -- in this fiscal year, to get us started, there was only a \$8.2 million growth and the rest of it was a consolidation of resources that already existed.

Q: And primarily from the Air Force or from all of the consolidation for --

GEN. RAYMOND: It's, again, forces that were assigned to U.S. Strategic Command are, as -- are joint -- are joint forces. U.S. Strategic Command is responsible for space today. When Air -- when the U.S. Space Command is established this afternoon, those forces will be reassigned from U.S. Strategic Command to U.S. Space Command and - - and then the command will be up and running.

Q: Thank you.

STAFF: Yes, sir.

Q: Thank you, Aaron Mehta with Defense News.

A couple of follow-ups on things that have been brought up. You've talked about allies a lot, they were mentioned a couple of times.

GEN. RAYMOND: Sure.

Q: Could you expand a little bit? Because in the past there have been attempts to get allies more space but there's issues with being able to share information and all of that.

GEN. RAYMOND: Yeah, I'll -- I'll tell you, we haven't -- historically, we haven't needed to have allies in space. Space was a benign domain, it wasn't as critical.

It is very important today that we have -- and we are working very closely with our partners, specifically our Five Eyes partners, with France, Germany and Japan.

We -- we exercise together, we train together, we conduct war games together, we have allied partners -- in our -- in our operations center out at -- at the Combined Space Operations Center, we have -- we have opened more training opportunities for our allied partners with our Space 100, 200 and 300 courses on the professional development side. We're -- we have partnerships where we're putting hosted payloads on allied -- on allied satellites like we're doing with Norway and Japan.

And so this is a big growth area for us and -- and I think it's going to provide our country great advantage. We're stronger together.

Q: One of the things we've seen in the last couple of years is a lot of countries are starting to get more into space on the commercial side. You mentioned those payloads as one thing. Are you hoping that with Space Command there's going to be a way to maybe connect with more allies, bringing countries that haven't necessarily been space-bound in the past getting involved more?

GEN. RAYMOND: We absolutely are -- are open for new partnerships. We're eagerly working those partnerships. I mentioned the countries that are -- that we're working very closely with today, but we are looking -- looking forward to continuing to expand that. That's one of the priorities of the command.

Q: Thank you.

STAFF: Yes, ma'am, fourth row?

Q: Hi, Lara Seligman with Foreign Policy.

First, can you talk maybe about the urgency of doing this right now, with the development of new weapons from China and Russia and particularly the missile defense issue that we face and possibly creating some kind of space missile defense layer?

And -- yeah, let's start with that and then I have a follow up.

GEN. RAYMOND: First of all, as I mentioned up front, we're the best in the world in space, but there is a -- our -- our level of superiority is -- is diminishing. And so we view this as a -- this standup of U.S. Space Command and the standup of a -- of a U.S. Space Force we view as critical and it's a critical opportunity to stay ahead of that growing threat. Again, we're the best in the world, but we want to -- we want to move fast and -- and -- and stay ahead.

That's why things like the Space Development Agency -- they were a part of this, that's part of this, as well, is -- is all getting after being able to develop capabilities across a full range of mission sets to be able to stay ahead of the growing threat.

Q: And you mentioned the Space Force also. Can you talk a little bit more about how the two are going to work together?

GEN. RAYMOND: Sure, absolutely.

Q: And how Space Command is going to support the Space Force when it ultimately stands up.

GEN. RAYMOND: So, as you all know, back in 1986, there was a law called the Goldwater-Nichols Act that really reorganized the department into two functions. One function is an organize, train and equip function; that's what the services do: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines. And one is a warfighting function; that's what combatant commands do. On both of those functions, the U.S. is looking to elevate that -- that -- both of those functions, as it relates to space.

Today, when U.S. Space Command is established, we will elevate the warfighting component of that to -- today, I'm a component command commander of a component command that's part of U.S. Strategic Command. That component command is going to be elevated to a combatant command.

On the Space Force side, we're also seeking to elevate the organize, train and equip. We think that's an absolute imperative, to move -- to elevate space to its own separate force, as outlined by DASD Kitay in the first question.

Q: And how will they -- how will they --

GEN. RAYMOND: So -- so just like in all other domains, we will rely -- the combatant command, U.S. Space Command, will be reliant on the United States Space Force to provide its forces for us to then execute. And so that's that connection: Services organize, train, equip, present forces to combatant commands to conduct operations.

Q: Thank you.

STAFF: Yes, sir, in the back.

Q: Hi. Thanks, Dave. Luis Martinez with ABC News.

Is it correct to say that today, we are re-establishing Space Command, the earlier iteration from the '90s?

And can you also expand on how different -- what the differences are today, with this new command from the previous one?

GEN. RAYMOND: Absolutely.

I think it -- you know, there was a U.S. Space Command that was established in 1985, and was disestablished in 2002. And so this command that we're establishing today is called U.S. Space Command,

it shares the same name, but it's a different -- it's a different command, built for a different strategic environment: again, with a sharper focus on protecting and defending, with a sharper connection to our intelligence community, with a sharper connection to our allies and partners.

And so, share the same name. It's a -- and the other -- the other difference is, in this -- the U.S. Space Command that's being established today, is being established as a geographic combatant command, which will help us integrate with our warfighting partners more effectively. The last -- the original U.S. Space Command was a functional combatant command.

STAFF: Second row.

Q: Tony Bertuca from Inside Defense.

The department's always said continuing resolutions are bad for the department, bad for standing things up, bad for organizing. If a continuing resolution were to happen, what kind of impact would that have on you guys getting out of the gate here?

GEN. RAYMOND: It would have significant impact. We need to have stable budgets as we build this command. And they are -- continuing resolutions are never good, and it would be bad in this case as well.

STAFF: Third row.

Q: Hi. Thank you. Rafa Salido, Efe News.

So you are talking about the relationship between the Space Command and Space Forces, how they will provide with the folks and everything.

What I don't quite understand is, both units are in the Air Force, but still they are different. Why do you not make it all together, if you are basically the same, if you are kind of -- as far as I get it, you are the ones who are going to be organizing things, but they are the ones who are going to be providing with the resources? So, why two different things?

GEN. RAYMOND: So the way that -- back in 1986, when the Goldwater-Nichols Act was passed, it was to strengthen jointness and -- and -- and today, the way that the department is organized is in two separate functions: One organizes, trains and equips and one conducts operations and fights -- fights the wars.

Just like we do in all other domains, we're going to follow that same path in space. You have an organize, train and equip and you have a -- a warfighting command.

MR. KITAY: So maybe to expand on that a little bit, if you think of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marines, these are branches of our armed forces where people join them. We are looking to create a branch of the armed forces focused on space where people join that and spend their career.

That branch of the armed forces will be focused on the doctrine of warfare, it'll be focused on the people, it'll be focused on developing the capabilities and a culture and ethos for this domain.

As Gen. Raymond said, we fight wars jointly. So those forces from the armed -- the -- the services, the branches, then go to combatant commands to operate, to deter and do our day-to-day operations, but they are always part of an armed force.

So it's the -- it's the separate role, as Gen. Raymond was saying, of organize, training and equipping and developing the people, the capabilities and the doctrine, and then operating those forces in a joint manner to fight and win.

Q: In a joint manner with whom? So like, Space Command is going to be the brains and Space Force is going to be the muscle?

MR. KITAY: I -- I -- I would say Space Force will be a primary provider to U.S. Space Command, but all of the armed forces -- the branches of the armed forces -- the Army, the Navy, the Marines and the Air Force -- will still have a role in U.S. Space Command.

And that's because when we look at space and the importance of space to our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, their lives, the operations they are conducting, they need to be a part of space, and Space Command will give them that -- that -- that participation in joint warfare and ensuring they have the capabilities they need to -- to fight and win in their domains.

Q: Thank you so much.

STAFF: Yes, ma'am, first row.

Q: Thank you. I'm Theresa Hitchens with Breaking Defense. Hello sir,

thank you for the briefing.

My question is, are you still convinced that no air force anywhere should use kinetic energy weapons in space?

GEN. RAYMOND: I'm convinced that we need to keep the domain safe for all to use. I'm convinced that space is a warfighting domain. I'm convinced that our way of life and our way of war depend on space capabilities. And I'm convinced that the -- our primary focus needs to deter that activity from happening.

But if deterrence were to fail, I'm also convinced that -- that we need to operate from a position of strength, and that's what we're going to do.

STAFF: Yes, sir, third row.

Q: Kasim Ileri, Anadolu Agency.

So, of course, you mentioned China and Russia as threats. We also know that the department has some issues with aliens, as well. And to what extent the Space Command is kind of -- the establishment of the Space Command is triggered by the concern regarding aliens?

GEN. RAYMOND: That -- the standup of U.S. Space Command is -- is designed to be a warfighting command focused on being able to protect those capabilities that fuel our joint and coalition operations around the globe, they're -- it's designed to protect and defend those

capabilities that -- that fuel our way of life and to develop people to be able to -- to do that. That's the focus of this command: It's a warfighting command.

MR. KITAY: I would just add to that, as Gen. Raymond is saying, Space Command and the United States Space Force, at the end of the day, is focused on life here on Earth, because space does impact, as he said, our way of war and our way of life, and those soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines depend on space capabilities.

This is about protecting and defending, delivering those capabilities throughout and ultimately about life here on Earth.

Q: And you talk about --

STAFF: We have time for just one last question here. Sir, please, fourth row.

Q: Thank you.

You characterized China and Russia as the greatest threats to the United States in the space domain. Can you just talk about -- a little bit about what their objectives are? Do they seek to dislodge American power? What are they specifically trying to do, other than their capabilities that you outlined?

MR. KITAY: Sure.

So China and Russia, in particular, are updating their organization. In fact, they've had reform in 2015 where they've created a greater focus on space. And they are updating their doctrine and their capabilities, both space to enable their terrestrial forces and counter-space, as Gen. Raymond has mentioned.

Their doctrine and there's a perception that -- that space represents an Achilles heel and that this is a way -- an asymmetric advantage for them to then take on the United States power, because we project power globally through space-enabled capabilities.

And as Gen. Raymond is saying, that space will not be a -- an Achilles heel. We will protect and defend it and provide it for our way of life and our way of war.

STAFF: All right.

Thank you, sir. That's all of the time we have today.

Just a reminder, the embargo on this engagement until 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time. Thank you for the time, if you have questions --

GEN. RAYMOND: I -- I would also say, I was introduced as the U.S. Space Command commander. That's embargoed, 'cause that doesn't happen until 4-something this afternoon, so.

STAFF: Yes, sir.

GEN. RAYMOND: Thanks.