

Disarmament and International Security Committee: Trump's Space Force

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I. Background

On Thursday, August 9, 2018, the Vice President of the United States, Mike Pence, announced plans for the United States Space Force, a new branch of the US military which would be dedicated to fighting wars in space. Trump's administration deemed it necessary to create this unique military branch, because of "galactic threats from US adversaries" (The Guardian), such as Russia and China. In 2007, China destroyed one of their own satellites as a test for a weapon that could be used against other nations. Russia has conducted similar tests before, including one with a missile that could track and target satellites. The proposal details the United States Space Force to be a new branch of the military, in addition to the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard, which would be implemented by the year 2020. A new branch of the military cannot be created without the approval of the US Congress. However, officials have already started making plans for this new force. For example, they have mentioned the creation of a "Space Operations Force." This would be comprised of fighters drawn from the already existing branches of the military and who will be specially trained in the domain of space; and it would also be created using as a model already existing special operations forces. Proponents of the Space Force within the US government also propose creating a "United States Space Command" and a "Space Development Agency," as well as an assistant Secretary of Defense specialized in the Force. Even if there is not an independent branch of the military dedicated solely to space fighting, the Air Force has a Space Command, created in 1982. In terms of financing, the Trump administration has asked Congress to approve a budget of \$8 billion, even though it is estimated that the new branch of the military would cost much more.

II. Current Economic and Political Situation

Two months after Vice President Mike Pence announced the plan to create a Space Force, the military finds itself at odds over how to make it happen. An internal Air Force

estimate leaked to the press said that the Space Force would cost nearly \$13 billion to create, which has sparked groups, especially within the Air Force, to argue that a Space Force should not be created at all, but rather that the Air Force should be renamed. Multiple signed memos by the US Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson revealed that creating both a Space Force and a unified space command would cost more than \$3.3 billion for the fiscal year of 2020. Senior editor for aviation and space at *Inside Defense*, Courtney Albon's reports showed that more than 13,000 new personnel would be needed, as well as a five-year budget of \$12.9 billion. Other estimates state that the Space Force will oversee some 13,000 personnel when it is officially implemented. According to a Monday Politico report, the "anti-Space Force movement" is concerned about the new branch diverting funding from other military programs. "I have worked to reduce the size of the Pentagon bureaucracy," Coffman told Politico. "And now we have a plan by this administration to expand that bureaucracy by creating a whole new branch of military service—a department of space—without, I believe, a commensurate increase in capability." Coffman said a better idea would be a new Space Command that takes in elements of the existing branches of the military.

When Vice President Mike Pence set forth the US's vision for the future of space exploration and combat, he took a not-so-subtle shot at China, signaling a coming second space race between the world's two biggest powers. The head of the Chinese lunar-exploration program said last year: "The universe is an ocean, the moon is the Diaoyu Islands, Mars is Huangyan Island. If we don't go there now even though we're capable of doing so, then we will be blamed by our descendants. If others go there, then they will take over, and you won't be able to go even if you want to. This is reason enough." Ye's mention of the Diaoyu Islands, which the Japanese also claim and contest, and of Huangyan Island, which the Philippines also claim and contest, recalls Beijing's behavior in the South China Sea.

The National Space Council has already started making recommendations to the Trump administration for the proposed Space Force. Mike Pence, the council's chair has said that

Trump will take action very soon. Deputy Defense Secretary, Patrick Shanahan made the following six recommendations (DefenseNews):

1. “Guides the creation of a unified space command to be known as U.S. Space Command
2. Gives direction on an legislative proposal for a Space Force
3. Calls for creating a funding plan in the fiscal year 2020 budget for a Space Force
4. Outlines an interagency authorities review
5. Establishes joint Space Development Agency for technology procurement
6. Strengthens the relationship between military space and the intelligence community”

III. Repercussions (Space Debris)

Analysts estimate that 25 percent of today’s space debris originated in the above-mentioned 2007 test when the Chinese military blasted apart one of its own weather satellites with a missile at an altitude of 537 miles. More than 170 million pieces of space debris, including decades-old satellites or spent rockets, already orbit the Earth today, with 29,000 of them being bigger than four inches. According to the European Space Agency, a satellite colliding with one of the 29,000 larger objects would be “catastrophic,” while smaller fragments could still penetrate surfaces. Apparently, Trump signed Space Policy Directive-3 for this very reason. The directive aims to make it easier for companies to avoid collisions between their satellites and space debris by ordering the Commerce Department to improve public access to a Defense Department catalog of objects in space. The directive also orders the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) to strive to create the best practices to reduce the creation of new debris and for the State Department to push the international space community to take similar steps to reduce debris.

IV. Guide Questions

- A. What is your delegation’s position regarding Trump’s Space Force?
- B. How will your delegation be affected by Trump’s Space Force politically and economically?

- C. How would your delegation implement (or not implement) the supposed Space Operations Force?
- D. What policies would your delegation propose to come to a compromise regarding Trump's Space Force?
- E. How would your delegation propose the Space Force and its different subdivisions (Command, Development Agency, etc.) be implemented? If your delegation is against the Space Force, what precautions would you establish in order to make sure the command of the Force remains as stable as possible?
- F. What would your delegation do if Trump's Space Force was implemented in such a way that your delegation suffers?
- G. How would your delegation incorporate the already existing United States Air Force Space Command into the new branch of the military that would be created under this proposal?
- H. What kind of inclusion does your delegation propose that companies such as the National Space Council have on the new Space Force?
- I. How big of a role does your delegation propose the Space Force will play in the Defense Department?
- J. How would your delegation take action regarding the recommendations made for the creation of the Space Force?

V. Resources and Works Cited

- A. <https://www.theverge.com/2018/8/9/17670286/pence-trump-space-force-military-branch-2020-ndaa> (The Verge)
- B. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/aug/10/space-force-everything-you-need-to-know> (The Guardian)
- C. <https://www.defensenews.com/space/2018/10/23/pentagon-presents-recommendations-on-space-force-to-trump/> (Defense News)
- D. <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/09/17/politics/trump-space-force-cost/index.html> (CNN)

- E. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/markets/rocketing-costs-the-air-forces-new-price-tag-for-trumps-space-force-shows-why-its-so-unpopular-in-congress/ar-BBNuM8q> (MSN)
- F. <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/trump-space-force-could-fuel-new-1-trillion-economy-2018-6-1027312647> (Business Insider)
- G. <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/19/politics/us-china-russia-space-force-intl/index.html> (CNN)
- H. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/23/AR2007012300114.html> (Washington Post)
- I. <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/18/world/asia/18cnd-china.html> (New York Times)

VI. Message from the Dais

Delegates, this topic has many important aspects that we wish be covered in the committee. We have done our best to describe as much as possible some of these aspects in this document, however, we encourage you to research your delegations' positions fully by reading each delegation's actions, beliefs, and overall impact regarding Trump's Space Force. The committee will be set in real time, so anything that happens between the time this briefing is released and the time the committee ends could be used in the committee. We also encourage the delegates to attempt to reach a compromise regarding the resolutions, so we can come to an agreement that is beneficial to all parties involved. Position papers should be submitted by **Tuesday, November 6, 2018 at 11:59 PM** and they should be sent to both chairs and to the committee email which is specified below. Papers should be written in **Times New Roman** font size **12** with **1.5** spacing. The maximum amount of pages is **3**. The guide questions do not need to be answered, however they serve as a guideline to make the research and writing process less tedious. We are currently working hard to make this committee as fun and interesting as possible. Please do not hesitate to email us if you have any questions or concerns. We are very excited to see you soon!

Sincerely,

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