



U.S. SPACE FORCE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

Strength Through Partnership



UNITED STATES
SPACE FORCE



FOREWORD

Spacepower is the ultimate team sport. This fundamental principle underpins so much of the Space Force's work, and its significance cannot be overstated. Space is simply too complex, too vast and too risky for any single power to control. Therefore, if the Service is to achieve its mission to secure our Nation's interests in, from, and to space, then it absolutely must cultivate partnerships with partners upon whom it can depend on to share its pursuit of a stable, secure and sustainable domain.

To that end, in April 2024 I published the Commercial Space Strategy in partnership with SAF/SQ, and in July 2024, I published C-Note #30, which articulated the need to align our people, policies and processes with those of our Allies and partners to the extent that we are *Integrated by Design*. Furthermore, the Secretary of Defense has emphasized that an "America First" approach is not isolationism but rather a deliberate effort to build alliances and partnerships that address global challenges and are beneficial to all. To that end, this International Partnership Strategy explains precisely how we plan to achieve this vision as well as to establish direction for our way ahead. Additionally, this Strategy, when combined with the Commercial Space Strategy, enables the development of hybrid architectures which integrate DoD, Commercial, Allied and partner capabilities to increase resiliency through redundancy and proliferation.

Specifically, this Strategy details the ends, ways and means around which we will organize our efforts to present resilient and ready space capabilities to the Combined Force. It provides a framework for the processes by which we will cultivate present and future relationships with like-minded nations and it lays the groundwork for three lines of effort that when combined will produce a multi-national combat credible space coalition that truly demonstrates *Strength Through Partnerships*.

For decades, the United States has considered its international partnerships as one of its most potent force multipliers. Executed deliberately and with rigor, I am confident that this Strategy will deliver the capabilities we need to maintain and advance our competitive advantage over any entity that might wish to challenge the international order and the rule of law.

To embed this concept at the core of the Service, I invited a Senior Allied Officer to assume the role of Assistant Chief of Space Operations for Future Concepts and Partnerships (ACSO/FCP). Moving forward, I am entrusting ACSO/FCP with the responsibility to help me hold the Service accountable to the concepts defined here. I therefore direct all subordinate Commands and Direct Reporting Units to prioritize, plan and manage their international activities in accordance with this Strategy.

Semper Supra!



B. Chance Saltzman
Chief of Space Operations
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our greatest asymmetric strategic advantage is the global network of Allies and partners and like-minded nations who remain committed to security and stability in space, enhancing the resiliency and effectiveness of space capabilities and deterring our adversaries against hostile and irresponsible behavior in this critical domain.

The USSF was formed on 20 Dec 2019 to organize, train and equip space forces to protect and defend American interests in space and the space capabilities that enable and enhance the lethality and effectiveness of the Joint Force. Five years later and many of our Allies and partners have formed their own space commands, dedicated to growing and training national space cadres, developing space capability and undertaking space operations. A Service International Partnership Strategy is critical to ensure coherence and alignment between like-minded nations.

This Strategy communicates our intent to *Partner to Win* through alignment of USSF roles and responsibilities, using the ends, ways and means framework. It has been developed to nest under the National Defense Strategy (NDS), the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) International Space Cooperation Strategy (ISCS)¹ and supports the objectives included in the DOD's 2023 Space Strategic Review (SSR) implementation guidance. This provides a 'golden thread' that runs from the NDS to the Enduring Goals within this Strategy and is consistent with DoD guidance. It will be actioned through an Implementation Plan with the Assistant Chief of Space Operations for Future Concepts and Partnerships (ACSO/FCP) responsible for producing the Plan and tracking progress to achieve milestones and objectives.

Ends

In C-Note #15 Gen Saltzman states "We must have the capability and fortitude to endure in a long-term state of competition because doing so is preferable to crisis or conflict in the domain." Given the rapidly changing environment, threat and technology within the space domain, this Strategy will use three Enduring Goals to guide the Service in operationalizing *Strength Through Partnerships*. The three Enduring Goals are:

- ▲ **Secure** collective national interests in, from and to space by empowering Allies and partners to be combat multipliers.
- ▲ **Communicate** to ensure interoperable data, capabilities and activities while maximizing information sharing across all classification levels.

¹ International Space Cooperation Strategy dated 10 Nov 24 (Secret).

- ⚠ **Integrate** with Allies and partners across the full spectrum of Force Design, Force Development and Force Employment (Generation and Operations).

Ways

Three Lines of Effort (LOEs) have been selected to be used within the Implementation Plan and align with the DoD framework of Force Design, Force Development, Force Employment (Generation and Operations). The Implementation Plan will define objectives and milestones along each of the LOEs and for appropriate Measures of Performance (MOP - completion of tasks) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE - the impact of the Strategy on task completion). The three LOEs are:

- ⚠ **Create** - Creating the conditions for Allies and partners to be integrated into USSF Force Design.
- ⚠ **Integrate** - Incorporating Allies and partners into Force Development activities.
- ⚠ **Operate** - Maximizing opportunities for Allies and partners to participate in Force Employment (Generation and Operations).

Means

To operationalize *Strength Through Partnerships*, resources will need to be prioritized to ensure efficient and effective use of time and money. While the Implementation Plan will further develop specific tasks and objectives to achieve relevant milestones, it is critical that the USSF establishes designated lead and supporting organizations for key tasks that can be undertaken immediately on publication of this Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

USSF and allied space capabilities are essential not only to our national security but also to our way of life. These capabilities provide the foundation upon which the Joint Force projects power and ensures the prosperity of our nations. The U.S. seeks to work closely with Allies² and partners³ to protect our Joint interests and the peaceful use of space. The Service, since its inception in 2019 and for many years as part of the United States Air Force (USAF), has worked toward *Strength Through Partnerships* by developing a military space architecture that includes Allies and partners. There are proven examples of this success through partnerships on Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS), hosting payloads on Allied systems such as Norway's Arctic Satellite Broadband Mission (ASBM) and Japan's Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS), providing Satellite Communications (SATCOM) to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) with the United Kingdom and Australia, and the Joint Commercial Operations (JCO) cell for common training, techniques, procedures and operations using commercial space domain awareness data with multiple Allies and partners.

The space domain is inherently global and is vast compared with the terrestrial domains. International geography is critical to understanding, accessing and securing the domain. The high cost of space systems, finite resources in budgets, personnel and exquisite technology requirements drive us to collaborate with Allies, partners, commercial and civil space. The deterrent effect of bilateral and multilateral relationships should not be underestimated, either through the creation of complex military problems for our potential adversaries, or through advocacy and legitimacy in shaping international rules, norms and behaviors within the domain. *Partnering to Win* is not optional, it is essential.

The purpose of this Strategy is to operationalize *Strength Through Partnerships*. This Strategy will provide the guidance through an ends, ways and means framework to integrate Allies and partners in Force Design, Force Development, Force Generation and Force Employment (Generation and Operations).⁴

² For purposes of this Strategy, the term "Allies" means any country with which the United States has entered into a common defensive military alliance (such as members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, or the Republic of Korea), or which is otherwise designated as any allied country by the Secretary of Defense with the concurrence of the Secretary of State

³ In accordance with the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, dated January 2025, a "partner nation" is a nation with which the United States cooperates in a specific situation or operation.

⁴ See SPFGM 2025-90-01 and CSO Notice to Guardians (C-Note 21), dtd 1 Dec 2023, Subject: Forging the Force, for details articulating Force Design, Force Development and Force Employment.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Space is integral to modern multi-domain military operations and provides strategic advantage to the U.S., our Allies and partners. Space-based capabilities are relied on to project and employ power on a global scale and continued delivery of these capabilities requires unfettered access to, and freedom of use in space. Today, strategic competitors seek to challenge, disrupt and limit these capabilities. Intelligence reporting⁵ indicates that China and Russia have fielded reversible non-kinetic and kinetic counterspace means against the U.S. and our Allies' and partners' space systems. China has already fielded ground-based electronic warfare (EW) systems, directed energy weapons and antisatellite (ASAT) missiles intended to disrupt, damage and destroy target satellites. Russia has deployed kinetic counterspace capabilities that can target U.S. and Allied space systems in all orbital regimes. Russian actions in space during the war with Ukraine have shown their ability to threaten our communications, navigation and telemetry, tracking and command (TT&C) systems, which can have an impact on multiple nations' way of life. These activities by our strategic competitors illustrate how such counterspace capabilities could degrade operations in space. These actions demonstrate a disregard of responsible behavior increasing the possibility of misperception, miscalculation and escalation.

⁵ Office of the Director of National Intelligence's report, subject: Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, dated 5 February 2024.

ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS

ENDS (ENDURING GOALS)

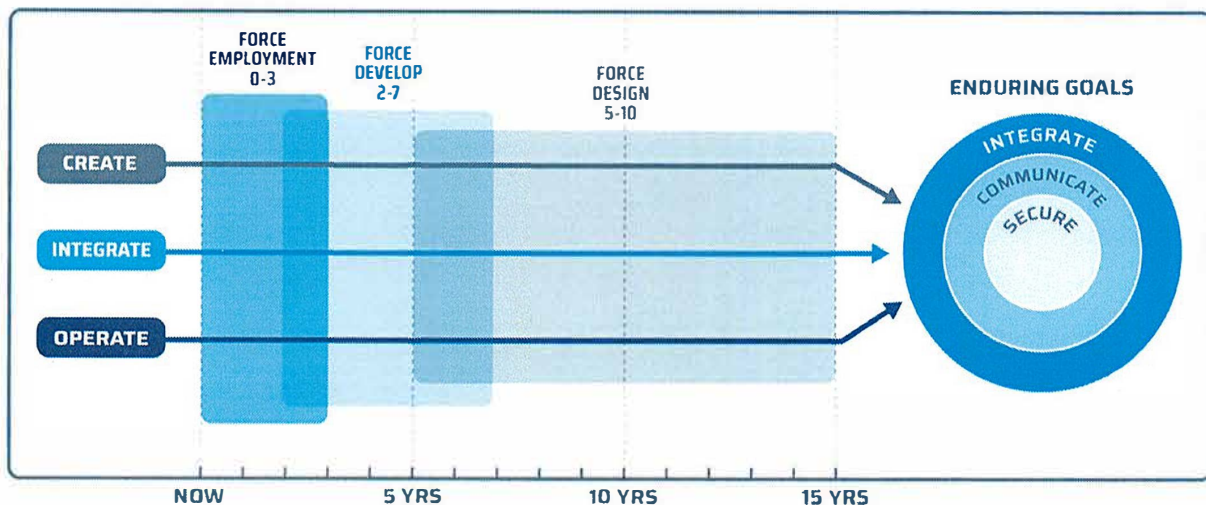
Our enduring goals for this Strategy are focused on unity of effort across all U.S. stakeholders and in cooperation with Allies and partners. Rather than a specific end state which implies a static and predictable strategic environment, this Strategy will use three enduring goals to focus our collective efforts to enable our Allies and partners to be combat multipliers.

- ▲ **Secure** collective national interests in, from and to space by empowering Allies and partners to be combat multipliers.
- ▲ **Communicate** to ensure interoperable data, capabilities and activities and maximize information sharing across all classification levels.
- ▲ **Integrate** with Allies and partners across the full spectrum of Force Design, Force Development, Force Employment (Generation and Operations).

Our enduring goals are aligned with DoD and Department of the Air Force (DAF) guidance. The Service will review and update this Strategy as required.

WAYS

The three Lines of Effort (LOE) to achieve this Strategy are **Create**, **Integrate** and **Operate** and relate to the three elements of Joint Force Design.



LOE #1 – CREATE – Creating the conditions for Allies and partners to be integrated into USSF Force Design.

This LOE is designed to bring Allies and partners in at the beginning of the Force Design process:

- ⚠ Adopting a common baseline taxonomy with Allies and partners and defining interoperability requirements for the objective force.
- ⚠ Developing Capability Area Designs and Mission Area Designs together with our Allies and partners.
- ⚠ Designing future concepts, experimenting and wargaming with our Allies and partners.

LOE #2 – INTEGRATE – Incorporating Allies and partners into Force Development activities.

This LOE is designed to ensure integration of personnel, systems and resources between the USSF, Allies and partners to improve the Force Development process by:

- ⚠ Driving the adoption of common international and applicable commercial standards with existing and future partnership frameworks.
- ⚠ Aligning strategies and policies to guide Force Development to further inform Force Design and Force Employment (Generation and Operations).
- ⚠ Planning with Allies and partners across requirements, budgets, programming and execution.

LOE #3 – OPERATE - Maximizing opportunities for Allies and partners to participate in Force Employment (Generation and Operations) exercises and operations.

This LOE is designed to maximize the opportunities to combine our efforts within Force Employment (Generation and Operations) by:

- ⚠ Embedding Guardians, Allies and partners in each other's campaign and operational planning.
- ⚠ Conducting Force Generation training, education and exercising to expand our combined awareness, analysis, actions and assessment of activities in space.
- ⚠ Maximizing the use of exchange and liaison programs to place Guardians within Allies' and partners' space enterprise and embedding allied foreign exchange and liaison personnel across the USSF.

MEANS

The USSF will execute this Strategy by incorporating Allies and partners in every element of Force Design, Force Development, Force Employment (Generation and Operations).

The Service will not implement this Strategy alone; it will require significant collaboration across the Department of Defense (DoD) and Intelligence Community enterprise to maintain coherence in Ally and partner engagement.

▲ Key organizations include, but not limited to:

- Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)
- Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs (SAF/IA)
- The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration (SAF/SQ)
- United States Space Command (USSPACECOM) and other Unified Combatant Commands (CCMD)
- United States Intelligence Community (IC)

Although the Implementation Plan will provide more detailed direction, lead organizations have been designated for the following tasks to enable this Strategy:

Force Design: The process by which the USSF envisions the objective force through the incorporation of new concepts and technologies through experimentation, analysis and wargames. (5-15-year outlook).

▲ Establish a coordination activity that integrates Allies and partners to augment the objective force.

- *Lead: Task Force Futures / Space Futures Command (SFC)*
- *Supporting: Chief Strategy & Resourcing Officer (CSRO)*

▲ Integrate Allies and partners into the Mission Area Working Groups (MAWG), SWAC led International Partner Working Groups (IPWG) and associated processes if, and when applicable.

- *Lead: CSRO*
- *Supporting: Task Force Futures / SFC and as appointed by CSRO*

- ▲ Provide input into current, 2nd and 3rd Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) to include emerging Allied and partner capabilities.
 - *Lead: CSRO*
 - *Supporting: Task Force Futures / SFC*

- ▲ Incorporate Allies and partners based on roles and interests with the appropriate institutional function lead, Field Command (FLDCOM)⁶, or Component Field Command (C-FLDCOM).
 - *Lead: CSRO*
 - *Supporting: Chief Operations Officer (COO), FLDCOMs and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Incorporate Allies into future concepts development, Wargames and Experiments.
 - *Lead: SFC*
 - *Supporting: SAF/IA, COO, Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM), Space Systems Command (SSC), Space Development Agency (SDA) and Space Rapid Capabilities Office (SpRCO)*

- ▲ Develop the USSF Force Posture Position to support Global Force Posture activities across the DoD.
 - *Lead: CSRO*
 - *Supporting: COO and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Collaborate with Allies and partners on adoption of common international and applicable commercial standards.
 - *Lead: SSC*
 - *Supporting: Task Force Futures / SFC*

⁶ Refer to Space Doctrine Publication 1-0, Personnel, dtd 7 Sep 22 for FIELD COM and C-FIELD COM definitions

Force Development: The mechanism to adapt functions, capabilities and concepts to improve future joint force effectiveness; attempts to achieve the objective force. (2-7-year outlook).

- ▲ Integrate Allies and partners into requirements development processes.
 - *Lead: CSRO*
 - *Supporting: Task Force Futures / SFC and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Develop and coordinate processes, procedures and advise on policy for training and education standards that foster reciprocity with our Allies and partners.
 - *Lead: STARCOM*
 - *Supporting: SAF/IA, COO, Chief Human Capital Office (CHCO), Space Operations Command (SpOC) and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Integrate Allies and partners in acquisition and architecture activities that translate to investments.
 - *Lead: SAF/SQ*
 - *Supporting: SAF/SQ, CSRO, SDA and Task Force Futures / SFC*

- ▲ Develop a “fast track” for the acceptance and integration of internationally developed and invested prototypes into USSF Force Design process as a candidate for future partnership opportunities with an operational system.
 - *Lead: SAF/SQ*
 - *Supporting: COO, SpOC, C-FLDCOMs and SWAC*

- ▲ Strengthen engagement with regional space organizations to maximize opportunities for capability development and interoperability.
 - *Lead: C-FLDCOMs*
 - *Supporting: COO, CSRO and FLDCOMs*

Force Employment (Generation and Operations): Planning, force management and decision making required to fulfill the defense objectives of the NDS and U.S. national interests in the National Security Strategy (NSS). (0-3-year outlook).

- ▲ Leverage current forums and operations that the USSF participates in to drive the activities directed in this Strategy.
 - *Lead: ACSO/FCP*
 - *Supporting: SAF/IA, COO, CSRO, FLDCOMs and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Develop, coordinate and enact policies, processes and procedures to improve threat and information sharing with Allies and partners.
 - *Lead: S2 in coordination with SAF/IA*
 - *Supporting: COO and CSRO*

- ▲ Develop, coordinate and execute Service level strategic communication emphasizing Allies and partners.
 - *Lead: ACSO/FCP in coordination with SAF/IA and Secretary of the Air Force for Public Affairs (SAF/PA)*
 - *Supporting: COO, CSRO, FLDCOMs and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Codify in policy and directives, the processes associated with the integration of international partners across all functions of the USSF.
 - *Lead: ACSO/FCP*
 - *Supporting: SAF/IA, COO, CSRO, FLDCOMs and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Plan together with Allies and partners the fielding and operation of space capabilities.
 - *Lead: C-FLDCOMs*
 - *Supporting: SAF/SQ, COO and SpOC*

- ▲ Maximize use of combined exercises and wargames in the U.S. and abroad.
 - *Lead: STARCOM*
 - *Supporting: COO, FLDCOMs and C-FLDCOMs*

- ▲ Develop combined sustainment and maintenance plans with Allies and partners for Joint and coalition exercises and operations.
 - *Lead: SpOC*
 - *Supporting: SAF/SQ, FLDCOMS and C-FLDCOMs*

RISKS

▲ **Resource constraints and limitations.**

- Hazard - Limited personnel, time and fiscal resources.
- Mitigation - Ensure our Force Design, Development and Employment (Generation and Operations) maintain a strict discipline in prioritization to manage resources and communicate with Allies when limitations arise.
- Mitigation - USSF will work with SAF/IA to reduce duplication of effort on Security Cooperation.

▲ **Threat sharing and information sharing.**

- Hazard - Overclassification, lack of clear National policy and lack of expedited processes.
- Mitigation - USSF S2 will work with SAF/IA, OSD and other key stakeholders to develop and influence policies that minimize overclassification and expedite intelligence and information sharing.

CONCLUSION

Space is fundamental to national security and global prosperity. This has been enabled through our close work with Allies and partners to ensure the peaceful use of space. By prioritizing a *Strength Through Partnerships* Strategy, we ensure the Service integrates Allies and partners into Force Design, Force Development, Force Employment (Generation and Operations). This Strategy shows the commitment of the Service to one unified effort; to adapt to dynamic challenges by leveraging partnerships to protect and advance mutual space objectives and capabilities. By creating shared standards, aligning policies and embedding personnel, the USSF aims to secure collective interests, enhance interoperability and strengthen combined space operations to deter our potential adversaries.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Campaign Plan - A strategy that outlines how to achieve military objectives within a specific time frame and is used to coordinate the efforts of different military units.

Capability Area Design - attributes of an optimized material solution generated through high fidelity analysis of a mission area, based on concepts, and informed by available resources.

Capability Enabling Design - attributes across DOTmLPF-P required to enable Forces for a given Mission Area Design, based on concepts, and informed by available resources.

Capabilities - The technology used by the military across the spectrum of conflict.

Combined Force - a grouping of two or more nations organized for the purposes of carrying out a specific mission or task, which is then disbanded when the task has been accomplished.

Combined Space Operations Initiative (CSpO) - An international initiative to generate and improve cooperation, coordination, and interoperability opportunities to sustain freedom of action in space, optimize resources, enhance mission assurance and resilience, and prevent conflict.

Commercial - Pursuant to the 2020 National Space Policy, refers to capabilities, goods, services, or activities provided by private sector enterprises that bear a reasonable portion of the investment risk and responsibility for the activity, operate in accordance with typical market-based incentives for controlling cost and optimizing return on investment, and have the legal capacity to offer those goods or services to existing or potential non-governmental customers.

Common international and commercial standards - Documents established by a consensus of subject matter experts (Commercial or International) and approved by a recognized body that provide guidance on the design, use or performance of materials, products, processes, services, systems or person.

Counterspace - those kinetic and non- kinetic operations conducted to attain and maintain a desired degree of space superiority by the destruction, degradation or disruption of enemy space capability.

Directed energy weapons - electromagnetic systems capable of converting chemical or electrical energy to radiated energy and focusing it on a target, resulting in physical damage that degrades, neutralizes, defeats, or destroys an adversarial capability.

Electronic warfare - The military actions involving the use of electromagnetic and directed energy to control the EMS or to attack the adversary (fires and protection). Electromagnetic warfare consists of three distinct divisions: electromagnetic attack, electromagnetic support, and electromagnetic protection.

Exchange (program) - an agreement between countries to exchange military personnel with the goal of building relationships and improving cooperation between the countries' militaries

Fielded force - Forces as currently constituted. Example: Composite Force offering of combat squadrons.

Force Design - Focused on the 5–15-year time horizon, force design is a continual and iterative process that analyzes, assesses, and recommends what capabilities and force structure the Joint Force should develop and procure through the incorporation of concepts and technologies through experimentation, analysis and wargames to envision the objective force.

Force Development - Focused on a 2–7-year timeline, force development provides the mechanism for adapting current functions, capabilities, and concepts to improve future joint force effectiveness in achieving national strategic objectives in accordance with the National Defense Strategy prioritization.

Force Employment - Focused on a 0–3-year timeline, force employment involves planning, force management and decision making required to fulfill the defense objectives of the U.S. National Defense Strategy and National Space Strategy.

Force Generation - Force Generation activities build, sustain, and reconstitute force elements capable of conducting prompt and sustained operations. Force Generation transforms the *force we field* into the *force we present* to the combatant commanders. (CSO Notice to Guardians #21).

Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) - is a database that captures and summarizes forces, resources, and programs associated with all Department of Defense (DoD) operations approved by the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF).

Global Force Posture - A key element of force structure. The forces, footprints, and agreements in place overseas, enable the projection of force and constrain military options.

Implementation Plan - The International Partnership Strategy (IPS) Implementation Plan will detail the next level of detail on actions to be taken and organizational assignment to fully operationalize the IPS.

Joint Force - A military force that combines elements from two or more military departments. They operate under a single commander and are most effective during times of conflict.

Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) - A measure of the ability of a system to meet its specified needs (or requirements) from a particular viewpoint.

Measures of Performance (MOP) - Are necessary for correlation to specific MOEs in order to determine the optimal levels of effort for objective achievement.

Mission Area Design - Design efforts of a major grouping of interrelated activities that must be performed to accomplish a core function. Mission areas are comprised of mission sets.

Mission Area Working Group - An enduring interdisciplinary focus group of action officers from stakeholder organizations within a specific mission area to support core Force Design, Development and Employment (Generation and Operations) processes to ensure fielding of resilient, ready, and fully burdened combat-credible forces.

Multi-domain military operations - A concept that the Joint force can achieve competitive advantage over a near-peer adversary by presenting multiple complementary threats that each requires a response, thereby exposing adversary vulnerabilities to other threats. It is the artful combination of these multiple dilemmas, rather than a clear overmatch in terms of any particular capability, that produces the desired advantage.

Objective Force - Describes the force the USSF will need to fight and win future battles based on strategy, future operating concepts, future and current requirements, anticipated threats, technologies, and the geopolitical environment. It is the output of the Force Design process focused on a defined time span (e.g. 2025-2040) that is continually iterated as variables change.

Offensive Counterspace - Actions taken to deny an adversary freedom of action in space.

Operational Planning - The act of completing a detailed plan for conducting joint military actions.

Partner to Win - Strengthening the partnerships we rely on to accomplish Space Force roles and missions. Spacepower is a collaborative endeavor. Even with superlative talent and exceptional capabilities, the Space Force will not succeed without robust joint, coalition, international, interagency, academic, and commercial partnerships.

Programmed Force - Consists of the capabilities, facilities, infrastructure, personnel, S&T investments, etc. that have been allocated funding through the USSF national budgeting process over the course of the first Fiscal Years Defense Plan (FYDP). The programmed force is not static and changes from one budget cycle to the next. Differences between the objective force and the programmed force indicate areas of strategic regret.

Security Cooperation - All activities undertaken by the DoD to encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives.

Space power - The total strength of a nation's capabilities to conduct and influence activities to, in, through and from space to achieve its objectives.

Space Superiority - The degree of control in the space domain of one force over another that permits freedom of access and action without prohibitive interference.

Strategic Communications - A process designed to coordinate communications (words and deeds) between inter-ministerial actors and to reinforce their strategic effect.