

Star Wars: An American Initiative



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Bible: 1 John 3:8: "... The devil has sinned from the beginning"

The United States of America (USA) Air Force Secretary, [Troy Meink](#), in an address at the Annual Air, Space and Cyber Conference, Maryland, on September 14, 2026, announced that the United States has deployed "Orbital weapons in Space to defend joint forces against hostile adversary actions." No further technical specifics were shared either on the deployment date or on the systems' kinetic or non-kinetic capabilities. This announcement marks the first official acknowledgement by a senior functionary of the US government confirming active weapon systems in Earth's orbit. What was left unsaid was who are/is the threat? The reaction from (threats) Russia and China was to strongly condemn the US statement, and China further stated that the US must halt its military build-up that will accelerate the arms race in outer space.

It is a 1957 Sputnik moment for the rest of the world not aligned with US-led Western civilisation. The history of four non-armament treaties in force under the UN Charter is interesting to understand, as these early ones were agreed to at the height of the Cold War and subsequently will be quoted by future articles on the subject ad nauseam. The Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was signed between the USA, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United Kingdom (UK) and formally went into effect on October 10, 1963, since the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) could not be agreed to at that time. This was followed by the Outer Space Treaty in 1967, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970 with its indefinite extension in 1995 and finally the CTBT adopted on September 10, 1996. While PTBT, NPT, and CTBT deal with nuclear proliferation over time, the Outer Space Treaty, while prohibiting any use of nuclear weapons, is silent on the use of conventional weapons in space. At the time

it was signed, space was a new frontier, and the USSR, along with the USA, were the only two spacefaring nations in the 1960s, besides being nuclear behemoths of their era. The chips, computers, semiconductors and internet of the future were still to be designed.

The reaction of the Chinese to the American announcement is both interesting and instructive: It sounds the same as it did when it denounced PTBT, NPT and CTBT, i.e., till it got itself in possession of nuclear weapons and became part of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Today, the US perceives a threat from China more than from the Russians, and when it will turn existential is anyone's guess. Therefore, the timing of the announcement is a complete surprise.

Let's analyse the likely Star Wars, as it will shape human space history in this century and beyond. It is akin to Christopher Columbus sailing west in the vast ocean and beyond in search of the new world with weapons to defend himself, but conquer he did! The US has, by this decision, announced its dominance in Outer Space and also its intent to "defend" and keep it that way for the foreseeable future.

Nuclear weapons are banned under Article I of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which specifically bans stationing weapons of mass destruction in Earth orbit, on the Moon, or any other celestial body or otherwise stationing them in outer space, while Article IV further prohibits testing nuclear weapons, establishing military posts/bases installations, fortifications and conducting military manoeuvres of any kind. These terms of reference duplicate early colonial European establishments of military outposts in frontier land or islands and in colonies. It was for the reason of 'fortification' that the Battle of Plassey was fought in 1757, or Harrods Temple was demolished; the legacy of its Western wall in Jerusalem lies to this day. In fact, Space Laws draw heavily from Maritime laws of the 15th-17th centuries, and it is today the final frontier for humanity to get out of the solar system. But before we can go out to space and the solar system, we must save it for ourselves by ourselves.

There are primarily three orbits defined in space, which are mentioned in Table 1 below: -

Table 1

Orbit	Height above Earth (kms)	One Orbit around Earth	Used by	Military counter
Low Earth Orbit (LEO)	160-2,000	90 mins	High-resolution imaging, Military Research, weather monitoring, communication networks and Space Stations.	EMP, Laser, directed Drones; easier to target in clusters, so will have collateral damage.
Medium Earth Orbit (MEO)	2,000-35,780	2-24 hrs	Global Navigation and positioning systems like GPS, GLONASS, and Beidou.	Collision, Laser-directed Drones
High Earth Orbit (GEO)	35,786+	24 hrs and fixed in one location with regard to Earth	Telecommunication, weather and long-range communication	Pellets, directed Drones, Docking, Collision

Source: Compiled by the author

One can assume that the US orbital weapons mean manoeuvrable satellites that have sufficient fuel to raise their orbit on Earth command. This specific satellite carries kinetic weapons like directed drones, which spray pellets at victim satellites, employs fusion(like) laser bursts to burn the targeted parts of the satellite, and may employ limited EMP to disable satellites of inimical nations in low Earth orbit or higher orbits. Since most satellites have dual use, wherein the difference between pure civilian and military purpose of the satellite payload is not feasible, it is assumed that any satellite deemed hostile can be neutralised in the event of specific requirement by stating that its employment is military or dual purpose should the need arise.

The vacuum in space requires kinetic weapons to have an inbuilt oxidation process. Kinetic weapons of choice will use thrust vectoring, targeted laser, EMP, directed pellet drones or simply suicidal collision amongst the options to neutralise any hostile satellite. Additionally, targeting LEO orbit satellites will require residual/spare launch capability and several launch sites on Earth itself

for redundancy. Here, the US Space Command has stated its ability to perform complex Apollo manoeuvring, docking and extraction, possibly to neutralise rogue satellites. This is also backed up with robust Space Situational Awareness (SSA) radars, telescopes and satellites which can track around 2 to 4 lakh objects of 10 cm diameter continuously.

China or Russia's ability to counter the USA's worldwide satellite/object tracking capability is presently limited. However, amongst the two, if coordinated, China will possess the ability to counter US Space forces as a credible deterrence in around 40 years' time. Hence, much will depend on the economic power trajectory and their ability to fund this space race before it becomes a space war. As a brighter reasoning, if there are aliens more technologically advanced than humans in our galaxy or universe, then humanity's survival will ultimately depend on its ability to arm and protect itself through these initial small steps in the weaponisation of near-Earth space. This need for protection arises even when these steps are primarily focused on controlling the behaviour of other humans.

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