

Defeating Threats in Indo-PACOM

This transcript is made possible through the sponsorship of Schneider Electric

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you for joining us to discuss perhaps the greatest reason to prepare for great power conflict. And as our moderator just said, Defeating Threats in Indo-PACOM. Yet according to The Economist magazine, "The first shot of the next war between the world's big powers, it is often said, will be fired in space."

What you see on this panel is representative of the integration of air, space, and allied power to challenge the destabilizing behavior of China, North Korea, and Russia in a region that connects the economic powerhouse of East Asia to the newer dynamism of South Asia.

Please welcome my guests. First to my left and your right, or your left, Brig. Gen. Anthony "Chachi" Mastalir, Commander of the United States Space Forces Indo-Pacific. Thank you. To his left is Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi, Commander of the Space Operations Group, Japan Air Self-Defense Force.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Yeah.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

To his left is Brig. Gen. Select Col. David "Ajax" Berkland, Pacific Air Force's Chief of Staff.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Air Power.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

I feel like I'm dancing with the stars already. And to his left is Col. Jongseo "Jay" Park, Air & Space Attache, Embassy of the Republic of Korea. Let's get going.

Gen. Mastalir, Chachi, set the scene for us please, sir. Over the past decade, China has rapidly developed into a major international space power, effectively multiplying its number of on-orbit satellites tenfold. So first of all, how do you address the growing competition in space? And with a second follow-up question really, what measures are being taken to ensure space superiority?

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Hey, thanks Doug, I appreciate that. And first of all, congratulations to Air & Space Forces Association because tripling in size in one year. Are you kidding me? I mean, that's better than the PRC. Way to go AFA.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you. Just for that. Hold on. He gets a free T-shirt.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Oh, thank you. That's all I had to do? All right, thanks. Look, we're going to have a little fun, but this is a serious issue. As we've heard all morning, all day yesterday, some of my folks asked me, "What should we expect when we talk about re-optimizing for Great Power Competition?" And I said, "You. You are a

part of the re-optimization for Great Power Competition." Space Forces Indo-Pacific, Space Forces Korea, and soon Space Forces Japan. This is part of presenting forces to combatant commanders, and starting in the Indo-Pacific, where the pacing threat is most acute.

Now, when we stood up it was very clear that we were not there. Well, let me put it this way. We were there to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific, to uphold the rules-based international order. And when you really think about it, what does that mean? This is the rules-based international order has underscored prosperity for every nation that chooses to participate, including the PRC. When you think about every positive growth metric from the life expectancy, levels of poverty, numbers of free democratic nations from post-World War II to today, that is the evidence of the power of a rules-based international order. And that is why it is so critical that we, alongside with our allies, come together, and enforce this order, and speak out against malign behavior that looks to upset that.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Awesome.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Do you agree?

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Yes, I totally agree with you.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So on that note, Col. Kimi-san. For your audience and from your perspective as a space group commander, what do you see as the current security environment surrounding Japan? And then, I'm going to give you another question after that. But let me just tell you in advance, what type of threats in the space domain do you think are the greatest common concern to the U.S., Japan, and the Republic of Korea? Sir.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Thank you very much, sorry, Gen. Raaberg. First of all ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for this opportunity. It's my great honor to be here as a panelist on behalf of Koku-Jieitai, Japan Air Self-Defense Force. About your first question. The current security situation surrounding Japan is really severe and complex, we recognize. Remember that in Asia is the most densely concentrated area of large military forces like China, Russia, North Korea, and so forth with nuclear weapons. So it's really hard and complex. So this is really tough challenge, we recognize.

And also, their activities is expanding even in the space domain. So we have to closely watch it. About the second question. The greatest concern in space domain we recognize is attack against satellite because the Indo-Pacific area is so vast. So the space systems is vitally important. So we have to ensure the security usage of satellites. It's vital, not only communication, but navigation and so forth. Our society heavily rely on space capability, so we have to ensure the safe use of it. So the attack against those satellites or interference is really a concern, so we have to closely watch it. That's my-

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

... view.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Ajax, let's go open up the aperture now. It's time to go wide. From your vantage point leading the PACAF staff, particularly as the air component to PACOM, how does PACAF perceive the current security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region? And I've got a follow-up question to that.

Col. David J. Berkland:

Okay. As far as the scenario, the situation in the region, we're obviously very concerned with increasingly provocative and assertive behavior by the PRC, primarily in terms of what we are doing about it at PACAF, Pacific Air Forces. Everything we try to do in the Pacific is aimed at being joint, all domain and multilateral. I think you can kind of get a glimpse of that just by looking at the panel up here today. This is kind of a snapshot of a day in the life at PACAF. We try to team up.

If you go at it alone, pretty confident in our Pacific Air Forces capabilities right now to ensure that we maintain our overmatch. But when we couple what we have in Pacific Air Forces with the joint force capabilities, and then you leverage allies and partners on top of that, we really do have a serious asymmetrical advantage in the Pacific. So that's how we're going about our integrated deterrence efforts in PACAF is, again, a snapshot of this panel being joint multi-domain and multilateral in everything that we can do.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

I know we have a new PACAF commander with Gen. Schneider just coming on board on Friday. Holistically, we're now seeing combined Chinese and Russian aircraft formations, and they're probing the Korean Air Defense Identification Zone. And that's been as recent as December, unless you want to up the game on this one. But are we seeing an increase in Russia, China kind of joint exercising in the theater?

Col. David J. Berkland:

What we're seeing is just an overall increase I think in provocative behavior from the PRC. And whether it's in the last couple of months or over just the past few years that I've been in PACAF, definitely on the uptick in terms of that type of behavior. I think it indicates, as opposed to the discussion we're having up here, and Gen. Schneider had opened dialogue with multiple members of the media this morning, that kind of stuff isn't happening in Beijing. Those conversations are not happening.

And when it comes to choosing allies and partners, I don't think they have a whole lot of options. So they choose those allies and partners out of necessity and pragmatism. Whereas, we choose our allies and partners out of shared values, values that Gen. Mastalir hit on in terms of freedom, basic freedoms and human rights, and economic prosperity. We don't want anyone to have to pick a side. We really want to harness free and open Indo-Pacific to let everyone benefit from that scenario.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

If I could just pile on the... Ajax talked about the multilateral exercises and whatnot, multi-domain. And quite frankly from a space perspective, we kind of look to the air component because they've been doing this for a long time. And in many ways space is trying to mirror what we see in the other domains in terms of flying together, steaming together, fighting together.

And so, to have Col. Sugiyama and Col. Park, and by the way, congratulations to Col. Choi and finishing his tour as the ROKAF Space Director. And I look forward to Col. Chang coming on board. But these are the folks that are going to be fighting and exercising alongside of us in Space Forces Indo-Pacific, and Space Forces Korea, and Space Forces Japan. And in many ways, we have got to cement these relationships, make this alliance even stronger than it is today. And we can look to our air partners as an example of how to do that.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Jay, let's be honest. North Korea has already launched four cruise missiles this year alone, each capable of causing significant harm to allied forces. The Trilateral Cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan is critical to defeating cross-border and regional threats. So directly asking you, what is your country's assessment in particular of the North Korean threat? And then, I'll have another question to follow.

Col. Jongseo "Jay" Park:

Yeah. First of all, before diving into the questions you asked. I want to thank you for inviting me. This is a very tremendous panel discussions. And for me, very honor and great opportunity to talk about the security issues. How many guys stationed in Korea? Yeah. Thank you for your service.

From the comment from Brig. Gen. Mastalir, he mentioned about the free Indo-Pacific, that is our country is the evidence of the prosperity of free Indo-Pacific. Because from the ashes from after the Korean War, we just developed one of the top 10 economic country, and free, very pro-democratic country. So that is a very strong evidence. And I want to thank you to establishing the Space Korea in our Korea. So it is good your efforts to increase your posture in our country.

So strictly, about the assessment of North Korea's threat is getting bigger. I believe North Korean threat is become what you want, dangerous recently. [inaudible 00:14:02] take a look at. You mentioned about some cruise missiles. But I'm concerned with the three aspects. First of all, their capabilities. They're improving, and expanding, and diversifying their nuclear and missile capability, and as well as the conventional capabilities.

Second thing is their policy changing. Policy toward South Korea. They're thinking that Kim Jong-Un will not consider South Korea as a same blood, and same siblings, and brother country. Just a foreign country, the primary threat. And their nuclear policy, they just proclaim that they're going to pursue the preemptive strike. They set the condition that if provoked, but there's very great concern.

And third thing is Russia. Russia and North Korea, their ties are going to now being strengthened. North Korea provided military support, ballistic missiles, and the drones, and any kind of artillery shells. And in return, the Russia is providing the military and economic capabilities. So tensions is rising. So we need to be much more prepared that threat.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So follow up, and any of you other gentlemen can add to this. But really, Jay, what role do you see the current future air and space capabilities play in the Trilateral Agreement?

Col. Jongseo "Jay" Park:

Yeah, air and space power forces is still very important for deterrence. And if deterrence fails, we have to dominate the fight. So for ISR capabilities, air and space powers. The main role is for ISR capabilities. If

the deterrence fails, we have to be dominant in air and space power as well. So in our country, very small country, and our air bases are the main target from North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities.

So as far as I understand that ACE concept is... Now, you brought up that concept because of the contested environment. We should apply it to our territory as well. So we need to cooperate with just USFK in Korea. I heard that USFK started to exercise and apply it to their own forces. So we need to work together bilaterally and we continue to expand to the Trilateral environments.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So Ajax on that note, and then I'll get to you Gen. Mastalir. So from a PACAF level, the Agile Combat Employment under the Trilateral umbrella, a lot of work ahead, right?

Col. David J. Berkland:

Absolutely. And part of ACE is a scheme of maneuver, which is a key deterrent in and of itself. Allies and partners are critical to access pacing and overflight. So we've made a lot of progress in that area. Not necessarily a concern with the two nations represented here as much as it is with some of the other island nations in the Pacific that we continue to work on and have had tremendous progress.

That's one of Gen. Schneider's comments this morning was, when he left the movie a few years ago and went to the building in DC, we were in the early stages of Agile Combat Employment, and he's really been impressed at the progress that we've been able to make in the Pacific in the subsequent years. But absolutely, allies and partners is not just critical to the ACE scheme of maneuver, but it's also critical to that multilateral framework of allies and partners that is a deterrent in and of itself.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Yeah, Gen. Mastalir, please.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Yeah. And then, I'm going to kick it over to Kimi-san for a comment. But one of the value of having these nations represented here, exercising together can't be overstated. And we just went through an exercise with Japan and Australia. And we'll get Kimi-san's perspective here in a second. But when you actually go through the exercise and you start to understand where you're like-minded, and then what's important to each sovereign nation and their defense force, right? And you have an appreciation then for how you're going to operate. So for example, homeland defense is going to be the highest priority for both Japan and the United States.

In this case, Guam, for example. And then, you look at the Southwest islands, and you look at some of the other things that are going to be important to Japanese leadership, and you can work together to put together a plan that accounts for each nation's desires in terms of what they need to accomplish. And that makes us so much more effective. The opportunity to have the JASDF Space Operations Group participate in this exercise, I thought was absolutely remarkable, a lot of learning. And I don't know, Col. Sugiyama, if you have thoughts on what we just went through from your perspective.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Oh, thank you very much, Chachi-san. From my perspective, currently, I'm the Commander of Space Operations Group. However, I spent almost 30 years as a Air Battle Manager. So I changed from air domain to space domain. So I'm in the middle of quick running. However, I strongly believe that multilateral cooperation is really important and very effective, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. The

country of freedom countries work together and really important and very effective, I believe. Last October, Japan, U.S., and Korea conducted the Trilateral exercise for the first time. This kind of effort is vitally important for us and we're in the right direction, I believe. This is my perspective. Thank you.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Yes, sir. Gen. Mastalir, let me carry on what Jay brought up about the Trilateral. So 2024, what are the Trilateral exercises really going to look like and show us how the integration of space is now brought into the fold?

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Yeah. So on one level, we talked about learning from the air component in terms of how they've been flying together with other nations for years. And this agreement really allows us... This is an information sharing, a data sharing agreement. So for example, missile warning, which is so critical. Kim Jong-Un is launching them just North of Jay and right over Col. Sugiyama. And this is a every week occurrence.

And so being able to share that missile warning and increase the level of data sharing across the three nations is fundamental to building more complex integrated exercises going forward. So whether it's Freedom Shield, or Freedom Sword, or PAC Sentry, or Keen Edge, being able to bring and share that level of information is critically important. And it's not something we have had to the level that we want or desire in the past. So I'm really excited about the agreement and moving forward

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Ajax, anything to add on the Trilaterals, the exercises?

Col. David J. Berkland:

Absolutely. I mean, your question I think was, are we going to continue to see more of these? From the PACAF perspective, I would say, absolutely, you're going to continue to see more of this because back to my original point about how we deter. It's through a multilateral approach to include as much Trilateral efforts as we can incorporate. So you're going to continue to see more of those.

I mean we've got a laundry list of annual exercises and events that we hold every year. I mean, I go back to my time at Eielson as the Wing Commander and the Red Flag Alaska exercises. One of the premier high-end major combat operation air exercises that we do. And that is multilateral and trilateral for a lot of those exercises. Cope North, Pacific Air Rally, the laundry list goes on and on.

I think the only change you might see is when you heard some of the pre-optimization for Great Power Competition words that were put out yesterday. We're going to start to build up to more complex kind of high order of magnitude type exercises. And so when you do that, you might not be able to count as many happening throughout the year. But the ones that we do are going to be bigger, more intense, and more valuable I think for getting us to maintain that level of overmatch at the high end of combat.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So Jay, I'm going to throw this question at you. Let's go to the high ground for a second because this is a very important topic, especially from North Korea. And that is, last November, North Korea launched its spy satellite. Even though it appears to be kind of a rudimentary imagery satellite. And I'm kind of blending this with the conversation about exercising and watching these exercises.

But it seems to be the first reconnaissance satellite that the North Koreans have put on orbit. So this has resulted in restored reconnaissance surveillance ops against North Korea, especially along the DMZ. So

what significance does that change or the calculus in terms of being able to monitor the DMZ based on the fact that North Korea is now putting the beginnings of a proliferated constellation?

Col. Jongseo “Jay” Park:

Yeah. North Korea's surveillance satellite launch is very concerning to our government, because our Comprehensive Military Agreement, we agreed to lower the tensions. So we limited our surveillance capability around the DMZ area. So if we wanted to watch their activities, North Korea's activities, we couldn't do that. We are doing that with the other majors, but it's very limited. In that situation, North Korea launched surveillance data is going to increase their ability to surveillance over our territory, and U.S., and Japan as well.

So our government approach toward North Korea now, we are not doing the same thing as the previous administration. We are doing the peace through strength. So we needed to act very... How can I say? Actively to take measure. So we're not going to just stand, and then we are not going to back off. We need to do something to protect and defend our people's safety and our national security. So we continue to do that to increase our readiness against North Korea provocations. Yeah.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Chachi, do you want to expand on that?

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Yeah, so I think at a basic level, it's a reminder that we are going to have to fight for space superiority in this AOR. And just like the air component's going to have to fight for air superiority, it's not a given. And it's not just China threats, which we've kind of enumerated over the last 24 hours, but North Korean threats as well.

And let's not forget that in that fight for space superiority, which not only ensures that the combined force here has access to space capabilities, but that we are able to deny the adversary the use of space capabilities to protect the combined force from space enabled attack.

Let's not forget the possibility of the third-party intervention opportunism should deterrence fail and competition transitions to crisis or conflict with China, understanding the capabilities that North Korea has. And the potential for that third party intervention is something that all of the warfighters in the Indo-Pacific region are watching very closely.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So my next question is for you Col. Sugiyama. So Kimi-san, last August 23, the leaders of Japan, Republic of Korea, and the United States convened at Camp David. What they inaugurated was really a new era of that trilateral partnership. But I'm going to dig in a little bit here, and that is, the President's emphasized space security cooperation, particularly threats in the space domain, national space strategies, and the responsible use of space. So what significance does the alliance serve in the Indo-Pacific region? And what role will Japan play in the Air and Space Force assuring that regional stability?

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Thank you very much. I think there are two major pillars that Koku-Jieitai, Japan Air Self-Defense Force has to play. The one is to enhance the capability... How can I say? The joint capability to cope with the aggression. So we have to increase the deterrence with U.S., and Korea, and other like-minded

countries. And the second is, yes, multilateral corporation and to shaping the better situation for... Yes. Sorry.

The one is the response capability, the jointly. The second is multilateral cooperation. To that purpose, we are conducting exercise jointly and we share information. We process the information sharing and so forth. And in space domain as well, so there's no border in space. So we share the same outer space, and we are closely watching what's going on in space. By doing that, it can lead to a better deterrence, I believe. So we'll do our best. Thank you.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you. Ajax, I'm going to throw this at you because this is a questions that inquiring minds really want to know. And obviously, the Chinese intercepts continue to increase. We've had 180 instances just recently alone since last year into this year. So as you mentioned, you're a fighter wing commander. You really understand the intercept challenges facing PACAF, and Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Have we seen a change in the Chinese intercept behavior?

Col. David J. Berkland:

I guess it depends on the timeframe you're looking at. We've seen over the past few months sort of a lull in that behavior. Over the past few years, we've seen overall a significant increase in the aggressive and in many cases unprofessional intercepts conducted by primarily the PLA's Air Force. We've seen them intercepting our aircraft operating in international airspace with excessive rates of closure, airspeed out of control, unsafe intercept geometry, where sometimes they're flying across the nose of our aircraft very dangerously.

So I can't really say what the trend will look like in the future. What I can tell you is that, what our response is going to continue to be is that we will continue to operate in international airspace, in accordance with international norms, and really to reinforce a free and open Indo-Pacific in the air domain. In that case, our pilots and our air crews are going to continue to do what they've done all along, and that is to conduct themselves professionally, safely, and do everything we can to prevent a dangerous escalation from occurring over international airspace. And that's really what our concern is with respect to those intercepts.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So gentlemen, I got an open question. So Jay, I'm going to start with you if you don't mind, but I'm going to shift it over to Gen. Mastalir. And that is, the Republic of Korea and Japan, as your country develops space-based capabilities and in cooperation with the U.S. Space Force, do you see a need to continue to conduct potentially high-risk airborne surveillance operations along the DMZ?

Col. Jongseo "Jay" Park:

Yes, we have assets. And then, there's a DMZ area is most critical place in the Korean Peninsula. There's some provocations or aggression happen, it's going to be that area. And in space-based intelligence, it is very effective, but it's going to be provided to our country if something happens. But we need to enclose and real time surveillance activities around the DMZ area. So we need to still have to do that.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Chachi, do you want to add to that?

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Yeah. So I think I'd be hard-pressed to have any combatant commander give up capability. The space layer as it grows and becomes able to deliver from missile warning, missile track to space-based sensing and targeting. There's a lot of capacity, the Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture. A lot of capacity that we can move to the space layer, but there's always going to be a need for platforms in the other domains to do some of these missions. So I would say we're not ready to walk away from any particular platform at this point, I wouldn't say. But we are certainly eager to see increased capacity in our low Earth orbit constellations in the coming years.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

So we have about five minutes remaining. I'd like to kind of take it very quickly through a question. And that is, starting with you Ajax. What do you think from the PACAF perspective is the most dangerous consequential threats as a result of strategic miscalculation?

Col. David J. Berkland:

I mean, the region itself has got a bunch of variables, but our focus is pretty singular on the People's Republic of China and what the regime in Beijing and their autocratic ways are thinking of doing. So that I think is really where our focus is primarily. Again, our approach to that, we need to continue to maintain our overmatch. I see the shot clock running down. So this will be kind of my final comment I think. And that's just, once again, this panel up here, this is deterrence. And it's not a talking point, although it's often used as one.

But this team up here with my brother from the Space Force, and the JASDF, and the ROKAF, this is real deterrence. And I can tell you that 20 years ago as a F-16 pilot stationed at Kunsan, we would do "integration" with air quotes, with the ROKAF and with the Koku-Jieitai, and it was really just deconfliction, as Gen. Mastalir clarified for me. We were sectoring off our operations and calling that integration.

We are not doing that anymore with either one of these. And I can tell you at the highest end in the F-35, that is not the way we are integrating now. We are overlapping sensors and massing firepower together. And that type of synergy is what really enhances our asymmetrical overmatch at this point. So I'll close with that. But it's just really been an honor to be up here with my wing men today. As a single seat fighter pilot, right? I never go anywhere alone, and it's awesome to be up here with these wing men.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Great. Start, Jay. Again, closing remark and especially on the consequential threats of a miscalculation.

Col. Jongseo "Jay" Park:

Yeah, the consequential threat is now a very short time period in our country is a North Korean nuclear missile threat. As I mentioned, the three aspects. If it is meet the other internal or external circumstances, it provoke, and some point, it's going to be flashlight to any kind of aggression from North Korea, and it's going to be expanded to the other Indo-Pacific area. So to deter and defeat the threat. So our country has a very limited territory and bases is very, we cannot move away.

We needed support from our allies, partners. So our administration is doing that approach very actively after the Trilateral Summit at Camp David. So we're expanding the military exercise, and especially missile warning data is a very good approach. And we try to make it very institutionalized that exercise.

So we have to keep doing it to increase our security in the Korean Peninsula and the other Indo-Pacific area. Yeah, thank you.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you. Kimi-san, one minute.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

Oh, thank you very much.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Please.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

The time is almost over.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

It's okay. I've got the shot clock.

Col. Sugiyama Kimitoshi:

It's okay? Finally, I'd like to mention that the space capability can be a key variables for aggressor's calculation to win. And because space domain relates all the domains, not only land, sea, maritime, but also cyberspace and electromagnetic warfare. So it can be a great variables. In Japan, we are developing space capability very rapidly. And we'll keep growing and we will keep cooperation with you. So we will make this effort to ensure the stable use of the space domain. Thanks so much.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you. Gen. Mastalir.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

Yeah.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Take us home.

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Mastalir:

To piggyback off of what Ajax said about deconflicting and sectoring versus truly integrated operations. And we're already starting to exercise that in the space domain just with the last exercise in terms of being able to provide electronic warfare fires to support various strike packages, being able to put defensive space packages in place for our allies' missions. So those are the kinds of things that need to continue to grow.

My biggest concern, and we monitor different periods of concern. Certainly, the recent Taiwan elections was one of those. But my biggest concern is that some miscalculation in the South China Sea over a territorial dispute, and it's better now. But the lack of communication between DC and Beijing between our militaries, that's a dangerous proposition to not have that communication. And thanks to the

chairman and other work with the SECDEF, we're starting to break that down a little bit and communicate.

But the risk of miscalculation, and then unintended escalation would get us into a conflict that the U.S. does not seek. And that is the biggest risk right now and the biggest danger. So as we continue to build our space capabilities, being able to do that together with components both in Japan and Korea will help ensure that we're able to integrate and respond together should that worst case scenario take place.

Maj. Gen. Doug Raaberg, USAF (Ret.):

Gentlemen, I'll be honest with you. I've asked a lot of tough questions today, and you have demonstrated exactly what we came here to do, and that is the integration of space, air, and allied power, and we could not thank you enough for that.

Ladies and gentlemen, this has been a very, very interesting panel. I would ask Gen. Mastalir to hold up that shirt again, if you don't mind. This is my time for a shameless plug. Please go to the Shop AFA store. We not only have space, we have air, and we have quite a bit. But let's give this panel a well-deserved round of applause. Thank you.

This transcript is made possible through the sponsorship of Schneider Electric

