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Thank you General Legere. Thank you Tish.

It's great to be back. Folks here really get what we do.

I want to thank the USGIF and the city of St. Louis for playing host this week.

We're going to make a couple of announcements this morning, so I'm looking forward to taking your questions in just a few minutes. But first…

The NRO has been providing overhead imagery from space for 60 years, so we have a little bit of depth in this area.

In short, we build, acquire, launch, and operate the satellites that **not only see what's going on, but hear what's going on**. These days, we do it with even **more precision and across a wider spectrum.**

Space remains an amazing domain with unlimited potential. It used to be an environment dominated by just a handful of governments.

Today, it's a vibrant arena with a combination of commercial and government organizations.

This scenario has opened up new avenues for cooperation and allowed us to pursue new capabilities.

It's also created a congestion that we have to address and navigate.

Most concerning though, is the fact that space has become competitive— so competitive that **we now find ourselves having to protect our own assets.**

Other nations are trying to deliver capabilities to deny our ability to operate.

As a result, **we no longer have the luxury of treating our advantage in space as a given.**

That's why the U.S. and other nations have partnered to create Space Commands and alliances.

Last week— just one day after the heads of the UK Space Directorate visited our headquarters—the agency released its first-ever Space Strategy, in partnership with

SPACECOM. It's designed to protect and defend the UK's interests in space, and help shape the space environment.

Today, I want to focus on two areas that give us, and our allies, an advantage if we stay focused and aggressive.

Those areas are **innovation and commercial capabilities**.

Over six decades, the NRO innovated by developing new technologies, utilizing new techniques, then combining those techniques and technologies to develop capabilities and acquisition strategies to solve the most difficult problems of ISR from space.

Consider imaging satellites: we went from small, space-based film cameras that dropped from the sky to be snagged mid-air, to electro-optical systems that beamed data directly to the ground in no time at all.

We continue that tradition by building upon past gains to provide the most amazing, credible, usable intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance information, to anyone and everyone in government from warfighters to firefighters, relief workers and analysts, right up to the Oval Office.

But the game has changed by leaps and bounds since we started in 1961.

Today, data has to be delivered faster, just so we can keep pace with the rapid changes around the globe.

We have to innovate faster so we can stay technologically ahead of our adversaries and deliver capability faster than our competitors.

To do this, we need to develop systems and architectures that are resilient to interference or attack.

And we need to be more nimble.

We are already employing technologies to enable new ways of observing, that defeat denial and deception techniques. We can't talk about those in this setting, but they're amazing.

We're employing on-board processing and artificial intelligence to deliver what's needed directly to the front, and to free-up analysts to focus on difficult inferential tasks.

We are testing and deploying constellations of satellites of all sizes to provide capability, diversity of collection, and resiliency.

We are integrating commercial tools, products, and data streams into our architecture **to increase capabilities and coverage, reduce cost, and allow us to focus on critical next generation technology.**

This includes launch services, cloud data services, commercially-produced spacecraft, and of course, commercial data services.

All of this is happening today.

What we need from folks like you, are developments and technologies that will **enable us to bring more robust capability to our users faster, at a lower cost.**

Specific areas where we need advances include improved algorithms for AI/ML, reduced costs for processing, improved low-power computer systems for spacecraft, quantum technologies that can enable new harder-to-confuse observational techniques, more reliable communication systems that are immune to disruption, and many others.

Finally, and we're all in the same boat here, **we need a reliable and trusted supply chain.** Recent news reports have highlighted the disruption caused by the current pandemic.

We can't allow this to happen again. **All of the above is only possible if we have the parts to build the systems.**

Partnerships also play a significant role. They're foundational to our success in space.

We're only a few blocks from NGA's new west campus where much of the data the NRO provides will be analyzed and turned into the products decision-makers, military personnel, and relief workers need to do their jobs.

I want to congratulate Admiral Sharp on the new campus. I consider him a great friend, and I really couldn't ask for a better partner.

Together, NGA and the NRO are bringing new capabilities to the intel community that will revolutionize how we see the world and improve our ability to understand it.

We also have strong relationships with NSA for signals and all the other intelligence and civil agencies that rely on our data. International relationships continue to be critical.

New relationships with the U.S. Space Command and Space Force highlight both the importance of space, and its status as a contested domain.

What makes this all possible is our people. It's the dedication, intelligence, and creativity of the people of the NRO and all our partners that enable the mission.

We're committed to maintaining a workforce that's reflective of American society, and brings different views, ideas, experiences, and capabilities to the forefront.

As many of you know, the NRO was created 60 years ago as an organization that valued a broad spectrum of thought.

Five years ago the NRO established its own cadre to add to the organizational breadth we enjoy.

But we still need the next generation of the NRO workforce, and we need them from everywhere.

The NRO is committed to creating a workforce of all races, religions, abilities, and perspectives.

We're doing everything we can to pull the very best from every community, and every neighborhood, in every corner of this country, including a brand new NRO internship program.

New voices lead to new insights, and new ideas, and we're making a deliberate commitment to support that growth.

Two programs we have on-orbit right now are the direct result of our people and partnerships.

I can't give out their names, but I can tell you we launched both of them last year as demos.

Both were developed using a combination of commercial components and processes, and government-sponsored capabilities.

Both went from concept to orbit in less than three years, and both were delivered on-schedule and within budget.

These two systems started contributing almost immediately.

Both supported earthquake relief in Haiti, imaged areas over Afghanistan to support the evacuation, and provided insight into areas of North Korea where we've struggled to collect in the past.

For anyone who's been around the NRO long enough, the fact we're sharing this much information in public is probably a big surprise.

But we're doing it for a reason: this is an unprecedented time at our agency and across the country.

As a Nation, we've never been as reliant on space as we are right now, and our role in that mechanism is being taken to new heights.

As I mentioned earlier, the commercial sector presents incredible opportunities. For us, **commercial isn't just a priority, it's a must. We don't just want it, we need it. It's part of our architecture.**

Commercial to the NRO is about capability, from launch to production systems, applicable processes, and commercially-provided data.

We focus on the pixels and the data streams. Our partners focus on the analytics.

We started our commercial office, CSPO, about three years ago. CSPO is responsible for working with commercial imagery providers.

We've already awarded multiple commercial contracts, totaling hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

Those contracts are providing about 100 million square kilometers of commercial imagery every single week.

We're also working two contracts for commercial radar and RF sensing capabilities.

All these things allow us to accelerate our technological progress, and focus on new phenomenologies.

Back in June, we released a draft RFP for the next-generation of EO contracts.

We're so committed to creative thinking when it comes to our partners and our process, that those contracts even include pricing incentives for innovation and rewards for the development of new capabilities.

We expect those awards to start going out early next year.

The next big step happens right now, and we're accelerating the process even faster.

This morning, I'm proud to announce the NRO's new Broad Agency Announcement, or BAA.

On the surface, that sounds a bit cryptic, but here's what it means.

The BAA is a flexible approach to an acquisition process that will allow us to evaluate, leverage, and even integrate new and emerging phenomenologies like radar, hyperspectral, and RF sensing as they become available.

We're working, right now, to release the framework for the first focus area of the BAA, which is commercial radar.

These opportunities are open across industry, including foreign-owned U.S. companies. So, if you have technologies that fit the bill, come talk to us.

In the coming months, we're opening it up to a whole host of other phenomenologies, like hyperspectral, and RF sensing. We're going to need all of those capabilities based on our plans.

In the end, we're all trying to innovate faster so we can provide what everyone needs— at the civilian level, the government level, and anywhere else our resources are required.

We need your help to do it. As I mentioned earlier, the folks in this room get what we do. You know what we need to maintain our world-class capabilities, and for those who are already part of the mission, I want to thank you.

I've already spoken for way too long, and I've probably only covered a tenth of what we're doing right now.

I want to emphasize again how much I like being back here, and I want to thank you for your time.

Be sure to stop by our booth if you'd like more information. And I am glad to take your questions.