A Statement from Dr. Chris Scolese

Director, National Reconnaissance Office

April 2025

Hello. I'm Chris Scolese, director of the National Reconnaissance Office.

The NRO is on a mission. Today, we're accelerating the build-out of the world's most capable, resilient, and technologically advanced satellite constellation. We're strengthening the capabilities and security of our ground architecture. And deepening our partnerships across the whole of government, and with commercial space enterprises, academia, and our allies to ensure we push the boundaries of innovation.

The NRO's first mission in response to our commitment to build the world's most capable, resilient, and technologically advanced satellite architecture launched in May 2024 from Vandenberg Space Force Base.

NROL-146 was not only carrying into orbit the first operational system in what we call our "proliferated architecture," it was also setting a new standard for data collection, speed, and responsiveness.

Over the past year, we've launched eight missions supporting our proliferated architecture, with a ninth and tenth coming within days of one another in April. Future launches in support of our proliferated architecture are expected at this rapid cadence through 2029. And yet another launch – also in April – will carry a separate national security mission.

This enhanced constellation is already shortening revisit times and increasing observational persistence; delivering enhanced coordination; and empowering faster data processing, fusion, and transmission speeds. All with greater resilience and security.

Most profoundly, we're making it harder for our adversaries to hide, while reducing time to insights for our customers from minutes to seconds – strengthening national security with improved prospects for lethality, when it's necessary.

Altogether, over the last two years, we've launched more than 150 satellites creating the largest and most capable government constellation on orbit in our nation's history.

Investments in ground systems – my second commitment – are enhancing capability, resilience, data processing, and cyber security. We're deploying advanced data and analytics, machine learning, and deep learning to support the entire range of satellite tasking, collection, processing, exploitation, and dissemination.

Of course, we're not realizing these achievements on our own. My third commitment was to expand the NRO's partnerships across the whole of government, and with commercial space enterprises, academia, and our allies to marshal the phenomenal levels of expertise that exist within each group.

These partnerships are yielding enhanced capabilities in areas from electro-optical to radar and other phenomenologies. We're benefitting from our exposure to world-class expertise in areas such as AI, machine learning, quantum sensing, computing, cybersecurity, and launch.

Today, we can see, hear, and sense better than any other nation on earth. Used wisely and effectively, these capabilities will help to solve some of the toughest intelligence challenges of our time – while enhancing strategy, planning, and decision making; improving lethality; and saving lives.

It's an incredibly exciting and challenging time, which makes it especially important that I share a call to action with you…

To our customers – especially those within the Defense and Intelligence communities – I encourage you to collaborate on the highest and best use of the outstanding space-based ISR capabilities that we've built.

To our current and prospective partners, we must empower our talented people to innovate and share their ideas to better utilize the data being provided. We all stand to benefit from a stronger collective commitment to advance the science we need to succeed.

We're moving fast – faster than ever before. And with the best technical talent – and a culture that values integrity, trust, and hard work – the NRO will *continue* to go above and beyond; ensuring our customers – warfighters, policymakers, government agencies, and others – have the information they need to make decisions that enhance stability, preserve life, and ensure freedom.

Thanks for listening.

###