

# U. S. Space Leaders Call for Action to Protect Nation's Future

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 10, 2008**

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Government and industry leaders convened recently in a National Security Space Mission Assurance Summit and pledged to address areas of concern which threaten the future stability and survivability of our nation's preeminence in space.

"Attention to mission assurance demands collaboration, a focus on common standards and development of a skilled future workforce," said Scott Large, Director, National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), and co-host of the summit.

Lieutenant General John T. (Tom) Sheridan, Commander, USAF Space and Missile Systems Center, and a summit co-host said, "In space, we engage in work that is expensive, demanding, and sometimes harsh and unforgiving. A solid mission assurance approach helps us ensure that people who may have no other reason to get together will meet and share information which will improve our chance for mission success."

The participants defined "mission assurance" as the disciplined application of proven scientific, engineering quality and program management principles toward the goal of achieving mission success in all national security space programs.

Participants noted that mission assurance is important and collaboration is how we get there. They acknowledged the demand for national security space assets and intelligence data continues to increase in an ever-changing and uncertain environment where budgetary resources are strained. They agreed to work collaboratively on several areas during the coming year.

Calling for action across government and industry, the summit participants identified critical areas for ensuring the future viability of our country's national security space program and infrastructure:

- Pursue progress in resolving a common set of standards and parts specifications. Such a plan would strengthen the industrial base and promote multiple sources for materials.
- Seek greater understanding of impacts and potential relief from some restrictions which govern conducting business with foreign countries.
- Develop workforce skills and an industry-government shared portal for mission assurance.
- Detail plans to ensure high quality parts and eliminate counterfeit parts and components that could hinder performance and mission assurance initiatives

Senior leaders from many industry partners and the following agencies were involved in summit discussions: the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems Center, Director of National Intelligence, the Missile Defense Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the NRO, National Security Space Office, Secretary of the Air Force Acquisition Office, and Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

The summit participants agreed to continue working on their concerns and to collaborate further in another session next year. The group used this initial meeting as a starting point in a larger cross-agency and industry-wide effort to implement change and improvement initiatives across the national security space community.

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