

Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT

Event

Space Strategic Dialogue: Space and the Future of Warfare
with Gen. Stephen Whiting, Commander of U.S. Space
Command

Introduction and Welcome Remarks

DATE

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. ET

FEATURING

Representative Mike Rogers (R-AL),
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee

Tony Frazier,
Chief Executive Officer, LeoLabs

CSIS EXPERTS

Kari A. Bingen
Director, Aerospace Security Project, CSIS

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Kari A. Bingen: All right. Good morning, everybody. Great to see you all. My name's Kari Bingen. I'm the director of the CSIS Aerospace Security Project. Welcome to the Inaugural CSIS Space Strategic Dialogue. I am especially pleased to have General Stephen Whiting, commander of the United States Space Command, with us to launch this series.

A few weeks ago we watched NASA astronauts circle the Moon, a testament to human ingenuity and technological progress. But it's just a glimpse of the changes underway in space, bringing both extraordinary opportunity but also growing risk.

Too often, though, these changes are not well-understood. So our purpose with this dialogue is simple, to close that gap. This dialogue is a platform for serious sustained conversations bringing together leaders from across our ecosystems to examine the activities and threats unfolding in space and what they mean for security, stability, and strategic competition.

We are doing things a bit differently, pairing expert discussions with compelling visuals to make the space domain more accessible and concrete. And we're committed to broadening the audience, which is why you'll see here today students, embassy representatives, congressional staff, leaders from industry, from government, and even engaged citizens who are interested in where we're heading in space.

Today, our focus is on space and the future of warfare, beginning with a fireside chat with General Whiting on the evolving threat environment and what these trends mean for policy, operations, and investment priorities. We will build upon these themes, then, with a terrific, terrific panel of experts. Future discussions will address topics such as growing traffic jams in space and technology trends shaping the future in space.

I will say we could not do these kind of events and discussions without the generous support we receive from our donors. So I want to particularly thank LeoLabs and Tony Frazier for enabling us to undertake this series, and then also to thank the Bertelsmann Foundation for the visuals that you'll see today.

Now please turn your attention to the screen for a message from Congressman Mike Rogers of Alabama, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Representative
Mike Rogers:

(From video.)

I'm sorry I can't be with you in person today, but it's a pleasure to help launch this important Space Strategic Dialogue at CSIS. Discussions about

crosscutting issues affecting military, civilian, and commercial activities help strengthen our advantage in space. The need for that advantage has never been more evident than in the past few months.

We are seeing the power of America's space capabilities every day: The real operational effects that Space Force is bringing to military operations around the world, including in the Middle East. The work of the United States Space Command and the Space Force is absolutely vital to our national security and economic prosperity. That is precisely why I worked to establish them in law, and I'm proud of the tremendous progress both have made over the past six years.

That work continues today on the House Armed Services Committee. Last year we streamlined the Pentagon's acquisition process, improving efficiency and reducing the time it takes to field capabilities. We're building on that progress this year, and I'm pleased that the president's budget request for the Space Force meets the moment with significant investments in our space security.

As we grow our defense capabilities in space, our commercial sector is also expanding rapidly. Our commercial space industry, truly the envy of the world, is a powerful source of innovation and strategic advantage.

Even so, as our industry has grown our competitors, particularly China and Russia, have not stood still. But this threat is difficult to fully recognize. Unlike in other domains where we can see aerial dogfighting or the buildup of foreign maritime forces, space operations unfold far from the public eye. There are no video clips capturing what is happening hundreds of miles above the Earth.

Addressing the threat to our space leadership means bringing awareness to it. So this Space Strategic Dialogue comes at a critical moment, and I commend CSIS for undertaking such a timely and important effort.

Tony Frazier:

Good morning, everyone. I'm Tony Frazier, the CEO of LeoLabs. It's a pleasure to be here today to kick off the CSIS Space Strategic Dialogue series.

We're at a pivotal moment. Recent events demonstrate that modern warfare is not just enabled by space; it now extends to space. Adversaries like China and Russia are dramatically increasing their launch cadence and developing sophisticated capabilities to both deny U.S. space superiority and utilize space to their advantage to place U.S. and allied forces at risk.

This accelerating threat environment demands a coordinated response. The CSIS Strategic Space Dialogue series is a unique forum where operational

leaders, policymakers, and industry can gather to not only align on the challenges but collaborate to define actual solutions.

We're fortunate today to be joined by renowned experts in the space warfighting domain, but I'm especially grateful to welcome General Stephen Whiting to be with us today, the commander of U.S. Space Command, who will kick off today's event. General Whiting's profound leadership, deep experience, and unique operating perspective are shaping how the United States approaches space as a warfighting domain and prioritizes the capabilities required to ensure we maintain our advantage as the threat continues to escalate.

General Whiting, thank you for being here. I want to thank CSIS for hosting this conversation. We're proud to partner with you on this series.

And with that, Kari, I'll turn it over to you.

(END.)