

New Report calls for Britain to define its national space interests following a coherent framework in order to improve policy decision making

- **New Report makes the case for Britain to develop its thinking on space strategy to keep up with allies and adversaries;**
- **The United Kingdom (UK) is increasingly finding itself exposed in space amid a rapid increase in the number of satellites in orbit;**
- **Maj. Gen. Paul Tedman CBE, Commander of UK Space Command, commends the framework outlined and underscores the urgency in developing this to support space policy.**

A new Report from the Council on Geostrategy's Strategic Defence Unit finds that Britain's approach to space strategy has been ineffective and lacking a clear theoretical basis to date, and that developing a clear understanding and awareness of the national space interest is vital if it is to compete effectively in space.

The new analysis highlights that the principal British national space interest is increasing national space power, which combines space diplomacy, information and narrative management, military support and economic infrastructure.

The paper describes these core components in relation to the main challenges facing UK space strategy, from cooperating with international allies and articulating Britain's national space narrative, to gathering intelligence via military satellites and developing the industrial ecosystem to support the space strategy.

The Report builds on a developed understanding of what the UK's national space interest is, and tackles what should be done and prioritised. This will help to boost cooperation with allies and secure advantage in the competition with adversaries, noting the rapid space build-up by the People's Republic of China in particular.

A space power vision is required to allow His Majesty's (HM) Government to pursue its ambitions and help with space policy development in a wider evolution, with consideration of different perspectives flowing into the national understanding of British space power. Options range from seeing space technology as merely supporting daily life on Earth to being regarded as an essential aspect of national power and security.

Taking a broader view, the Report also looks at the global picture of how space power is being balanced by major nations. It develops a way to assess this against the four

categories of logistics, satellite capabilities, counterspace systems, and space domain exploration.

The paper applies this approach to frame a new space strategy making process and offers a subjective take on where UK national space power stands today. The process would allow HM Government the ability to identify its space interests and develop British space power. This should be a central tenet of the country's overall grand strategy, helping to make the UK an effective global player in the space domain.

In a Foreword to the Report, Maj. Gen. Paul Tedman CBE, Commander of UK Space Command, said:

'Over the past decade, the number of satellites in orbit has nearly quadrupled. ...[T]here is now a considerable adversary counterspace arsenal on orbit – ready, rehearsed and operational.'

'If we are to act with confidence and coherence in this domain, we must also strengthen our thinking.'

'That is why this Report by the Council on Geostrategy is so valuable. It contributes to the essential work of building a British school of thought on space power.'

'The study of space control...is not just an academic exercise; it is an urgent national imperative.'

In a second Foreword, Doug Liddle, Chair of UKspace and Professor in Practice at Surrey Space Institute, said:

'The British space sector is facing existential challenges in the next few years.'

'A methodology for a space strategy via a rigorous and systematic analysis of national space interests is welcomed by industry.'

'A clear, stable, coherent strategy and subsequent coordinated delivery, in partnership with the space sector, will accelerate corporate and private equity investment into the sector and enhance the UK's international position as a space power.'

Gabriel Elefteriu FRAeS, Senior Research Fellow (Space Power) at the Council on Geostrategy, said:

'This Report has presented a methodology for space strategy making which relates space power to the national space interest. There is an urgent need to develop thinking in this area.'

‘Remaining a minor player, or falling further behind in this strategic area, will only place the UK in a position of dependency and subordination to other space powers, with severe consequences for the country’s overall status.’

‘Without this, Britain cannot chart a coherent trajectory to meet its national space requirements in the future instead of indulging in the aimless, un-strategic approach taken thus far.’

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The Council on Geostrategy was launched on 2nd March 2021. More information can be found on our [website](#), including our [mission statement](#).
2. The Council on Geostrategy has an [Advisory Board](#) of 16 individuals with experience in politics, the military, diplomacy and academia.

Council on Geostrategy

www.geostrategy.org.uk | [Twitter/X](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Bluesky](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Facebook](#)