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**Remarks:
“Space Situational Awareness and the U.S.-Japan Alliance”**

**Japan Space Forum
Tokyo, Japan
February 26, 2015**

Introduction

Thank you very much. It’s an honor to be back in Tokyo. I would like to thank the Japan Space Forum for continuing to organize these symposia, and for inviting me to address you all today.

Over the past four years of this conference, our discussions have highlighted the importance – indeed, *the necessity* – of strengthening the long-term sustainability, stability, safety, and security in space. This year’s Forum is rightly focused on the critical contributions of space situational awareness, or SSA, to this effort. I look forward to the perspectives that will be offered here today.

Strengthening the U.S.-Japan Alliance

The United States-Japan Alliance has long been the cornerstone of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

Our partnership with Asia-Pacific nations not only enhances the national security of our respective countries, but also strengthens strategic stability in the region as well as international peace and security globally.

We recognize the need to enhance our Alliance with Japan in wide-ranging areas of common interest in order to address the changing security environment. Part of our effort to strengthen and modernize our Alliance is through enhanced space cooperation.

Space Situational Awareness: A Foundational Capability

As we all know, space situational awareness is a foundational capability for spaceflight safety and preventing collisions in space. International cooperation on SSA is greatly beneficial, as international partnerships bring the resources,

capabilities, and geographical advantages to enhance SSA upon which we increasingly depend.

The U.S. National Space Policy recognizes this fact and thus directs us to collaborate with foreign governments, the private sector, and other organizations to improve our SSA – specifically, to improve abilities to rapidly detect, warn of, characterize, and attribute natural and man-made disturbances to space systems.

Having accurate information in a timely fashion is critical for a number of reasons – not only for human spaceflight safety and the global economy, but also for U.S. and allied security – *indeed, everyone's security* – where we need to detect, identify, and attribute actions in space that are contrary to responsible and peaceful uses of outer space.

The United States is taking action in a variety of ways to implement the National Space Policy and to enhance our SSA capabilities, especially through international cooperation.

SSA sharing efforts leverage existing national SSA capabilities, technical exchanges among experts and space operators, assessments of how information can

be shared in an internationally acceptable format, and development of “best practice” guidelines that can be implemented by government and private sector stakeholders.

In implementing the National Space Policy and working to enhance our SSA capabilities, especially through international cooperation, the United States continues to provide notifications to other governments and commercial satellite operators of potentially hazardous conjunctions between orbiting objects.

It’s worth noting China has recently provided us with a designated point of contact for the appropriate Chinese entity responsible for spacecraft operations and conjunction assessment, allowing this entity to receive Close Approach Notifications directly from the JSpOC.

The Department of State works closely with the Department of Defense on SSA information sharing agreements with foreign partners. To date, the United States has signed ten SSA sharing agreements and arrangements with national governments and international intergovernmental organizations, and 46 commercial entities. The latest technical arrangement was signed with Germany on January 9, 2015.

In 2013, Japan and the United States concluded an SSA information sharing agreement, and are now exploring ways to share information from Japan's SSA sensors. The United States is also engaged in technical exchanges with experts from the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Union (EU), and individual ESA and EU Member States to ensure our existing and planned SSA systems contribute to a more comprehensive situational awareness picture.

Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures

Given the hazard of space debris and the current era where many States and nongovernmental organizations are harnessing the benefits of outer space, it is crucial that we work with our allies and partners around the world to ensure the long-term sustainability of the space environment through SSA and other means.

We also must speak clearly and publicly about what behavior the international community should find both acceptable and unacceptable.

Over the past few years, the United States has worked to support a number of multilateral initiatives that seek to establish consensus guidelines for space

activities that are both in the national security interests of the United States, and will further the long-term stability and sustainability of the space environment.

In implementing the President's National Space Policy, the United States is pursuing bilateral and multilateral transparency and confidence-building measures, or TCBMs, to encourage responsible actions in, and the peaceful use of, space.

TCBMs also have the potential of enhancing our SSA by increasing our knowledge of activities occurring in the space environment.

International Code of Conduct

TCBMs, such as the proposed International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, can contribute to everyone's awareness of the space environment. This also includes the political commitment to notify other spacefaring nations of orbital collisions or breakups that could pose a hazard, and to provide timely notifications of space object malfunctions that could result in increased probabilities of high risk reentries or space object collisions.

Among the Code's commitments for signatories is to refrain from any action which brings about, directly or indirectly, damage, or destruction, of space objects and to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the creation of space debris, in particular, the creation of long-lived space debris.

The Code could also help solidify safe operational practices, reduce the chance of collisions or other harmful interference with nations' activities, contribute to our awareness of the space environment through notifications, and strengthen stability in space by helping establish norms for responsible behavior in space.

The United States continues to consult with the European Union and all other interested nations to develop this non-legally binding Code, which would be an effective, pragmatic, and timely way of strengthening the long-term sustainability, stability, safety, and security of the space environment.

Political commitments such as the International Code of Conduct are complemented by work on guidelines on space operations and collaborative space situational awareness from expert-led discussions in multilateral fora such as the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, or COPUOS.

The Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, a part of COPUOS' Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, which just concluded its meeting in Vienna about a week ago, is doing important work to move forward in the development of new international long-term sustainability guidelines. These efforts contribute to the development of multilateral and bilateral space TCBMs and the sustainability of the space environment.

Conclusion

All nations, especially those in the Asia-Pacific region due to the region's dynamic growth in space capabilities, have become more reliant on space than ever before. Ensuring the long-term sustainability and security of the space environment is in the vital interest of the entire international community.

A key part of ensuring the long-term sustainability and security of the space environment is SSA. That is why sharing SSA information to enhance spaceflight safety and reduce the risk of space object collisions is so important.