



TRANSCRIPT

U.S. Space Command
Change of Command Ceremony
Hangar 140, Peterson AFB, Colo.

Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force, General John W. Raymond

20 August 2020

NARRATOR: Ladies and Gentlemen, the Chief of Space Operations, General John Raymond.

(APPLAUSE)

GEN JOHN RAYMOND: Mr. Secretary, Chairman, distinguished guests, family, friends and most importantly the men and women of USSPACECOM...what a spectacular day here in Colorado Springs. It is always good to be back home at Peterson Air Force Base.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for presiding over today's ceremony. For your visionary leadership establishing this command and, in doing so, raising space to a level commensurate with its importance to our national security. Most importantly, thank you for your trust and confidence in me, and our space command team.

I also want to thank the chairman for participating today. I have had the opportunity to serve with General Milley in both my Space Force and Space Command hats, and I am so thankful for your leadership. We all benefit from your integrity, your unwavering commitment to our constitution, and your enduring commitment to America's soldiers, sailors, airman, marines, space professionals and their families.

As I have said many times, getting stationed in Colorado Springs is like winning the lottery...I would be remiss if I didn't thank the community leaders with us today.

To my wife Mollie, and our kids Christina, Amy and Garry...I can't thank you enough. To say this has been a pretty dynamic few years would be a huge understatement. I appreciate your love and support. Mollie, your commitment and dedication to our AFSPC, JFSCC, USSPACECOM, and Space Force families has been especially important in this time of change. I love you.

To the men and women of United States space command, I couldn't be more proud of you and your accomplishments.

Two years ago in August 2018, someone whispered in my ear that I should start planning to re-establish United States space command and to be prepared to stand up the command in just three months.

A couple of days later, I was headed out for an extended TDY to participate in a promotion board, and brought a small team of five planners with me: Brigadier General Tom James, Brigadier General Shawn Bratton, Mr. Dave Toczek, Colonel Ken Klock, and Mr. Mark Main. The team worked all day while I was on the board, and then together we would spend the evenings refining the plan. This went on for a week, and at the end of the week we emerged with a plan for the establishment of this command.

What's interesting when you look at the butcher block paper we used to develop the plan...it is almost exactly what we implemented. I give that team a lot of credit.

After returning from that TDY, I tapped Brigadier General Rock Miller to implement and he pulled together a task force that did the detailed planning to stand up the command a year later. Rock, my hats off to you for your leadership.

And there we were on 29 August 2019, just a year ago, in a ceremony hosted by the President and the Vice President in the White House Rose Garden, where Secretary Esper signed a document formally establishing the command and re-assigning forces from USSTRATCOM to USSPACECOM. CMSgt Towberman unfurled our flag and we were established!

But it was clear after a tremendous amount of hard work...we were just at the starting line...and it was time to sprint. Our national security demanded it.

This command is purpose-built to meet the demands of the national security strategy and the national defense strategy. To compete, and to deter from a position of strength, and if deterrence were to fail...to win.

This command is tailor-made to focus on: enhancing our ability to conduct offensive and defensive operations in space, to further strengthen our partnerships with the intelligence community, and with our allies, and finally, to enhance global warfighting, integrating more seamlessly with our combatant command partners.

U.S. Space Command is laser-focused on protecting and defending our critical space assets. We've established the joint task force space defense, a first of its kind operational command

focused on warfighting. Under the leadership of Brigadier General Tom James, the team constructed a unified structure with our intelligence partners and allies.

We also established, under the leadership of Major General Stephen Whiting and now Major General John Shaw, our first-ever combined command. This team of allies, partners, commercial, and civil space professionals, is taking the necessary steps to ensure our joint warfighting partners in the combatant commands can fully leverage spacepower in their global operations.

A special thank you to our allies and partners in the room and around the world. This command has focused on expanding partnerships because we know the u.s. cannot protect and defend space on our own. We are stronger when we work together. We are a more credible warfighting force because our allies increase lethality through their unique capabilities and perspectives.

We could not do our mission without our incredible partnership with the intelligence community and the national reconnaissance office. Our organizations have never been closer. This partnership has been absolutely critical to understanding the threats in space and on earth. Your unwavering commitment and tradecraft ensures our enduring safety and security.

To our combatant command partners...our primary measure of success is to deliver the warfighting capabilities you need, when you need them...without fail. I am proud of our efforts to advance joint force global integration and would like to highlight Colonel Chris Wendland for the work he has done to develop our joint planning cell. Your integration efforts are leading the joint force. My hats off to you and your team.

I would also like also give a special thanks to my front office team, the communications team, and my security team for their strong support and selfless service.

Finally, the real source of combat power at U.S. Space Command is our warfighters. We've been deliberate in our process to attract, develop, educate, and retain a cadre of warrior-minded experts ready to address the challenges in space.

To all the directors, leaders, soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, space professionals and civilians who make up this command, you do so much for our nation, and I'm proud of each and every one of you.

USSPACECOM's foot never let off the accelerator over the last year. But as we continue the transition from establishment to full operational capability...general Jim Dickinson's foot will now be on the pedal.

Jim, thank you for serving with me over the past 6 months as my deputy, I couldn't be more excited that you and Angie will now lead this command. There is nobody more qualified to assume command and I am excited to see where you will lead it.

As the United States space force's chief of space operations, my sole focus now shifts to providing you the capabilities you need, at the time and tempo you need them, to successfully conduct your mission. I promise I will give it my all.

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, I am pleased to report that our nation is better prepared today to compete, deter and win in the space domain than we were just a year ago... and, I am convinced that the joint space warfighters assigned to USSPACECOM under the steady hand of Jim Dickinson will ensure that into the future.

(APPLAUSE)