

SPACE: THE USA HAS SOME QUESTIONS TO RUSSIA. WHILE RUSSIA HAS MORE QUESTIONS TO THE USA

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On November 15, 2021, the Russian Ministry of Defense carried out the successful destruction of the discontinued and decommissioned national spacecraft named "Tselina-D", which was put into orbit back in 1982. The head of the Russian Defense Ministry, Sergei Shoigu, confirmed that the Russian Aerospace Forces had indeed successfully destroyed this satellite system with the pinpoint accuracy.

Pinpoint accuracy

The fragments formed after knocking out this spacecraft do not pose any threat to either orbital stations or other satellites, or generally speaking to the space activities of any state. This is well known to all space powers that have fairly effective national technical means of controlling outer space, including the USA.

After the destruction of the named satellite, its fragments move along trajectories outside the orbits of other operating spacecraft, have been under constant observation and monitoring from the Russian side and are included in the main catalog of the space control system.

Predicament of any possible dangerous situations calculated after each orbital movement has been made in connection with the accompanied debris and newly discovered fragments of the destruction of the "Tselina-D" satellite with operating spacecraft and the International Space Station or ISS "Mir". The Russian Ministry of Defense reported that the ISS orbit is 40-60 km below the fragments of the destroyed "Tselina-D" satellite and there is no threat to this station. According to the results of the calculation of any potential dangerous situations, there are no approaches to it in the near future.

Earlier, Anthony Blinken, the U.S. Secretary of State said that Russia's test of an anti-satellite system used in this case jeopardized the safety of space research.

Moscow corrected his untenable judgment. "This event was carried out in strict accordance with international law, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, and was not directed against anyone," the Russian Foreign Ministry official spokesperson said. Russian Foreign Ministry also repeated that the fragments formed as a result of the test do not pose a threat and do not interfere with the functioning of orbital stations, spacecraft, as well as space activities in general.

Washington has clearly forgotten that Russia is not the first country to hold such actions. The United States, China and India have the capabilities to destroy spacecraft in space, having previously successfully tested their own anti-satellite assets versus their own satellites.

Washington also ignores the recognition of the American Center for Strategic and International Studies, located in the American capital, whose report in April 2018 recognized that "the United States remains a leader in the use of space for military purposes."

Precedents of destruction

They were announced by the named states at the relevant time.

In January 2007, the PRC conducted a test of a ground-based anti-missile system, during which the old Chinese meteorological satellite "Fengyun" was destroyed. This test led to the formation of a large amount of space debris. It should be noted that on November 10 of this year, the ISS orbit was corrected in order to avoid the wreckage of this Chinese satellite.

In February 2008, with the interceptor missile of the United States sea-based missile defense system "Standard-3", the American side destroyed its "USA-193" reconnaissance satellite that had lost control at an altitude of about 247 km. The launch of the interceptor missile was carried out from the Hawaiian Islands area from the U.S. Navy cruiser Lake Erie, equipped with the Aegis combat information and control system.

In March 2019, India also successfully tested an anti-satellite weapon. The defeat of the "Microsat" satellite was carried out by the upgraded "Pdv" interceptor.

Earlier, the USSR has called, and now Russia has been calling for space powers for decades to legally consolidate at the international level a ban on the militarization of outer space by preventing an arms race in it and refusing to deploy any strike weapons in it.

In 1977-1978, the Soviet Union held official negotiations with the United States on anti-satellite systems. But as soon as the American delegation heard about Moscow's desire to identify potential types of hostile activities in space that should be banned, including similar systems in question, it initiatively interrupted them after the fourth round of talks and decided not to participate in such a negotiation process anymore.

A fundamentally important clarification: since that time, Washington has not held and does not intend to hold such negotiations with any state in the world.

Moreover, the updated draft of an international treaty on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space proposed by Moscow and Beijing is regularly blocked by Washington at the UN and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Back in 2004, Russia unilaterally committed itself not to be the first to deploy weapons in space, and in 2005, a similar commitment was made by the Collective Security Treaty Organization member states involving a number of nations of the former USSR.

In total, since the beginning of the space age, which began with the launch of the first artificial satellite called "Sputnik" by the Soviet Union in October 1957, Moscow has jointly or independently put forward about 20 different initiatives in the international arena to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Alas, all of them were successfully blocked by the United States and its NATO partners. Anthony Blinken seems to have forgotten about it.

Against this background, Russia is implementing a purposeful and adequate policy to strengthen the country's defense capability, including in the space sphere, taking into account, among other things, many additional circumstances.

X-37B with specific tasks

What are they? Russia takes into account that the United States is taking concrete practical steps to steadily increase its combat strike space potential.

Work is actively underway to create a space-based missile defense network, develop and operate systems with ground-based, sea-based and air-based interceptor missiles, electronic warfare, directed energy weapons, including testing an unmanned reusable space shuttle X-37B, which has a spacious cargo compartment on board. It is claimed that such a platform is capable of carrying a payload of up to 900 kg.

It is currently carrying out its sixth long-duration orbital flight. His space brother, who made his fifth flight in space in 2017-2019, continuously flew in space for 780 days.

Officially, the United States claims that this unmanned spacecraft performs the tasks of running-in technologies of reusable space platforms. At the same time, initially, when the X-37B was first launched in 2010, it was indicated that its main function would be the delivery of certain "cargo" into orbit. Only it was not explained: which ones? However, all these messages are just a legend to cover up military tasks that this device that are already being performed in space.

On the basis of the existing military-strategic space strategies, specific tasks are prescribed for the U.S. intelligence community and the Pentagon.

Among them are made as conducting operations in space, from space and through it to contain conflicts, and in case of failure of deterrence - to defeat aggression, as well as ensuring the protection and preservation of vital interests of the United States together with allies and partners. It is obvious that in order to carry out such operations, the Pentagon will need special reusable platforms in space, which indicates a promising process of its further militarization by the Pentagon without any restrictions.

According to some military experts, the plausible purpose of this device is to test technologies for a future space interceptor, which allows inspecting alien space objects and, if necessary, disabling them with anti-satellite systems with various functions, including with 'hi-to-kill' kinetic characteristics.

This is confirmed by the statement of the Secretary of the U.S. Air Force, Barbara Barrett, who in May 2020 told reporters that during the current sixth X-37B space flight, a number of experiments will be conducted to test the possibility of converting solar energy into radio frequency microwave radiation, which later can be transmitted to Earth in the form of electricity.

So, what has this device actually been doing and continues to do in space for many years? Obviously, since this space platform was created by the Boeing Corporation with direct participation in its financing and development by the American Agency for Advanced Defense and Research Development, and it is operated by the U.S. Air Force, the tasks of the X-37B are by no means related to the peaceful exploration of outer space.

Some experts believe that such devices can be used to deliver missile defense and anti-satellite systems. Yes, it is not excluded.

It is noteworthy that the operation of this American spacecraft for a long time has caused concern not only on the part of Russia and China, but also on the part of some U.S. allies in NATO regarding its possible role as a space weapon and a platform for delivering strike space weapons, including nuclear warheads.

A special experiment

The X-37B can perform up to ten secret tasks.

One of them fulfilled recently should be mentioned in particular.

It is noteworthy that in the twenties of October 2021, the separation of a small spacecraft at high speed from the side of this "shuttle", which does not have the ability to conduct radar surveillance, was recorded from the X-37B currently in space, which indicates that the Pentagon is testing a new type of space-based weapon. It is obvious that this kind of activity of the United States is not compatible with the stated goals of the peaceful use of outer space.

The separation of the named space object was preceded by the maneuvering of the X-37 the day before.

From October 21 to October 22, the separated space object was located at a distance of less than 200 meters from the X-37B, which subsequently performed a maneuver to move away from the separation point of the new spacecraft.

Based on the results of processing objective coordinate information, it was found that the spacecraft was stabilized, and no elements were found on its body characterizing the presence of antennas that could provide the possibility of conducting radar observations. At the same time, the facts of the approach of the separated new spacecraft with other space objects or the performance of orbital maneuvers were not revealed.

Thus, according to the Russian side, the United States conducted an experiment to separate a small spacecraft with high speed from the X-37B, which indicates the testing of a new type of space-based weapon.

Such actions of the American side are assessed in Moscow as a threat to strategic stability and are incompatible with the stated goals of the peaceful use of outer space. Moreover, Washington intends to use outer space as an area for the potential deployment of space-to-space weapons against various objects in orbit, as well as in the form of space-to-surface weapons in the form of space-based strike weapons that can be used to defeat various ground, air and sea targets on the planet from space.

Current U.S. space policy

Since 1957, all American presidents, without exception, have been actively engaged in the militarization of outer space. In recent years, the most notable breakthrough in this direction has been made by the ex-Republican President Donald Trump.

On March 23, 2018, he approved the updated National Space Strategy of the country. On June 18 of the same year, he gave a specific instruction to the Pentagon to create a Space Force as a full-fledged and sixth branch of the country's armed forces, while emphasizing the undesirability of Russia and China being leaders in space. And on December 9, 2020, the White House additionally announced a new National Space Policy. On December 20, 2019, the beginning of the creation of the U.S. Space Forces was announced.

In these military-strategic guidances, three fundamental views of the American military-political leadership on the use of outer space for military purposes were openly announced.

First, it was proclaimed that the United States intended to single-handedly dominate in space.

Secondly, it was stated that they should maintain "peace from a position of strength" in outer space.

Thirdly, it was stated that space in Washington's views is becoming a potential arena for conducting military operations.

These military-strategic doctrines, according to Washington are a reaction to the "growing threat" in space from Russia and China.

The Pentagon will develop four priority areas of space activities to achieve the stated goals while countering the identified threats, potentials and challenges: (1) ensuring integrated military dominance in space; (2) the integration of military space power into national, joint and combined combat operations; (3) the formation of a strategic environment in the interests of the United States, as well as (4) the development of cooperation with allies, partners, the military-industrial complex and other ministries and departments of the United States.

The space strategy and policy of the current American administration led by Joseph Biden is not much different from the space line followed by President Donald Trump.

After Joseph Biden took office as president in January of this year, the United States continued to develop several types of space strike weapons, including in accordance with twelve programs for the use of outer space for military purposes, when six of them provide for the creation of various types of such systems, and on the basis of six others, controls for the orbital space grouping of a military country are being developed.

The Pentagon's intelligence and information group in space continues to be updated in full, as well as the financing of military space programs. For the fiscal year 2021, allocations for these purposes are set at \$15.5 billion.

Some pro-Western Russian experts are in favor of developing some compromise proposals with the American side on military space issues on the grounds that the United States is not ready to negotiate on military space. Such ideas pose a threat to the national security of the Russian Federation.

And here's why.

Resume

Various actions carried out so far by Washington on the militarization of outer space indicate that the current American military and political leadership does not consider space to be the universal heritage of mankind, for the regulation of activities in which, obviously, agreed international legal norms and rules of responsible behavior are necessary.

The United States has long seen a diametrically opposite prospect – the transformation of outer space into a zone of active hostilities.

In fact, the United States has already created an enlarged Space Force with ambitious offensive tasks.

At the same time, such force relies on the active-offensive doctrine of deterring any potential adversaries in outer space, borrowed from the American strategy of nuclear deterrence, which provides for the first preventive and preemptive nuclear strike.

If in 2012 Washington announced the creation of the "Chicago triad" - a combined combat mechanism in the form of nuclear missile, anti-missile and conventional strike weapons, then it is quite obvious that the United States is purposefully creating a multi-component strike "quatro" asset, when another essential component is added to the "Chicago triad" – that is space strike weapons.

It is obvious that in consultations with the United States on the issues of strengthening strategic stability, it is impossible to ignore all the factors and described circumstances that are related to outer space. It is necessary to avoid a selective, that is, an individual approach to solving the multifaceted problem of arms control without paying attention to other domains, which, at the initiative of the American side, is still in a deadlocked position.