



Russian View of Foreign Dependence on Space Capabilities

OE Watch Commentary: The accompanying excerpted interview of Colonel Sergey Suchkov, Chief of the Aerospace Forces' (VKS) Main Center for Space Situation Reconnaissance in *Krasnaya Zvezda* discusses his views on the importance of space as both an enabler for conducting terrestrial warfare, and now as a domain in its own right. Of particular interest, Suchkov points out a perceived dependency of foreign states (US/NATO) on space for a myriad of capabilities. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)**

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-Colonel Sergey Suchkov, Chief of the VKS Main Center for Space Situation Reconnaissance

Source: Yuliya Kozak, Наблюдать за звёздами и гарантировать безопасность страны (Observing the Stars Guarantees State Security),” *Krasnaya Zvezda* Online, 27 March 2020. <http://redstar.ru/nablyudat-za-zvyozdami-i-garantirovat-bezopasnost-strany/>

Observing the Stars Guarantees State Security

Peering into the starry sky, filled with satellites and orbital stations invisible to the naked eye, one would hardly think that all the aforementioned, as well as everything that goes on outside the Earth's atmosphere, is being constantly watched -- not just to idly admire, but to ensure the security of Russia's military space activity. And this continuous monitoring is being conducted at the Aerospace Forces' (VKS) Main Center for Space Situation Reconnaissance (RKO). Here, in a literal sense, by call of duty, they know everything about the near-Earth space that must be known, in order to fend off the threats, which space may pose for our country. As to what those threats exactly are -- we discussed with Colonel Sergey Suchkov, the chief of the VKS Main Center for Space Situation Reconnaissance.

You talked about the threats, and how to counter them? What is the national space monitoring system? What is its role in ensuring our country's national security? And how can the information of the Main RKO Center impact the increase of the Russian Federation Armed Forces capabilities?

The Russian National Space Monitoring System is a large information network, uniting the capabilities of all the Defense Ministry's and civilian departments' resources. It is intended for continuous, permanent, and global observation of space and for evaluating the space situation both in peacetime and in wartime.

Its role in implementing the country's national security lies in its information support for the accomplishment of such tasks as: foiling the threats emanating from space and in space, the unimpeded deployment and functioning of a domestic spacecraft grouping, and assessment of other hazards associated with man-made space debris.

It is no secret that the main means of command and control of troops, weapons, reconnaissance, communications, navigation, and meteorology of foreign states are concentrated in outer space today, while space itself is gradually turning into a sphere of armed struggle, along with the sea, land and air. Incidentally, military operations of recent decades were conducted through space.

As for the enhancement of the capabilities of our armed forces, it is achieved through the timely receipt of reliable information on the space situation. Thanks to this, a forecast of the nature of the foreign states' operations in space -- and, as a consequence, on Earth -- can be made.