

**The Hon Luke Pollard MP  
Minister for the Armed Forces  
Pre Recorded introduction to Defence Space Conference 2024  
23, 24 September 2024**

453 words

**Context:** UK hosted international conference for the space and defence community.

**Speechwriter's note:** Minister, my proposed layout is intended to ease delivery on the teleprompter.

I stand ready to address your feedback.

Shane Jones  
MoD Speechwriter

Friends. Colleagues. Partners. Allies.

On behalf of the UK Government...

UK Space Command...

and the Air and Space Power Association...

welcome to the Defence Space Conference 2024.

Whilst as a self-confessed space geek...

it's disappointing my commitments as Minister for the Armed Forces...

prevent me from joining you today.

As we undertake our Strategic Defence Review...

and drive a change in mindset across defence...

...shifting from Multi Domain Integration...

to 'All Domain Warfare'...

I want you to know...

that space is omnipresent in my thoughts.

And I use that word very deliberately.

Because as you all know...

as innovation accelerates...

space is only going to be increasingly omnipresent across defence...

as well as our economies...

and broader national interests.

And if we are to emerge successful...

from this inflection point in technology...

that's fuelling an inflection point in warfare...

where Space determines the efficacy of so many of our capabilities...

and those of our adversaries...

we must act now.

And acknowledge that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century space race...

is also an existential arms race.

And with an estimated £360 billion of British GDP supported by satellites...

it is also a race for economic security...

and central to the Government's mission to grow the economy.

But as our reliance on the domain continues to deepen...

it is becoming increasingly competitive, congested and contested.

With the combined satellite fleets of China and Russia...  
growing 70% between 2019 and 2021.

Staying ahead of autocratic regimes and aggressors is a team sport...

so I am delighted...

that so many allies and partners...

are at the Conference today...

and share our ambition to make space open, sustainable, and safe for all.

The good news for the UK and our allies...

is that the space sector is already a growing British success story.

Employing more than 50,000 people...

and generating almost £19 billion.

In May...

the UK established its National Space Operations Centre.

And last month...

Space Command launched our Tyche satellite into orbit...

the first of a series of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance satellites...

that we have in the pipeline.

I like to set my audiences homework.

So as you gather...

from allied countries, businesses, and institutions...

my homework is for us all to come together...

and put rocket boosters on our collaboration.

To ensure those who believe in universal freedoms...

and a rules-based international system...

win the 21<sup>st</sup> century space race.

As in other domains...

we need the credibility to deter...

and the advantage to fight and win, if necessary.

So contribute to our Strategic Defence Review.

And help ensure that the overarching domain of space...

has the prominence it deserves and requires...

to keep us safe and secure...

in our rapidly evolving...

and increasingly insecure world.

Thank you.