

# SPACE COMMISSION

**Hold for release until 2:30 PM Thursday, January 11, 2001**

## **Commission Urges Recognition of Space as Top National Security Priority**

(Washington, DC. January 11, 2001) The US is more dependent on space than any other country. That dependence is increasing rapidly, and it creates new vulnerabilities, which ought to receive top priority attention at the highest levels of US Government. According to the Report of the Commission to Assess United States National Security Space Management and Organization, delivered to Congress and the Secretary of Defense today, "Only the President has the authority...to provide the guidance and direction...needed to ensure that the United States remains the world's leading space-faring nation."

The bipartisan Commission, established by Congress last year, is composed of experts from the private sector, Congress, and the executive branch of government. Emphasizing the importance of protecting peace and security in space, they determined that "the Department of Defense and Intelligence Community (are) not yet arranged or focused to meet the national security space needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century." The panel concluded that a number of organizational changes are required within the executive branch to achieve greater responsibility and accountability for space issues.

Of special importance, the report points out, is the relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. These two must collaborate closely and continuously so as to resolve the differences over space programs that inevitably arise between their two large bureaucracies.

Six months of research, hearings, and interviews with the country's top experts have convinced the Commission that it is a virtual certainty that space will witness conflict as have the other transportation media – air, land, and sea. "This will require superior space capabilities," the panel concludes, which the United States must take immediate steps to develop.

Particularly crucial in the Commission's view is the nourishment of the sophisticated scientific and technological resources (which include people as well as facilities) the United States will need to retain its position as the world's leading space-faring nation.

The report, which is unclassified, is available to the public through the Internet at [www.space.gov](http://www.space.gov).

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