



## Strategic Deterrence in the 21st Century: Dampening Momentum to Achieve Stability

Christopher Thomas Kuklinski

United States Strategic Command, USA

### Abstract:

This discussion focuses on extending deterrence principles beyond the 20th Century nuclear paradigm to address challenges within the space and cyberspace domains. It opens with the post-Cold War era, proceeds to explore the attributes of deterrence; conducts a comprehensive overview of the space and cyberspace domains; applies deterrence principles to assure the peaceful uses of the space and cyberspace domains; and concludes with a discussion on the erosion of protections for noncombatants through the evolution of warfare from the Industrial Age to the Information Age.

The author posits that in order to counter the effects of a constant state of war, deterrence in space and cyberspace must be executed as a campaign through all phases of conflict. The fundamental strategy of this campaign is to assume a position of strength. This is achieved by building a resilient architecture supporting both space and cyberspace domains. This architecture includes a complementary set of offensive and defensive capabilities intended to make the cost of engagement exceed the intended benefits.

Complementing the architecture are confidence building measures designed to prevent inadvertent escalation by creating channels to resolve issues stemming from the misinterpretation of an action, miscommunication of intent, and inadvertent or accidental application of effects. These measures also serve to resolve incidents purposefully initiated either by hubris or fear at the lowest phases of conflict. These confidence building measures include the need for productive relationships between rivals, the establishment of norms of behavior, and the exercising of restraint to prevent emotions from clouding the judgement of decision makers. Through the combination of these measures, harmful momentum is dampened allowing a state of strategic stability to flourish. In this state, sovereign nations can pursue national interests while adhering to established international norms.

### Biography:

Mr. Kuklinski serves as the Assistant Deputy Director for Global Operations at United States Strategic Command. Chris has over thirty years of experience serving in a variety of capacities in the nuclear, space, and command and control operations. He served as the Deputy Launch Director for six space launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base and the Director for Operations conducting space-based missile warning at Buckley Air Force Base Colorado. Mr. Kuklinski holds degrees from the University of Pittsburgh, Chapman University, University of Nebraska-Omaha, and King's College London.