Meink did not provide many details about the weapon or when it was launched, but he stated that it will “make sure that when we’re threatened, we can take care of that.”

“We are increasing readiness against existing threats and the United States has on-orbit space control weapons capable of defending the Joint Force against hostile adversary action,” Meink said at the annual Air, Space and Cyber Conference in National Harbor, Md.

Meink’s acknowledgement prompted a stern reaction from China.

“China stands for peaceful use of the outer space and keeping it safe, and opposes any arms race in outer space or any attempt to weaponize it and turn it into a warzone,” China’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said Tuesday. “We urge the U.S. to stop its military build-up in the outer space, and uphold global strategic stability with concrete actions.”

Russia weighed in as well, with Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov saying Moscow believes “space must be free of any weapon,” according to state media.

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