

US can shoot down EU satellites if used by foes in wartime

By [Global Research](#)

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US officials have voiced fears that the rival system, which has also brought on board Russia and Israel in addition to China, could compromise US and NATO military operations which rely on GPS for navigation and combatant location and might also interfere with a classified Pentagon positioning system known as M-Code.

The United States could attack Europe's planned network of global positioning satellites if it was used by a hostile power such as China, The Business weekly reported on Sunday. Galileo, a constellation of 30 satellites and ground stations due to go into operation in 2008, is being launched by the European Union and the European Space Agency to tap into a growing market of global satellite positioning.

China last month became a partner in the Galileo program, which could help provide services such as communications for the 2008 Beijing Olympics but also has applications for strategic military use. According to a leaked US Air Force document written in August and obtained by The Business, Peter Teets, under-secretary of the US Air Force wrote: "What will we do 10 years from now when American lives are put at risk because an adversary chooses to leverage the global positioning system of perhaps the Galileo constellation to attack American forces with precision?"

The paper also reported a disagreement between EU and US officials this month over Galileo at a London conference, which led to the threat to blow up the future satellites. The European delegates reportedly said they would not turn off or jam signals from their satellites, even if they were used in a war with the United States. A senior European delegate at the London conference said his US counterparts reacted to the EU position "calmly".

"They made it clear that they would attempt what they called reversible action, but, if necessary, they would use irreversible action," the official was quoted as saying. Washington has long expressed doubts about Galileo, which could compete with its Global Positioning System (GPS), although the transatlantic feud was reportedly ended following an agreement signed in June.

US officials have voiced fears that the rival system, which has also brought on board Russia and Israel in addition to China, could compromise US and NATO military operations which rely on GPS for navigation and combatant location and might also interfere with a classified Pentagon positioning system known as M-Code. At one point, Washington suggested that Galileo was an unnecessary rival to GPS that merely duplicated the US system. Analysts said the US threat to Galileo's future system exposed the true military value of the global

navigation systems.

Previously, officials touted only the commercial benefit of Galileo, which is expected to tap into a burgeoning market for satellite positioning systems that doubled from 10 billion euros in 2002 to 20 billion euros in 2003. Brussels has also argued Galileo will create 150,000 new jobs across the European bloc.

The Business warned in an editorial that technological choices – Galileo versus GPS – now would fuel more international political division. “Technological decisions required by Galileo mean countries have to commit themselves to the ugly delineation of the Iraq War: pro-America (GPS) or anti-America (Galileo).” It warned that Britain, Washington’s staunchest ally in the Iraq war, would once again find itself trapped between the two camps ? and that as a result “the Anglo-American alliance is quietly splitting behind the scenes”.

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