



By: TA | AP Brief

# Russia is tracking satellites used by the German military



Russia is currently tracking two Intelsat satellites used by the German military, a senior minister said on Thursday.

German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius revealed the active operations as he announced a €35 billion (\$41 billion) investment in his country's space programs over the next five years.

Pistorius said Russia and China have the capability to engage in space warfare and already occupy strategic positions in space.

"They can jam, blind, manipulate, or kinetically disrupt satellites," he told a space conference in Berlin, adding that the German military has already been targeted by jamming attacks.

Russia did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Currently, Europe's only space base capable of launching rockets and satellites into orbit is in sparsely populated French Guiana, an overseas department of France in South America that's roughly 500 kilometers (310 miles) north of the equator. Otherwise, Europe **borrow**s NASA's Cape Canaveral in Florida.

## 39 Chinese and Russian satellites

Pistorius said two Russian Luch-Olymp reconnaissance satellites are tracking two Intelsat satellites that are used by, among others, the German armed forces.

The minister said that as he was speaking, "39 Chinese and Russian reconnaissance satellites are flying over us," with their observations being transmitted in real-time. "So be careful what you say," he added.

### Europe lags behind the United States, China and Russia in space

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For decades, Europe has relied upon the U.S. for its security in space, but the Trump administration's "America First" **policies**, plus a commercial market that's growing exponentially, has prompted Europeans to **rethink** their approach.