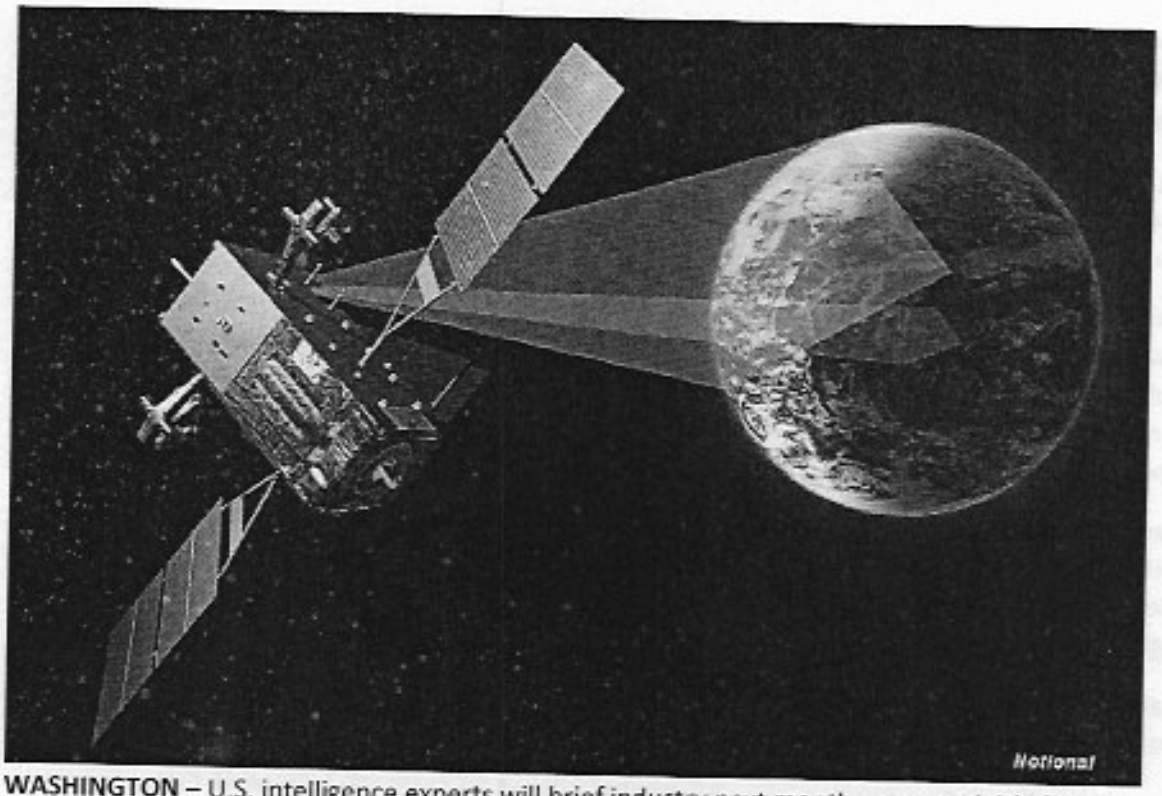
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IARPA asks industry for ability to image geosynchronous objects for space situational awareness

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WASHINGTON – U.S. intelligence experts will brief industry next month on a new initiative to develop space situational awareness precision imaging technology sufficient to gather high-resolution images of objects orbiting in geosynchronous orbit from installations on the ground.

Officials of the U.S. Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Agency (IARPA) in Washington from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. eastern time on 11 May 2017 at yet-to-be determined location in the Washington, D.C. area, on the upcoming Amon-Hen program to produce images of objects in geosynchronous orbit, which is 22,236 miles above the Earth's surface.

IARPA's Amon-Hen program seeks to develop ground-based GEO imaging that enables rapid collection of data for inteferometric image reconstruction of geosynchronous objects at low cost.

The name Amon-Hen, taken from the J.R.R. Tolkien Lord Of The Rings novel trilogy, refers to a significant lookout post that watches over the city of Gondor in the fictional world of Middle-earth.

One potential technology approach to the Amon-Hen project is to use a large number of small apertures, IARPA officials say. In addition to reducing costs, small aperture could enable simultaneous measurements at a large number of baselines, reducing acquisition timelines and increasing the number of geosynchronous objects imaged in one night.

The goal of the Amon-Hen program is to develop a low-cost, passive, ground-based, optical interferometer that from the ground can resolve images in geosynchronous orbit to 12.5 nanoradian angular resolution, and then convert one night's imaging data to a final image.

Imaging data from one geosynchronous object must be completed in less than one hour. Image interpretability must be equivalent to Space Object Rating Scale (SORS) Level 6 or better.