



Ground Truth Symposium

Operational Briefing on Drone Warfare and Modern Battlefield Lessons

Washington, D.C. · March 25, 2026 · 11:00 am – 3:00 pm · Invitation Only

The Ground Truth Symposium convenes Members of Congress, congressional staff, defense officials, and select industry leaders for an operational briefing on how drone-dominant warfare in Ukraine is reshaping modern combat and what it means for U.S. force design, allied defense, and American national security. Ukrainian frontline leaders and U.S. practitioners will share direct battlefield insight on force protection, training, battlefield adaptation, and the scaling of modern military capabilities.

The objective is to translate frontline experience from Ukraine into practical lessons for U.S. stakeholders responsible for defense strategy, procurement, and force readiness.

Opening Remarks and Welcome Bill Cole | Keynote: Congressman Don Bacon · Senator Richard Blumenthal

Keynote | **Lito Villanueva** U.S. Air Force veteran, drone warfare expert, and advisor to Ukrainian units Focus: Establishing the operational context for the day: how modern combat is unfolding and why traditional assumptions no longer apply.

Ground Truth Framing Bill Cole, Alik Kasman

Panel I | The Battlefield Today: How Combat Actually Feels – Mod: Lito Villanueva Focus: Forces operating under constant surveillance, with engagement cycles measured in minutes — how drones and electronic warfare define movement, decisions, and survival.

Panel II | The System Behind the Fight: Air, Drones, and Electronic Warfare – Mod: Oleg Gorenko Focus: Detection, targeting, strike, and electronic warfare as a continuous system — and the challenge of defending against fast, low-cost, adaptive drone threats at scale.

Break — Networking and transition

Guest Speaker | Illya Sekirin: Drone Warfare and the Future of War Focus: How drone warfare is reshaping combat and what it takes to win and end the war.

Panel III | Speed, Scale, and Adaptation: Why This War Is Different – Mod: Mike Kofman Focus: Rapid adaptation, continuous learning, and the ability to scale effective solutions — what separates forces that win from those that fall behind.

Panel IV | What This Means Now: Ukraine, the United States, and the Expansion of the Battlefield – Mod: Bill Cole Focus: Connecting battlefield reality to immediate implications for U.S. national security: resource allocation, scaling drone capabilities, and emerging global risks.

Panel speakers are officers from the 429th UAV Brigade "Achilles," Azov, and the Lazar Group. Individual identities are classified.

Fireside Conversation | Industry, Capital, and the Speed of Modern War – Mod: Bill Cole Bill Cronenberg, Perry Boyle, and industry participants

Closing Synthesis | What Must Change Now Bill Cole and Alik Kasman