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MAKING NEWSPACE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Abstract

The NewSpace revolution in general, and the vast use of small satellites in particular, is truly outstanding. The author alone supported the launch of over 500 small satellites during her career.

It seems that with the democratization of outer space, and increase in its accessibility, this revolution is now complete, but are the current exciting events sustainable?

Matters such as space debris, space traffic management and the contamination of outer space are not dealt with in the UN space treaties, and the newer UN Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, lack a legally binding nature.

In addition, pollution on Earth relating to launch activities seems like a non-issue in an era which prompts urgent regulatory action against climate change. Recent protests by astronomical scientists who warn against a process which would forever change our skies, are not heard loudly in the industry's meeting rooms.

In this paper, the author will suggest regulatory models to deal with the challenge of creating a thriving NewSpace industry on one hand, and ensuring the sustainability of outer space, and Earth, for future generations, on the other hand.

The author will base the paper on her experience working in the NewSpace industry, and her post-doctoral research, focusing on corporate and State responsibility, as vital legal tools, which will create a regulatory solution, together with valuable lessons learned from the aviation industry and its shift to regulating aircraft emissions.