

54TH IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Joint IAF/IISL Session on Policy and Law of Human Space Missions (7.-B3.8)

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RULES OF SPACE LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW: THE CASE
OF THE RIGHT TO WATER

Abstract

Satellite technologies can be used to support governmental measures aimed at improving access to drinking water as a prerequisite to advance in human development and poverty reduction. However, the legal reasoning behind the relation between space law and the right to water as a human right is not clear. The questions of how the rules of space law and human rights law are connected, and how they could be integrated have not been widely explored.

In this respect, international policies have begun to address the use of satellite technology for development and the right to water as a human right under a political language in UN General Assembly Resolutions. Nevertheless, this paper argues that the international community needs a common legal language to move forward on these topics.

Therefore, this paper adopts a rule-based perspective for studying the legal aspects of satellite applications for improving access to safe drinking water.

The first section identifies and presents a normative description of the international rules in space law and human rights related to the utilization of satellite applications to implement the right to water.

The second section relies on the previous normative description, in order to articulate and justify the normative connection between space law and human rights law, in particular the right to water.

The third section explores international institutional means for strengthening international cooperation in this field.

The paper concludes by presenting a proposal to adopt a common legal language dealing with space law and human rights law, emphasizing the right to water. In addition, the conclusion indicates the main legal argument for justifying the normative connection between space law and human rights.