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IS THERE SPACE FOR THE UN? PERSPECTIVES OF THE UN ROLE IN THE OUTER SPACE  
AND CYBERSPACE REGIMES WITH REGARD TO SUSTAINABILITY

**Abstract**

Cyberspace and outer space are two domains for human activity created by - and accessible only through - advances in science and technology. Both occupy high rungs on global and national agendas owing to their importance for military, economic, and political security. At the same time, both play key roles for promoting a sustainable future for humankind even as these two domains face growing challenges to their own long-term sustainability. The open and transparent Internet affords effective worldwide communications for UN organizations, yet the Internet faces mounting future challenges posed by expanding volumes of spam, disruptive hacking, and cyberwar. To communicate with outlying under-developed areas, UN organizations rely on communications, navigation, weather, surveying, and disaster alert services provided by satellites, satellites that are flying into a spreading threat from space debris blocking access to certain regions of a once unlimited frontier. Here is the paradox: UN organizations devoted to global sustainability depend on services performed by technologies in the increasingly unsustainable cyberspace and outer space domains. Will these sustainability challenges bring reforms in the UN governance institutions and mechanisms or will solutions be sought outside of the UN framework? This paper will examine this sustainability paradox from the perspectives of key UN agencies to evaluate the future UN role in cyberspace and outer space governance.