



北京航空航天大学
BEIHANG UNIVERSITY

Review of the Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Space

Prof. Dr. Li Bin

2nd Manfred Lachs International
Conference on Global Space Governance

31 May 2014



I. Three Key Controversies over the Remote Sensing Issues in the History

- *The Issue of Prior Consent*
- The developing countries claimed that the legitimacy of the satellite remote sensing shall be based on the prior consent of the sensed State.
- Western countries, however, held that "prior consent" is in violation of the principle of freedom in outer space.



I. Three Key Controversies over the Remote Sensing Issues in the History

- *The Issue of Restriction on the Dissemination of Data and Information on Natural Resources*
- Developing countries claimed that countries' sensing data and information must be strictly controlled.
- Western countries opposed to such restriction.
- A change of attention on such an issue: whether the sensed State has the priority to obtain the data and information on its territory at a lower price.



I. Three Key Controversies over the Remote Sensing Issues in the History

- *The Issue of How the Sensed State Can Obtain the Data and Information*
- It is a major concern for the developing countries that the sensed State can obtain the data and information of its territory continuously at a lower price.



II. Brief Comments on *the UN Principles*

- It is the most important international document generally dealing with the remote sensing activities. It is a fruit with many achievements. For instance:
- Principle 5 requires the international cooperation in promoting remote sensing activities.
- Principle 11 emphasizes that “Remote sensing shall promote the protection of mankind from natural disasters”.



II. Brief Comments on *the UN Principles*

- It is the compromise between two different systems and ideas.
- Principle 9 provides that "in accordance with article 4 of the Registration Convention and article 11 of the Outer Space Treaty, a State carrying out a program of remote sensing shall inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It shall, moreover, make available any other relevant information to the greatest extent feasible and practicable to any other State, particularly any developing country that is affected by the program, at its request".



III. How to Make *the UN Principles* More Feasible

- Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters (*The International Charter*)
- *The International Charter* was established to promote cooperation between space agencies and space system operators in the use of space facilities as a contribution to the management of crises arising from natural or technological disasters.



III. How to Make *the UN Principles* More Feasible

- To achieve its goal, *the International Charter* requests the parties to supply the relevant data, information and services to the States or communities influenced and threatened by natural or technological disasters.
- “The data and information” include those acquired by the means of remote sensing activities.



III. How to Make *the UN Principles* More Feasible

- *The International Charter* aims to help the parties to conquer the natural or technological disasters which every country in the world would face.
- The wording of *the International Charter* tries to avoid discussing controversial terms, such as state sovereignty. In this way, the purpose of the mechanism is least political.
- Another way to develop *the UN Principles* is to encourage the regional cooperation in remote sensing activities. (*Sentinel Asia*)



■ Thank you!