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Background Guide

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs

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Using space to support the Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction to the Topic

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, a set of 17 Development Goals defined by a series of 169 targets. The agenda was designed to succeed the Millennium Development Goals and included targets relating to poverty, gender equality and climate change. Ending hunger and malnutrition, ensuring that clean water and safe sanitation is available to all and promoting the sustainable use of oceans are also key priorities for the UN. (UN, 2015)

UNOOSA recognises that space technology, especially Earth observation and geolocation technology, is already instrumental in delivering against the Sustainable Development targets. In particular, UNOOSA's 'Space4Water' programme is helping to bring together stakeholders in space and water communities to find ways in which satellite technology can aid the sustainable management of sanitation. (Space4Water, 2019)

However, there is still much more that space technology could be doing to support the SDGs. So far, the use of observation and geolocation satellites have supported up to 40% of the General Assembly's 169 SDG targets. By making use of telecommunication technology and by sharing capacity with developing nations, the impact of space technology would be much greater. Addressing ways in which this space capacity, or the insight gained from space capacity, can be shared efficiently is also an important consideration. (UNOOSA, 2018)

More fundamentally, perhaps, making space activities work effectively for the promotion of Sustainable Development Goals will require us to first ensure that space activities are themselves sustainable. As the 62nd session of the COPUOS noted, "[T]he Earth's orbital space environment constitutes a finite resource". Finding cooperative ways to allocate this resource fairly is crucial. (COPUOS, 2019)

In sum, how we use space to support the Sustainable Development Goals is as much a question about what the technology can do as it is about how we allocate the capacity available to us. Prioritising effectively will be imperative in order to solve some of the most pressing challenges facing the world today.

History of the Topic

Timeline

1958: United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1348 XIII was adopted to establish the first ad hoc "Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" (COPUOS).

1959: UN General Assembly Resolution 1472 (XIV) establishes COPUOS as a permanent committee.

1967: The "Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies", commonly referred to as the Outer Space Treaty, enters into force.

1968: The first UN conference on outer space, UNISPACE I, is held.

1971: The UN Programme on Space Applications (PSA) is created.

1982: The second UN conference on outer space, UNISPACE II, is held.

1998: The third UN conference on outer space, UNISPACE III, is held.

2006: UN General Assembly Resolution 61/110 establishes the United Nations Space-Based information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response knowledge portal.

2015: The UN General Assembly finalises the "Post-2015 Development Agenda" process and adopts 17 Sustainable Development Goals

2018: To celebrate the 50th anniversary of UNISPACE I, the UN convenes UNISPACE+50.

From the very beginning of our quest to become a space faring civilisation, the international community has remained committed to placing the "common interest of humankind" at the heart of space policy. In 1958, the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 1348 (XIII) demonstrated consensus for such a principle and made it clear that space should be used for "peaceful purposes only" (UN General Assembly, 1958). The resolution also established the first ad hoc "Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" (COPUOS) with a mandate to promote the coordination of international space research programmes and responsibility for the development of space law.

The following year, resolution 1472 (XIV) established COPUOS as a permanent committee with a duty to further the "development of international cooperation" in space travel (UN General Assmebly, 1959). Even though the technology was still in its infancy, the UN recognised the potential for space to promote the "improvement of the well-being of peoples" around the globe by unleashing new avenues of scientific discovery. More importantly, perhaps, the resolution called on COPUOS to ensure that the benefits of space exploration were available to all states, "irrespective of the stage of their economic or scientific development". These principles have become ever more relevant as the global community faces increasingly complex challenges.

1967 saw the adoption and ratification of the "Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies", commonly referred to as the Outer Space Treaty. To date, this agreement has been ratified by over 100 countries. (UNOOSA, 1967)

In 1968, the first United Nations conference on outer space – UNISPACE I – was held in Vienna. It was the first time states and international organisations from all over the world had assembled to set an agenda for the future of space cooperation.

The first conference focused mainly on how emerging space technology could be utilised for the benefit of humankind. It also reaffirmed the international community's commitment to "international cooperation, with particular regard to the benefit of developing nations." (UNOOSA, n.d.) This led to the creation of the Programme on Space Applications (PSA), as body which assisted with the implementation of "trainings and workshops, using space technology in such diverse areas as telecommunications, environmental monitoring and weather forecasting".

Since 1971, the PSA “has made substantial progress in furthering knowledge and experience of space applications around the world.” (UNOOSA, n.d.)

In 1982, the second UN conference was convened in order to address “concerns of how to maintain the outer space for peaceful purposes and prevent an arms race in outer space.” The occasion was also used to strengthen the PSA, allowing it assist developing nations “develop their indigenous capabilities in the use of space technology applications.” (UNOOSA, n.d.) Specifically, it was recommended that UNOOSA should fund science and technology centres in emerging countries which would be instrumental in the development of space capacity. The first of a series of centres opened in 1995, in Dehradun, India. (UNOOSA, n.d.)

In 1998, UNISPACE III convened, this time with a focus on how the international community could better “Protect the global environment and manage natural resources,” “Increase the use of space applications for human security,” and “Increase developing countries' access to space science and its benefits.” (UNOOSA, n.d.)

In 2006, General Assembly Resolution 61/110 established the United Nations Space-Based information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) knowledge portal. The initiative was designed to provide the relevant authorities with “universal access” to “all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management” (UNOOSA, n.d.). In the aftermath of a catastrophic event, natural or otherwise, obtaining swift access to satellite data is often vital in order to implement an appropriate response. UN-SPIDER also enhanced the space capacity available to developing nations that lacked their own independent space programme.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first conference, in 2018 the international

community convened in Vienna for UNISPACE+50. The high-level panel involved a discussion between space experts, global leader and supporters of space activity on four key pillars of UNOOSA's work: space economy, society, accessibility and diplomacy. More specifically, the convention reaffirmed the international community's commitment to using space in aid of some of the UN's most ambitious challenges – the Sustainable Development Goals. (UNOOSA, 2018)

Between 2012 and 2015, a process known as the "Post-2015 Development Agenda" was led by the United Nations with an aim to design a framework which would replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs were due to end in 2015, so a new set of commitments were necessary and would form part of the UN's 2030 agenda. In December 2015, the General Assembly adopted a framework of 17 "Sustainable Development Goals" based on 169 separate targets, covering issues such as education, gender equality and climate action. (UN, 2015)

UNISPACE+50 called on COPUOS, with the assistance of UNOOSA, to draft a "Space2030" agenda in response to these goals. The agenda, due to be considered by the General Assembly in 2020, will seek to explore additional ways space technology can support the UN's Sustainable Development project, taking particular care to consider the needs of developing nations. As a recent draft of the agenda recognises:

"space tools are highly relevant for the attainment of the global development agendas […] either directly, as enablers and drivers of sustainable development, or indirectly, by providing essential data for the indicators used to monitor the progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda" (COPUOS, 2019)

Ultimately, the international community has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to using space in aid of sustainable development. The challenge for you as delegates, therefore, will be to identify ways in which the international space community can most effectively contribute to the targets set by the 2030 Agenda

Discussion of the Topic

There is perhaps some irony to the suggestion that sending satellites into orbit, burning thousands of tons of fossil fuel in the process, is necessary to confront issues such as climate change and resource management. Without a doubt, however, space technology plays a fundamental role in making our world safer and greener. The following discussion explores how space is already contributing to the UN's Development Agenda and how it could make an increasingly significant contribution in the future.

Sustainability of space activities

Space technology improves the lives of people worldwide without any of us even really knowing. Remote sensing, meteorological forecasting and satellite navigation all play a crucial role in our modern world, enhancing living standards and making our economies more energy efficient. To ensure that this can continue, international cooperation may be necessary to protect the sustainability of space activities. As UNOOSA put it, "there is a need to preserve and protect the outer space environment for use by future generations" (UNOOSA, 2019).

One of the most concerning threats to sustainability is space debris. Defunct satellites, discarded upper rocket stages and spacecraft fragments all contribute to

increasingly cluttered low Earth orbits. In 2016, for instance, NASA reported that it was actively tracking over 17,000 artificial objects. (NASA, 2016)

However, this figure may understate the problem. Estimates suggest that there might be millions of smaller objects (shards of metal, paint fragments, etc.) that cannot be tracked. These pose a significant threat to space activities, as a collision at orbital velocity can create large “clouds” of debris in a phenomenon known as “Kessler syndrome”. For satellites which rely on sensitive monitoring equipment or fragile solar panels, even the tiniest piece of space litter has the potential to jeopardise their safe operation.

In response, the international community has sought to develop a framework for the prevention and removal of space debris. The issue was first discussed as a priority by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (STSC) of COPUOS in 1994. By 2007, the international community had adopted a set of voluntary space debris mitigation guidelines. (UNOOSA, 2019) These involved ways of limiting debris during normal operations, reducing the probability of orbital collisions and removing space objects after the completion of their mission.

At present, some COPUOS members are seeking to re-examine this framework of debris mitigation in order to make space travel more sustainable. The STSC has reached consensus on guidelines in areas such as sharing accurate orbital data, distributing space weather forecasts and supervising activities at the national level. However, a conclusion is yet to be reached on a framework for the active removal of debris, pre-launch assessments and improving the registration of space objects. (Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS, 2018)

It is also possible that greater consideration should be given to the special needs of developing nations. As emerging economies seek to develop their own, independent space capabilities, care should be taken to ensure a framework on space debris does jeopardise their efforts.

Ultimately, the issues to consider which are relevant to the topic are:

- To what extent does the effect of space debris threaten to undermine the role of space technology in tackling the Sustainable Development Goals?

- Based on this assessment, to what extent should space debris be a priority for COPUOS?

The Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (UN, 2015). They include a commitment to:

1. No Poverty

2. Zero Hunger

3. Good Health and Well-being

4. Quality Education

5. Gender Equality

6. Clean Water and Sanitation

7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
10. Reducing Inequality
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life On Land
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals

Importantly, the UN has identified a few key cross-cutting themes which need to be addressed as a priority.

In particular, it has been identified that gender equality and education should play a fundamental part in the realisation of each goal. Not only are they both intrinsically valuable in and of themselves, the UN recognises that developing economies will only succeed by empowering and valuing the contributions of every citizen.

These goal also represent a development of the Millennium Development Goals which they were designed to replace. Specifically, the SDGs were drafted in partnership with a wider range of actors, apply universally to nations both developed and developing and have a greater focus on data acquisition to hold institutions accountable.

SDGs and Space

Of the 17 Goals, UNOOSA identify 4 which are already benefitting substantially from space technology: zero hunger (2), sustainable cities (11), climate action (13) and life on land (15). (UNOOSA, 2018)

Earth observation satellites are used to maximise the output of the agricultural sector. By monitoring water cycles, crop growth and vegetation levels, sites suitable for farming can be more readily identified. This helps to prevent famine in some of the most vulnerable parts of the world.

Urban planning and waste management benefit hugely from satellite navigation data and observation telemetry. This can be used to improve services and enhance the efficiency of communication networks.

Relatedly, navigation technology is a key part of reducing greenhouse emissions in the aviation sector, by plotting the most fuel efficient routes for commercial aircraft. Remote sensing satellites also play an indispensable role in monitoring changes to the climate and weather patterns.

Finally, imaging technology is able to effectively analyse vegetation levels and biodiversity density in remote areas. This is important for food and water security, as well as natural resources management.

Existing initiatives

The realisation of the SDGs is already supported by some longstanding UNOOSA initiatives.

Perhaps the most important among these is the “Programme on Space Application” (PSA), which supports all UNOOSA members with capacity building projects and facilitates the sharing of technological expertise. It runs the “Basic Space Technology Initiative”, supporting the development of space capabilities in emerging economies. The PSA also conducts a variety of training initiatives on climate change data and coordinates with the World Health Organisation to monitor disease transmission patterns related to environmental factors. In some parts of the world, the PSA has facilitated the establishment of “Regional Centres for Space Science”, providing a space education curriculum for aspiring scientists in developing nations. (UNOOSA, n.d.)

“Space4Water” is an UNOOSA supported portal for exchanging knowledge on space-based solutions for water management. By bringing together experts from around the world, “Space4Water” is able to more effectively support capacity building projects. (UNOOSA, n.d.)

“Space for Women” is a new initiative, designed to create a network of role models in STEM fields and the space sector. It also promotes the sharing of space data to empower women in developing countries. (UNOOSA, n.d.)

The International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) supports the free access to global satellite navigation networks. Assisted by the PSA, the ICG coordinates workshops on the application navigation data, particularly in relation to mapping remote areas and mitigating the effects of natural disasters. More specifically, the ICG sees its mission as “to promote the introduction and utilization of [satellite navigation] services and their future enhancements, including in developing countries, through assistance, if necessary, with the integration into their infrastructures.” (UNOOSA, n.d.)

“Space2030” agenda

As noted above, COPUOS is currently in the process of drafting the “Space2030” agenda. This is designed to be an action plan to coordinate the international community’s use of outer space in aid of the Sustainable Development Goals. The current draft structures the approach around 4 pillars (COPUOS, 2019):

- Space Economy: this includes a commitment to address issues arising from commercial activity in space to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space operations. It also seeks to support small and medium sized enterprises looking to contribute to the space industry.

- Space Society: the “Space2030” agenda seeks to promote contributions “to the preservation of the natural environment, sustainable resource management

and the protection of ecosystems". It also recommits the international community to strengthening integrated space applications and using space to support global health.

- Space Accessibility: the draft recommits to capacity building as well as using space to build broadband technologies, "giving special attention to developing countries and areas with less-developed infrastructure."

- Space Diplomacy: "Space2030" makes a commitment to share technical expertise to build capacity in developing nations. It also currently seeks to "Ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the preservation of the outer space environment for peaceful uses, including through the implementation on a voluntary basis of the guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities."

Much of this builds on initiatives UNOOSA already has in place to support sustainable development. However, does the current draft of the agenda do enough to support the 2015 SDGs? And does it take in to account the needs of developing nations sufficiently?

Sustainability issues

We have already explored the issue of sustainability, particularly in relation to the issue of space debris. The current "Space2030" draft talks of implementing guidelines for sustainability on a "voluntary basis" (COPUOS, 2019). It may be worth considering, in the context of the discussion so far, whether the agenda should take a tougher approach.

Priorities of developing nations

At UNISPACE+50, several developing nations cited examples of space applications which are of particular benefit. For instance, the work of UN-SPIDER was commended and some delegations suggested that it should be strengthened further (UNOOSA, 2018). Additionally, the G77 bloc highlighted the importance of space technology used for agriculture and water management (Group of 77 and China, 2018). Nigeria cited the specific case of Lake Chad and how Earth observation satellites are used to monitor water levels. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018)

Although UNOOSA supports initiatives in aid of these priorities already, it might be worth considering whether they should receive even greater attention in the future.

Remote sensing technology

The sharing of remote sensing capacity has been a key part of UNOOSA's sustainable development programmes thus far. The technology is especially useful for "studies of the Earth that require periodic observations, such as inventories and surveys in agriculture, hydrography, geology, mineralogy and land use." (UNOOSA, n.d.)

The framework governing this type of data sharing has existed since the 1980s and has been codified by the "Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space". Importantly, Principle XII imposes the following expectation on space agencies which conduct remote sensing:

> "As soon as the primary data and the processed data concerning the territory under its jurisdiction are produced, the sensed State shall have access to them on a non-discriminatory basis and on reasonable cost terms. The sensed State shall also have

> access to the available analysed information concerning the territory under its jurisdiction in the possession of any State participating in remote sensing activities on the same basis and terms, taking particularly into account the needs and interests of the developing countries." (UN General Assembly, 1986)

However, some nations have expressed concern that not all space faring countries are meeting their obligations under the Principles in a timely fashion (Islamic Republic of Iran, 2018). It might be worth seeking a renewed commitment to this resolution, therefore, given the importance of remote sensing to developing nations and the sustainable development agenda.

Capacity building

As well sharing access to data, we have explored some of the initiatives promoted by UNOOSA to bridge the technological divide and build the space capabilities of developing nations. Although capacity building programmes require sustained investment from more economically developed countries, such action may be necessary in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A common criticism of the Millennium Development agenda is that it fostered an unhealthy "donor-recipient" dynamic between poorer and richer nations. The post-2015 settlement has tried to avoid this, favouring instead a collective approach "according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities" (UN, 2013).

Given this, do the world's more developed nations have an obligation to share their expertise and actively support the formation of new space programme's around the world?

Natural Disasters

Finally, it is important to recognise that some of the most impoverished nations on Earth are also those most vulnerable to natural disasters. Hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunamis all pose a threat to sustainable development, so taking steps to mitigate their devasting impact is vital. Space technology already plays a pivotal role in coordinating the aid response following a catastrophe, but it is worth considering whether existing initiatives need developing.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

In 2015, the UN member states adopted the Sendai Framework, a document setting out targets and legal instruments for reducing disaster risk. It commits the international community to the:

> "substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries." (UNDRR, 2015)

The Sendai Framework also has a set of metrics against which progress can be measured.

UN-SPIDER

The international space community has already established initiatives seeking to promote coordination on disaster management. Chief among these is the UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). Established in 2006, the programme seeks to improve access to space technology by developing nations in the aftermath of natural disasters. This includes the sharing of remote sensing, telecommunication and navigation data. As UNOOSA puts it, the "objective is a better flow of information on disaster risks or disaster impacts between all stakeholders and affected populations." (UNOOSA, n.d.)

Incorporating this into the "Space2030" agenda

Early drafts of the "Space2030" agenda and reports from recent COPUOS meetings all indicate that the international community is fully committed to incorporating the Sendai Framework into UNOOSA's future programme of activities. In particular, the 2019 draft agenda draft talks of using space to provide "essential data for the indicators used to monitor the progress towards achieving [...] the Sendai Framework." (COPUOS, 2019)

However, could the "Space2030" be more ambitious? Should the international community strengthen the mandate of UN-SPIDER or commit more fully to using space for disaster reduction?

Bloc Positions

Mexico

The delegation from Mexico introduced resolution 73/6 to the General Assembly in 2018, formally inviting COPUOS to develop the "Space2030" agenda. They called for the "fair and equal use of outer space" and are particularly interested in capacity building initiatives for emerging economies. Mexico are supportive of the role UN-SPIDER plays in the aftermath of natural disasters. (UN, 2018)

Group of 77

At the UNISPACE+50 High Level Segment, Iraq, on behalf of the G77, endorsed the "Space2030" agenda plan, calling for support in promoting equitable access to space by developing nations. This would involve strengthening COPUOS as a platform to cooperate on technical issues, bridging the "technological divide". Moreover, the bloc reiterated the importance of sharing remote sensing data for water assessment, agriculture and food security purposes. (Group of 77 and China, 2018)

European Union

The EU views space technology as a vital resource in tackling climate change and natural disasters. They also identify that investing in space can promote jobs and socio-economic development around the world. More fundamentally, though, the EU has stressed the need to address the sustainability of space travel. In particular, they regard active space debris removal as a priority. The EU sought to use the

UNISPACE+50 conference to highlight and share existing space resources. (EU, 2018)

United States

NASA, since its conception, has continually sought to make use of international partnerships in the exploration of outer space. The US believes in sharing discoveries and knowledge derived from space with the wider international community. However, after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/6, the US disassociated itself with any consensus on the 2030 agenda, including the Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework. (US, 2018)

China

China believes that the space environment should be protected in order to promote future socio-economic development. Any new framework of space governance should, in their view, work to share the benefits of outer space with the international community. China is also seeking to incorporate capacity building projects into its "Belt and Road Initiative".

Russia

The Russian Federation believes in developing scientific cooperation. They believe that COPUOS should serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas in space activity. (UN, 2018)

Japan

Japan has also stressed the need to create guidelines on preserving the sustainability of outer space activities. In cooperation with other agencies, Japan is a provider of remote sensing data, which it shares with developing nations. Japan is also actively involved in assisting with capacity building. Their KiboCUBE initiative offers emerging nations to deploy their own “cubesat” from the Kibo module on the ISS. (Japan, 2018)

GRULAC

At UNISPACE+50, the delegation noted that the region has benefited substantially from capacity building initiatives to date and encouraged the international community to continue this work. They also stressed the need to guarantee the sustainability of space activities. (GRULAC, 2018)

Canada

Canada is committed to sharing space science with the wider global community to ensure it provides benefit to all. They have noted that remote sensing technology has been vital in tracking levels of Arctic sea ice. Canada believe in a cooperative **approach to using space in aid of sustainable development. (UN, 2018)**

Iran

Iran has expressed concern that orbital slots which have been allocated on a “first come, first served” basis prevents emerging nations from developing their space capacity effectively. They have also expressed a desire for the “space divide” to be

closed in order to promote sustainable development. Iran is a supporter of the UN-SPIDER initiative and hosts one of the regional offices. They have also recognised the value of remote sensing data to developing economies and requested that it is made available more swiftly to the "sensed" state. (Islamic Republic of Iran, 2018) (UN, 2018)

United Kingdom

The UK, through its space agency, has invested in the International Partnership Programme to deliver sustainable economic or societal benefits around the globe. The UK sees its role as a "conduit" through which British observation data can be shared with international partners. (UK, 2018)

Nigeria

At UNISPACE+50, Nigeria highlighted the importance of sensing technology in tracking water sources and drought, particularly in the Lake Chad region. They also expressed appreciation for assistance with capacity building and requested that this continue. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018)

Points a Resolution Must Address

To what extent should the international community treat the sustainability of space activities as a priority? Is an international framework needed to control issues such as space debris? How should the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS proceed on this issue in preparation for the "Space2030" agenda?

How effective have existing UNOOSA initiative been in fulfilling the Sustainable Development agenda? Which aspects of UNOOSA's work should be strengthened? Are there any initiatives at the national level which could be adopted by the international community and incorporated into the "Space2030" action plan?

To what extent should the international community focus on "capacity building" rather than "capacity sharing"? Is it more effective for developed nations to simply commit to share remote sensing data with developing economies, rather than build their technical expertise? How far should the "Space2030" go to avoid a problematic "donor-recipient paradigm" associated with the Millennium Development Goals? Do we need to seek a renewed commitment to the "Principles Relating to the Remote Sensing of Earth"?

Is developing space technology in and of itself valuable to the sustainable development agenda? Is it worth investing in capacity building as a way to promote scientific development and education, for instance?

Of the 17 goals in the Sustainable Development Agenda, which should receive the greatest attention in the "Space2030" programme? How should the agenda balance the special needs of developing countries against larger, more global issues? How can existing capacity be better utilised to address this?

How should disaster management and the Sendai Framework be incorporated into the "Space2030" agenda? To what extent can the UN-SPIDER programme be strengthened to provide more effective data in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Further Reading

The UNOOSA website is the best place to start with this topic. Find out as much as you can about existing initiatives and what they do.

Pay particular attention to the page on UNISPACE+50. You will find reports from the conference as well as statements from each delegation given at the high-level segment. This is a useful starting point when researching each delegation's priorities.

Reports from recent COPUOS meetings and its subcommittees will also shed greater light on UNOOSA's current priorities. The 2018 and 2019 meetings of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, for instance, has quite a lot on making space sustainable, particularly in relation to space debris.

You can find a link to the current "Space2030" draft in the bibliography. It is definitely worth reading this in full to get a better idea of current thinking on UNOOSA's space and sustainability strategy over the next decade.

The UN website is obviously a great place to go to find out more about the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, I would take a look at the SDG "Action Database".

Finally, research what national space agencies are doing unilaterally in relation to the SDGs.

Some useful links:

- UNOOSA on SDGs: http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/space4sdgs/index.html

- UNISPACE+50: http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/unispaceplus50/index.html

- UN SDH Action Database: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/unsurvey/organization.html?org=UNOOSA

- UN GA press release: https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12083.doc.htm

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