

***Business and human rights standards
in the space industry – how to make
the space industry itself more aligned
with human rights concerns***

Zuzanna Kulińska-Kępa



Human rights approach a key to space sustainability

Over 90% of SDG targets overlap with human rights obligations in the normative framework and Agenda 2030 envisions a world 'of universal respect for human rights and human dignity' where using a human rights-based approach no one is left behind in development progress.

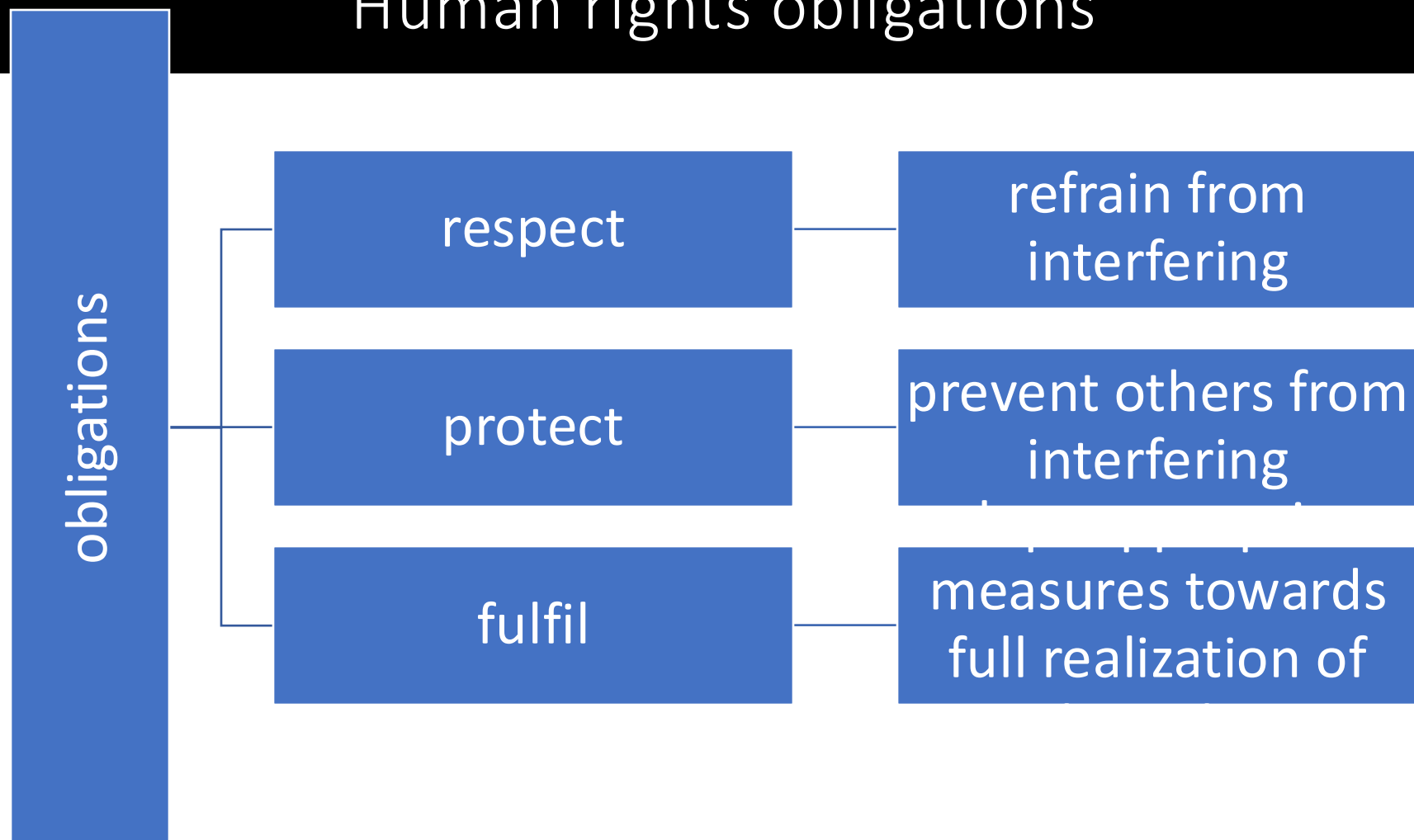
(<https://www.undp.org/rolhr/publications/human-rights-sustainable-development>)



Relation
between
outer space
and human
rights?

asset tracking maritime navigation
urban planning wildlife monitoring
climate research forest mapping
emergency services fitness tracking
navigation and route plan
precision agriculture mining water management
vehicle tracking
weather forecasting
autonomous vehicles

Human rights obligations



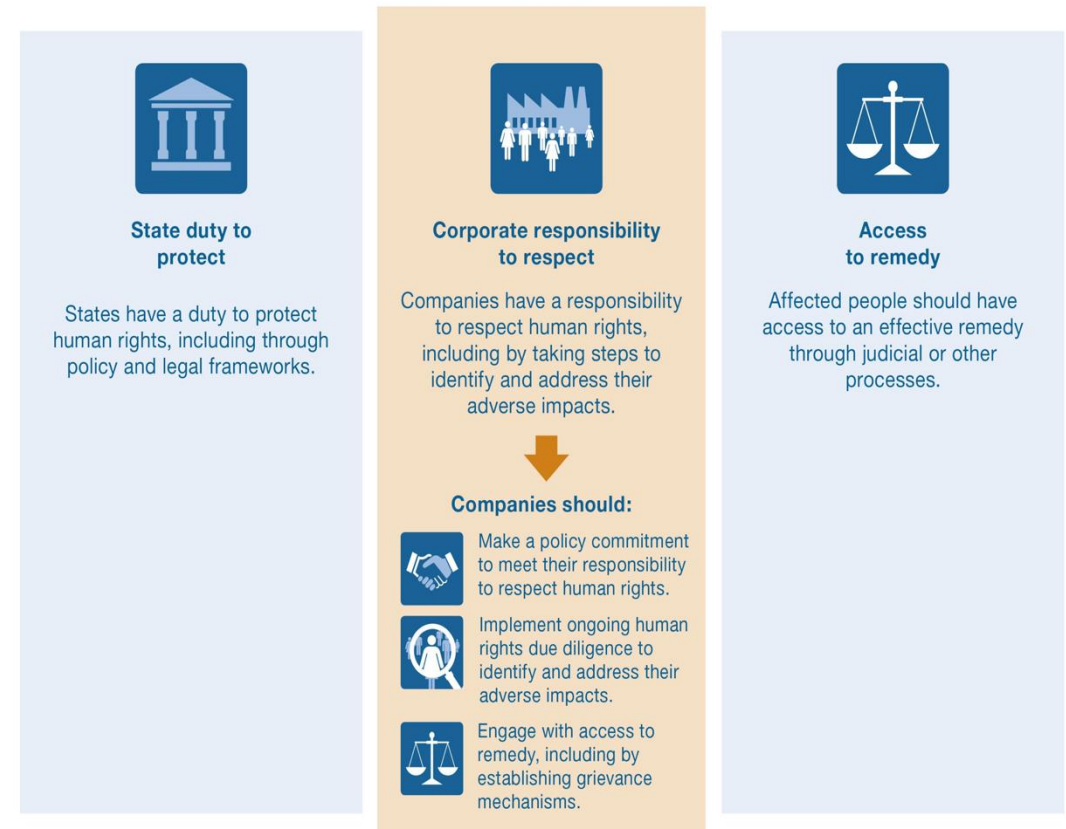
Distinction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)



Business and human rights (BHR)

The three pillars of the UN Guiding Principles



**Business and human rights (BHR)-
incorporate a human rights lens to
the space activities**

**Business enterprises should
respect human rights. This means
that they should avoid infringing
on the human rights of others and
should address adverse human
rights impacts with which they are
involved. (A.11)**



GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Implementing
the United Nations
“Protect, Respect and
Remedy” Framework**



UNITED NATIONS



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Human Rights Due Diligence

17. In order to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their adverse human rights impacts, business enterprises should carry out human rights due diligence. The process should include assessing actual and potential human rights impacts, integrating and acting upon the findings, tracking responses, and communicating how impacts are addressed. Human rights due diligence:

- (a) Should cover adverse human rights impacts that the business enterprise may cause or contribute to through its own activities, or which may be directly linked to its operations, products or services by its business relationships;**
- (b) Will vary in complexity with the size of the business enterprise, the risk of severe human rights impacts, and the nature and context of its operations;**
- (c) Should be ongoing, recognizing that the human rights risks may change over time as the business enterprise's operations and operating context evolve.**

Other existing instrument

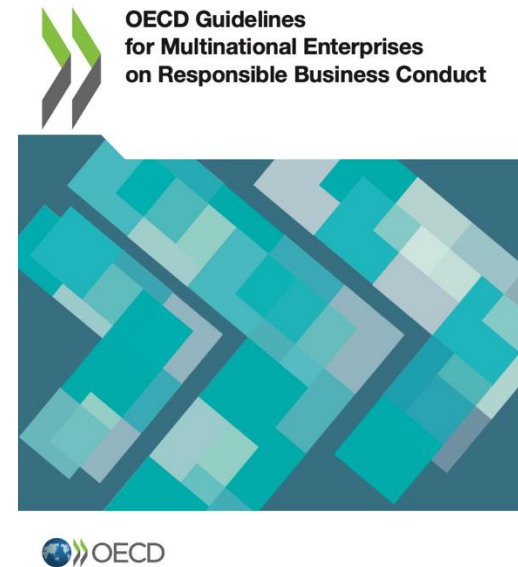
Corporate sustainability due diligence

Fostering sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour for a just transition towards a sustainable economy.

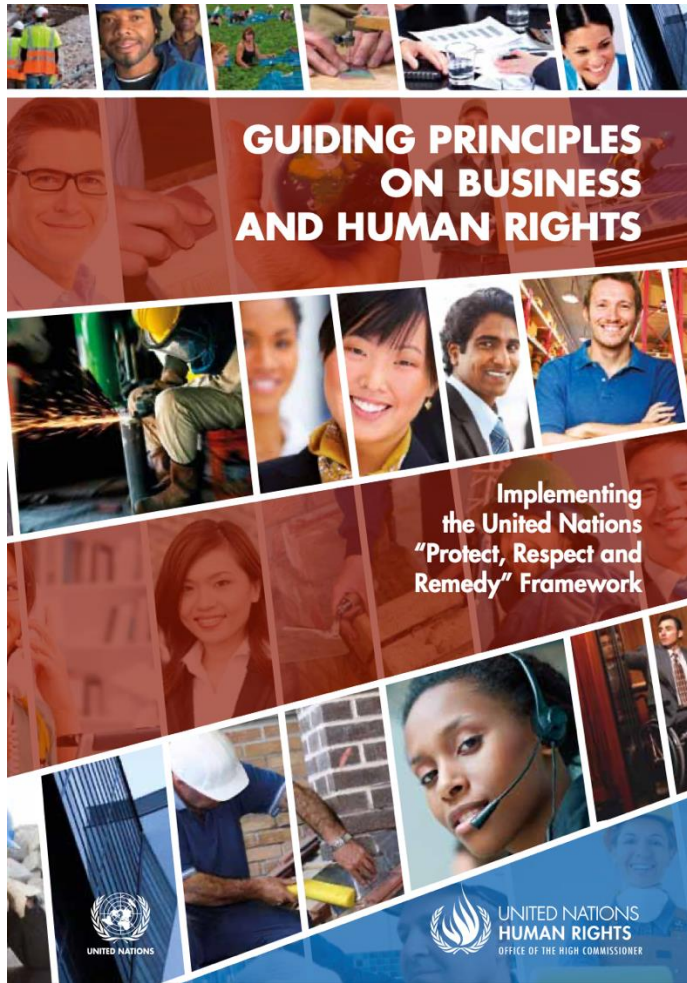


GettyImages/DigitalVision/We Are Stone/Ed Freeman Westend61

On 25 July 2024, the Directive on corporate sustainability due diligence ([Directive 2024/1760](#)) entered into force. The aim of this Directive is to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour in companies' operations and across their global value chains. The new rules will ensure that companies in scope identify and address adverse human rights and environmental impacts of their actions inside and outside Europe.



Download a copy



No matter how
far humans get,
along with them
human rights
should get there



Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of
Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies,
27 January 1967

Art. I

„The exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind.

Outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law, and there shall be free access to all areas of celestial bodies.

There shall be freedom of scientific investigation in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and States shall facilitate and encourage international cooperation in such investigation.”



Challenges in space exploration from human rights perspective

Earth oriented activities and human rights



Credit: ESA

HR application in space

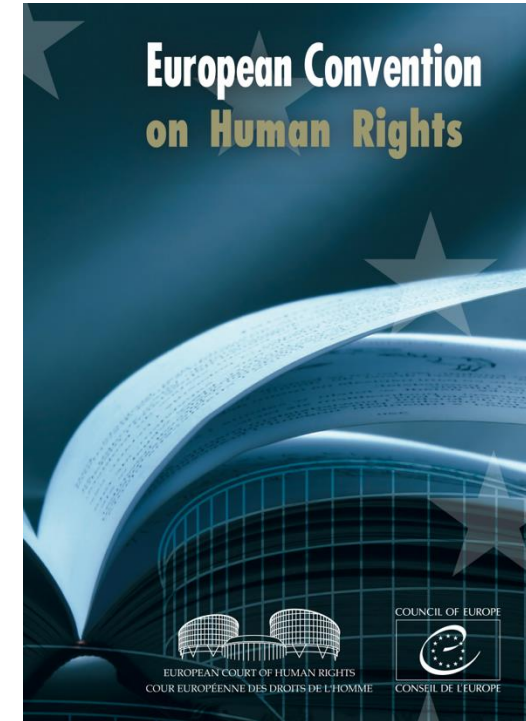


Credit: NASA

Application of international agreements on the protection of human rights to crews of spacecraft

Article VIII Outer Space Treaty

*A State Party to the Treaty on whose registry an object **launched into outer space is carried shall retain jurisdiction and control over such object, and over any personnel thereof, while in outer space or on a celestial body.** Ownership of objects launched into outer space, including objects landed or constructed on a celestial body, and of their component parts, is not affected by their presence in outer space or on a celestial body or by their return to the Earth. Such objects or component parts found beyond the limits of the State Party to the Treaty on whose registry they are carried shall be returned to that State Party, which shall, upon request, furnish identifying data prior to their return.*



ARTICLE 1

Obligation to respect Human Rights

The High Contracting Parties shall secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in Section I of this Convention.

Right to life...

Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies

Article V

States Parties to the Treaty shall regard astronauts as envoys of mankind in outer space and shall render to them all possible assistance in the event of accident, distress, or emergency landing on the territory of another State Party or on the high seas. When astronauts make such a landing, they shall be safely and promptly returned to the State of registry of their space vehicle.

Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched Into Outer Space

Article III

If information is received or it is discovered that the personnel of a spacecraft have alighted on the high seas or in any other place not under the jurisdiction of any State, those Contracting Parties which are in a position to do so shall, if necessary, extend assistance in search and rescue operations for such personnel to assure their speedy rescue. They shall inform the launching authority and the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the steps they are taking and of their progress

Thank you!

z.kulinska-kepa@uw.edu.pl

