

# Regulation of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) in Pakistan: Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

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## Abstract

The application of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) has played a significant role in the socio-economic development of Pakistan - ranging from protection of environment to disaster management. The Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has been using Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) application programme since 2000. However, at present, there is no law in Pakistan to regulate the application of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) in the public and private sector. The United Nations' Treaties and Principles on space law provide a fundamental legal basis for national space legislation by imposing a significant responsibility on every Contracting State to fulfill its international treaty obligations. One of Principles is particularly dealing with the application of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS). Pakistan is party to all five Treaties of the United Nations on Space Law but has not incorporated any Treaty into municipal law. According to Article VI of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 every State Party to the Treaty shall bear international responsibility for national activities in outer space whether such activities are carried on by governmental agencies or by non-governmental entities. Further, Article 40 of the Constitution imposes an obligation on Pakistan to respect international law and Treaty obligations. Article 26 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969 also stipulates that every Treaty in force is binding upon the Contracting States and must be performed by them in good faith. The existing legal system in Pakistan does not cope with the regulatory issues in the space activities. As a result, numerous legal concerns arise in the uses and application of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) programme. In order to respond emerging legal challenges faced by the public and private entities in complex legal environment, it imperative to enact Space Laws and Policies to better serve Pakistan's space sector. This research paper addresses legal aspects of Satellite Remote Sensing (SRS) in the context of data privacy, responsibility, liability, rights, intellectual property, and also identifies shortcomings in the existing Pakistan's legal system and proposes possible solutions.

**Keywords:** *Satellite Remote Sensing, SUPARCO, National Legislation, Legal Framework, Space Law.*