

Building Global Spectrum Trust: Cooperation, Openness, and the Path to WRC-27

FCC Commissioner Olivia Trusty
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Good morning, and thank you for that kind introduction, Ruth.

It is a privilege to open the 14th Americas Spectrum Management Conference here at the National Press Club, and to do so alongside so many innovators, policymakers, and partners shaping the future of connectivity across the hemisphere.

This conference has always been a touchstone for the global spectrum community, where technology meets policy, and where our collective choices chart the next decade of wireless innovation.

Over the next two days, this room will host an extraordinary breadth of discussion: from refilling America's spectrum pipeline under the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*... to unlocking the Upper C Band, scaling direct-to-device satellite ecosystems, and ensuring that the CBRS approach to shared spectrum continues to evolve to meet the growing demands of federal and commercial spectrum users.

By tomorrow, the focus will widen, to WRC-27, global coordination, and the future of U.S. spectrum leadership. And it's that bridge, between domestic innovation and international cooperation, that I want to focus on this morning.

Because the truth is: America's leadership in spectrum doesn't stop at our borders.

It depends on our ability to coordinate, harmonize, and lead in a global ecosystem that is evolving faster than ever before.

The New Spectrum Moment

Spectrum has always been the lifeblood of connectivity. But today, spectrum is also a strategic asset, one that underpins not only communications and commerce, but national security, supply chain resilience, and global competitiveness.

America's comprehensive approach to spectrum policy over the past several years has paved the way for broader and higher-quality 5G mobile coverage. It has driven converging innovations like fixed wireless, enabling traditional mobile providers to compete in the wireline market, and it has led to the proliferation of Wi-Fi services, empowering cable operators to enter the mobile space.

The *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* reflects a recognition that America must refill its spectrum pipeline, identifying new bands, modernizing coordination between the FCC and NTIA, and ensuring our policies are flexible and encourage the next wave of technologies: 5G, 6G, AI, IoT, and beyond.

This domestic focus is critical. But even as we look inward, mapping the next 800 MHz of opportunity, we must look outward too. Because spectrum policy doesn't exist in isolation. It's global by nature, and the decisions we make here in Washington ripple across continents.

America's Collaborative Spectrum Leadership

The United States has a long tradition of partnership when it comes to spectrum, across agencies, across borders, and across sectors.

The FCC has worked hand in hand with the NTIA, with industry leaders, and with our allies through CITEL and the ITU to advance the following shared principles:

- evidence-based spectrum management,
- flexible use policies, and
- technology-neutral frameworks that promote innovation.

But as we prepare for WRC-27, the stakes are rising. Every region is moving quickly to secure strategic advantage, from mid-band 6G allocations to satellite constellations and AI-managed networks.

The Americas must speak with a strong, coordinated voice in these forums, one that emphasizes openness, reciprocity, and innovation over protectionism or fragmentation.

The Global Stakes of Spectrum Decisions

WRC-27 will test our ability to balance national priorities with global harmonization. How we approach the upper 6 GHz band, the evolution of UHF spectrum below 1 GHz, or the integration of satellite and terrestrial systems will shape not only market access, but global competitiveness for the decade ahead.

This is why coordination is so important within the U.S., yes, but also with our partners in Europe, Asia, and across the Americas.

Because a fragmented spectrum world is a race to the bottom, where innovation slows, costs rise, and consumers lose.

Lessons from the Americas – Models That Work

The good news is: we already have models that show the world how to improve the utility of spectrum in a dynamic communications environment.

Through CBRS, the United States has explored new ways to balance federal, commercial, and unlicensed uses. The lessons from this experience continue to shape how we think about sharing frameworks going forward.

The Supplemental Coverage from Space (SCS) framework has put the U.S. ahead in direct-to-device integration, showing how satellites can extend mobile connectivity in ways that complement, not compete with, terrestrial networks.

And through the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*, we are reaffirming that the United States can balance innovation and security, and explore the next wave of commercial growth and federal mission needs, in a transparent, data-driven way.

These are approaches that demonstrate what's possible when evidence-based policymaking and cooperation guide spectrum decisions.

The Future of Satellite and Non-Terrestrial Networks

No conversation about international coordination is complete without recognizing the growing opportunities for satellite connectivity and the space economy as a whole.

The explosion of non-geostationary constellations, direct-to-device services, and integrated satellite–terrestrial networks is transforming the global communications landscape. These innovations promise global coverage, resiliency, and redundancy in ways that were unimaginable even five years ago.

But they also reveal something deeper: a widening gap between how nations treat market access for global providers.

In the United States, we have long welcomed participation from international satellite and broadband providers that meet our technical and safety requirements. We do this because we believe in open markets and open competition, principles that benefit consumers and accelerate innovation.

Unfortunately, that spirit is not always reciprocated.

In some regions, including Europe, U.S. providers face significant regulatory hurdles and competitive constraints that limit their ability to operate, even when they meet international and national technical standards.

Elsewhere, certain governments are using regulatory or international mechanisms to advance narrow industrial goals or restrict open information flows, actions that run counter to the spirit of free markets and fair competition.

To be clear: every nation has the right to define its regulatory path. But when rules and regulations are used to shield domestic players or constrain legitimate competition, they undermine not only fairness, but also the very innovation that global cooperation is meant to advance.

The United States believes in a better model, one of reciprocal access, transparent standards, and open competition.

If our goal is a harmonized, interoperable, and resilient global communications ecosystem, then market access must flow both ways.

We will continue to work with our partners, including the European Union, to ensure that openness and reciprocity are not optional features of the global spectrum framework, but its

foundation, and that our cooperation delivers real benefits for consumers on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Road to WRC-27 and Beyond

As we look toward WRC-27, the United States is entering this conversation with a clear vision:

- championing flexible use policies that enable innovation,
- supporting spectrum harmonization where it benefits consumers and global scale, and
- defending the principle that technological progress should not stop at regulatory borders.

We'll continue to work closely with our partners across the Americas through CITEL, to build regional alignment that amplifies our collective voice at WRC-27.

But beyond any single conference, our task is to define what spectrum leadership means in the next decade, not just in megahertz or auction dollars, but in the values of openness, collaboration, and trust.

The Opportunity Ahead

The next two days will bring deep and potentially difficult conversations, about priorities, trade-offs, and timelines. But the very fact that so many diverse voices are gathered here is itself a measure of progress.

Spectrum management has never been more complex, or more consequential. Yet in that complexity lies opportunity: to build policies that are smarter, more inclusive, and more global than ever before.

Let's make this conference a springboard, not just for the next auction or the next band, but for the next era of international cooperation in communications.

Because when we get spectrum policy right, when we lead with fairness, innovation, and openness, we don't just connect devices.

We connect people.

We connect nations.

And we connect the future. Thank you.