Preface

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This book is the culmination of our, the co-editors of this volume, project on the Global Governance of Low Earth Orbit Satellite Broadband, generously funded by the Internet Society Foundation as part of its transformative Decolonizing the Internet program. Since 2023, the project has embarked on a pivotal second phase, focusing on the crucial themes of "Trust and Data Governance".

In the first phase, we explored the implications of developed states' current geopolitical and economic dominance in setting standards for LEO satellite broadband in developing countries. We examined the critical policy issues that governmental and civil society actors must urgently address in response to the rapid development of satellite-based internet access, which resulted in the publication of an open-access report and dedicated policy recommendations for civil society and governmental actors. During this phase, we had the unique opportunity to work in parallel with a dedicated Internet Society expert group, which focused on researching the technical implications and potential of LEO satellite systems. The cross-pollination of our collaborative efforts proved invaluable, enriching the depth and breadth of our research. The project's second phase reviewed how international and multistakeholder forums can effectively tackle transnational data governance concerns, promote open and trustworthy internet policy objectives, and bridge the capacity divide between the Global North and the Global South in the context of newly enhanced satellite internet capabilities. Over the past four years, we have actively participated in various forums, including the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and RIPE Network Coordination Centre (RIPE NCC) meetings, as well as the annual European Society of International Law (ESIL) and RightsCon to discuss and share our research. Throughout this journey, we have had the privilege of collaborating with and learning from numerous experts, chiefly Dan York, who led the Internet Society team researching LEOs, and Larry Press, Jonathan Liebenau, Celestine Rabouam, Roxana Radu, Dmitry Epstein, Jane Coffin, Peter Micek, Jamal Shahin

and others. We also collaborated with several institutions, primarily the University of Lodz Faculty of Law and Administration, the Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet), and the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS). We are grateful for their support and collegiality.

In this second phase of the project, one of the highlights was the opportunity to host a group of interdisciplinary experts and young researchers from around the globe for a week-long face-to-face meeting in Lodz, Poland. During this meeting, we engaged in discussions on the way forward for sustainable internet infrastructure development. Each day began with a keynote address by an expert. Impressed by the quality of the papers presented at the workshop, we decided to compile selected papers into this edited volume. We invited other experts we had met along the way to contribute. The result is this volume, which we hope will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, and anyone interested in the governance of LEO satellite broadband and its implications for global internet governance.