

For All Moonkind, Item 4
Michelle L.D. Hanlon, President and Co-Founder
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Thank you, Chair. Distinguished delegates and representatives, it is as ever a great honor and privilege for me to submit this statement on behalf of For All Moonkind. I would first like to reiterate our appreciation for your leadership of this session and convey again our deep gratitude to the Secretariat and the entire staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs for their incredible work in organizing and managing these meetings.

For All Moonkind is an entirely volunteer international, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization. We are the only organization in the world committed to preserving human heritage in outer space. Our mission is to assure that historic sites – like, for example, the site where Luna 2 impacted the Moon in 1959, the site where Apollo 11 landed on the Moon in 1969, and the site of Chang'e 4, which marks the first ever robotic mission to the far side of the Moon – and similar sites and objects located beyond national jurisdiction and beyond our Earth are recognized for their outstanding value to humanity and consequently preserved and protected for posterity as part of our common human heritage.

Distinguished delegates, For All Moonkind applauds the many references made this session to the need to protect our dark and quiet skies. Most particularly, we are, forgive me, over the Moon, to hear -- repeatedly highlighted -- the importance of dark and quiet skies for our cultural heritage. This is significant because now more than ever, humanity needs to hold onto things that unite us. It is recognition and celebration of our cultural heritage that reminds us of our kinship and of the many achievements across cultures and centuries in our shared evolution that allow us, finally, to explore the stars that enticed, allured and inspired our common ancestors.

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Distinguished delegates, as this Boardroom embraces more State members and more Observers one interesting thread emerges. While we are all in this room because we understand how fully-intertwined our future is with space, every State brings its history. And, inevitably, that history includes a contribution to our spacefaring present. The distinguished delegate from Uzbekistan, for one example, last week highlighted Uzbekistan's contributions to astronomy.

Distinguished delegates, when we advocate for the protection of cultural heritage sites that are beyond Earth, we advocate not for recognition of a national achievement or one technological breakthrough, but out of recognition and respect for the diversity of cultures that have contributed to these human accomplishments. Just as we must preserve our ability to be inspired by the stars, we must protect our ability to be inspired by our past.

But is it not just about inspiration. Placing culture at the heart of space exploration and resource development policies and frameworks is the only way to ensure a human-centered, inclusive and equitable future. For All Moonkind urges the international community to embrace a concept for space that has already been accepted by virtually every nation on Earth: the preservation of cultural heritage. Today, we again urge this Committee to commence the process to formally consider the adoption of measures to recognize the existence of human cultural heritage in space.

Distinguished delegates, the COPUOS is in its most significant era since its establishment by the United Nations General Assembly in 1958. Of course, this Committee and its Subcommittees are already and rightfully busy and we appreciate that the agenda is already full. However, consideration of the process of identifying, recognizing and issuing protections for cultural heritage in outer space can be commenced in the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities because, after all, cultural heritage is

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a cornerstone of sustainable development. It can also be considered by the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities because, after all, human cultural heritage beyond our Earth may well be our most precious space resource. We also respectfully suggest that this Committee may adopt a resolution recognizing that human cultural heritage exists beyond our Earth and that a multilateral process should be established to properly identify, recognize, memorialize, protect and preserve such heritage.

Distinguished colleagues, culture is what shapes our identity as humans and establishes a basis for our unity. Moreover, cultural heritage protection is a mainstay of intergenerational equity. The protection and preservation of human heritage recognizes those who came before us, protects the gains of our civilization and allows future generations to learn from both their results and their processes. In protecting cultural heritage, we are drawn together in kinship rather than drawn apart by barriers.

Distinguished delegates, the COPUOS faces many challenges. The next stage of human development relies on our ability to take substantive and unified progress. Protecting our history in space is the first easy step in that direction.

The For All Moonkind delegation will be here all week and we invite you to meet us and pick up a copy of this booklet, Space Law, A Quick Reference, provided by our partners at the University of Mississippi. I thank you for your kind attention.

For more information about For All Moonkind please visit: <https://www.forallmoonkind.org>