

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Legal Subcommittee
Sixty-first session
Vienna, 28 March – 8 April 2022

MOON VILLAGE ASSOCIATION STATEMENT

Agenda item 4, General Exchange of view

Madame Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Delegates

It is an honour for the Moon Village Association, as an Observer member with COPUOS to address, virtually, this session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

Madame Chair, as the MVA Delegation is taking the floor for the first time, we would like to congratulate you as Chair of the Legal Sub-Committee.

MVA is confident that, under your wise leadership, this session will reach fruitful results, even if in hybrid form. My delegation would also like to extend its gratitude to the outgoing Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms Simonetta Di Pippo, and her staff for their hard work in organizing this meeting, and wish the best to the acting Director, Mr Niklas Hedman.

MVA, in 2021, has carried out many activities and I shall summarize just a few of them, more can be seen on the website: www.moonvillageassociation.org. A technical presentation by MVA will be held on April 6th to describe in more detail some of these activities.

I am pleased to report that MVA has been admitted in 2021 to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, as it is expected for all observers.

In 2022, More than 10 missions, from private and government stakeholders, are going to be launched to orbit or land on the Moon. The current lack of coordination mechanisms for lunar activities presents challenges to future missions and could lead to unintentional harmful interference, especially in the light of the increased global interest in specific areas like the lunar south pole. The need to preserve the peaceful uses of space, together with the desire to begin a new era of sustainable space exploration, urges the consideration of approaches that promote future lunar sustainability and recommended practices for upcoming lunar activities.

In view of this, the MVA in 2021, decided to promote the development of a neutral forum for multi-stakeholder discussions on lunar exploration and utilization: The *Global Expert Group on Sustainable Lunar Activities* (or GEGSLA).

The detailed content of GEGSLA status and future plan, are included in the Conference Room Paper A/AC.105/C.2/2022/CRP.15. This paper suggests the inclusion, by the 66th COPUOS meeting in 2023, of a new single-year agenda item related to Lunar Governance issues for Sustainable Lunar Activities, such as information sharing, safety zones, debris mitigations and other urgent coordination mechanisms for future lunar activities.

MVA will launch in June a global consultative survey related to the critical issues identified by GEGSLA. All Members States and Permanent Observers to COPUOS will be invited to participate.

MVA welcomes the creation of the Working Group on Space Resources, at the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee in 2021. MVA will actively engage with this Working Group to inform it about relevant work of the GEGSLA and achieve synergy.

Madame Chair,

The Moon Village Association is pleased to take note of the proclamation by the UN General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, in December 2021, of the International Moon Day celebration (A/76/415, item 13Un) to be observed annually, on 20 July. The relevant text is hereafter: “Declares 20 July International Moon Day, to observe each year at the international level the anniversary of the first landing by humans on the Moon on 20 July 1969 as part of the Apollo 11 lunar mission, taking into consideration the achievements of all States in the exploration of the Moon, and to raise public awareness about sustainable Moon exploration and utilization”.

The International Moon Day informs the public of the work undertaken in this area by numerous organizations involved in Moon activities, by COPUOS and its member States facilitated by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Because MVA has been an early advocate of the concept of the International Moon Day celebration, MVA is taking the initiative to support and contribute to its implementation. The MVA is also pleased to inform the delegations that a Memorandum of Understanding between the MVA and the United Nations will be signed soon to establish this collaboration.

MVA launched the International Moon Day celebration with a Press Conference held, in cooperation with the Cyprus Space Exploration Organization (CSEO) and participation of UNOOSA, on December 14 2021.

The implementation of the International Moon Day will be managed by an ad-hoc Group within MVA. The International Moon Day Group is being set up with the appointment of the Chair: Dr Nasr Al-Sahhaf (Saudi Arabia), the team is being established

Details of the International Moon Day implementation status are contained in the Conference Room Paper A/AC.105/C.2/2022/CRP.16.

All members and observers of this Subcommittee are invited to join this important event that will take place for the first time on 20 July 2022. Calls for participation, Logo competition and sponsorship are included on the IMD webpage: www.internationalmoonday.org

Thank you for your attention,

Dr. Giuseppe Reibaldi/ President Moon Village Association