

FOR ALL MOONKIND, AGENDA ITEM 4

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For All Moonkind
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Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
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Thank you, Chair. Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates and representatives, it is with great pleasure that I submit this statement on behalf of For All Moonkind to the 59th Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I would first like to convey our deep appreciation for the work and contributions of Director Simonetta DiPippo and express our gratitude for all that she has accomplished in her role as Director of the Office of Outer Space Affairs. We would also like to thank the Secretariat and the entire staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs for their incredible work as we continue to navigate the difficulties of hybrid meetings. Our hat is tipped to all of you.

Chair, 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 lunar landing sites – like, for example, the site where Luna 2 impacted in 1959, the site where Apollo 11 landed 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 object in outer space are recognized for their outstanding value to humanity and consequently preserved and protected for posterity as part of our common human heritage.

Our volunteers include more than 100 space law and heritage law experts from every inhabited continent. Just last month, we hosted the first-ever high-level forum focused on advancing a practical framework pursuant to which sites in space that are of universal value to humanity may be identified, recognized and preserved. As you can imagine at this early

stage, more questions and issues are raised than answered or addressed. Nevertheless, with the exciting news of so many missions planning on returning to the Moon both in person and robotically over the next few years, our resolve is cemented, and we are committed to continuing a review of the complexities and difficulties of protecting history in areas which, per Article 2 of the Outer Space Treaty may not be claimed territory of or by any State.

Distinguished delegates, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space enters its most significant era since its establishment by the United Nations General Assembly in 1958. The Outer Space Treaty established a sustainable legal framework for space activities which served humanity well as it tentatively explored the space surrounding our Earth. Its most foundational precept recognizes that space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies shall be free for exploration and use by all. Space is for everyone. This guiding principle has proven both durable and sustainable. Yet it is clear that as humanity continues to advance beyond our Earth, crowding our orbits, and seeking to explore, exploit and use space resources new principles must be adopted to assure success and sustainability, and, importantly, to avoid conflict and harmful interreference. The challenge for COPUOS today is not simply to adopt a legal model, but to cultivate an adaptive legal model with sustainable rules, ground in science and engineering, to guide at least the next sixty years of space activity to include the growth of human communities in space. The next stage of human development relies on our ability to get this right and the law must follow the science.

The Outer Space Treaty does not consider cultural heritage or the protection of historic sites in space. This is not surprising given that the Treaty was negotiated when only a handful of objects had been launched beyond Earth's atmosphere. But placing culture at the heart of development policies is the only way to ensure a human-centered, inclusive and equitable development. Culture is who we are, where we have been, and where we are going. It is what shapes our identity as humans. In short, development cannot be sustainable without culture.

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. It reminds us that we do not stand on a starting line as we look to space, we stand on the shoulders of those who came before. In protecting cultural heritage, we are drawn together in kinship rather than drawn apart by barriers and we assure our sustainability.

Heritage is more than just monuments. Heritage, cultural and natural, tangible and intangible, is an evolving resource that supports identity, memory and sense of place and has a crucial role in achieving sustainable development. Heritage is a fragile, non-renewable resource that must be conserved for current and future generations. It is incontrovertible that at this point in time, it is the historic sites, our heritage, in space that are currently most vulnerable to damage and in the most need of protection.

Chair, Distinguished delegates, on behalf of For All Moonkind, I thank you for your kind attention.

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If you would like to learn more about For All Moonkind, or if you are interested in participating in our future forums, please visit www.forallmoonkind.org and/or email info@forallmoonkind.org.