



Statement to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
67th Session, 19-28 June 2024

Dear Chair, we reiterate our appreciation for your leadership and gratitude to the Secretariat and entire staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs. Distinguished delegates, For All Moonkind is the only organization in the world committed to safeguarding human heritage in outer space. Two years ago, our colleague, and a former Chair of this Committee, David Kendall, urged this Committee to consider the adoption of measures to recognize the existence of cultural heritage beyond Earth. We renew that call and align it to Secretary General António Guterres's support for the UN's May 2023 *Policy Brief 7: For all Humanity – The Future of Outer Space Governance*, which in its recommendations urges UN entities to increase their inter-agency collaboration. Recognizing cultural heritage in space is a perfect starting point.

The UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, based in Paris, has for more than seventy years codified cultural heritage principles in six cultural heritage treaties to which many of COPUOS's Member States are States Parties. We urge you, distinguished COPUOS Delegates to speak with your cultural counterparts to consider mechanisms for inter-agency collaboration so that COPUOS can undertake its part to celebrate and memorialize cultural heritage beyond Earth. Such collaboration would not be the precedent, instead it would follow the model established more than forty years ago with UN cultural/maritime inter-auspices collaboration that led to the codification of laws to celebrate

and memorialize cultural heritage beyond national jurisdictions underwater. As technology led that collaboration, it now invites similar inter-auspices collaboration between the UN's cultural and space auspices to identify and safeguard cultural heritage beyond national jurisdiction in space and on other celestial bodies. On 28 October, the UNs Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Affairs will meet in New York. Cultural heritage should also be on that agenda.

We urge this Committee to assume the responsibility set by Article 1 of UN Charter establishing that one of the UN's purposes is to "achieve[] international co-operation in solving international [challenges] of a cultural character." The Charter provides the framework and the onus to work through UN auspices, including of this Committee, as "a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of [such]common end[s]." We urge the Committee to undertake this positive obligation by adopting a resolution acknowledging that human cultural heritage exists beyond Earth, in the breadth of its diversity and as we continue to develop it. This Committee may even be able to reach consensus on certain sites, like those where Luna 2, Apollo 11, Chang'e 4 and Chandrayaan 3 now lay.

Such a resolution would celebrate the contribution of communities and cultures throughout millennia to our space faring capacity. A human foot on the lunar surface would not have been possible but for, in part, the invention of glass in Mesopotamian, metallurgical techniques in West Africa, mathematical discoveries in the Middle East, textile developments from the Andes, nor the mastery of astronomical navigation from seafaring communities in the Asian Pacific. This magnificent list goes on.

Space exploration and resource development policies should develop in parallel with the elaboration of cultural heritage principles. The forum for this can be the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities because cultural heritage is a

cornerstone of sustainable development, as many of your Ministers of Culture declared in Mexico City in September 22, 2023, “culture [i]s a global public good with an intrinsic value to enable and drive sustainable development.” The forum can also be the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities because cultural heritage beyond Earth is arguably one of our most precious space resources. Such heritage sites on Earth are our collective pride, the Great Wall of China, the Egyptian Pyramids of Giza, the Aztec City of Teochitacan, the Parthenon of Athens. Likewise, cultural heritage sites will be our collective pride also beyond Earth.

Cultural heritage establishes a foundation for inclusivity and collaboration. All States and their citizens have a vested interest in this patrimony of humanity. The Artemis Accords has undertaken and commits its 43 signatories to this in its Section 9. We hope that the ILRS will also.

We urge you to lead the world in honoring the contributions of all cultures to humanity’s triumphs in space exploration. I thank you for your kind attention.

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