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The Outer Space Institute
The University of British Columbia
6224 Agricultural Rd
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Outer Space Institute, Item 5

June, 2024

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for giving me the floor and for providing this opportunity to present the application of the Outer Space Institute for permanent observer status at COPUOS.

Mr. Chairman, we wish to express our appreciation for your leadership, as well as our gratitude to the Director of UNOOSA, Ms. Aarti Holla-Maini, and the UNOOSA staff, for aiding us in the process of applying for the status of permanent observer at COPUOS. My name is Michael Byers and I am a co-Director of the Outer Space Institute alongside Aaron Boley. I am joined here today by Dr. Roohi Dalal, a Fellow of the OSI.

Chair, distinguished delegates, the Outer Space Institute was founded in 2019, as a global network of space experts united by their commitment to highly innovative, transdisciplinary research that addresses grand challenges facing the continued use and exploration of outer space. The Institute currently is comprised of 29 Fellows and 14 Junior Fellows from four continents. The Institute is incorporated in British Columbia, Canada as the non-profit "Outer Space Institute Society".

Through its membership comprised of natural scientists, engineers, social scientists, international lawyers, industry leaders, and policy makers, the OSI takes a transdisciplinary approach to identifying challenges, opportunities, and solutions related to outer space exploration and use, safety, and long-term sustainability. The OSI has been studying a number of issues that are currently being considered by COPUOS, including reducing risks from uncontrolled reentries of rocket bodies and other space objects, preserving dark and quiet skies, mitigating risks from space debris, investigating the environmental impacts of space activities, and enabling sustainable lunar activities with coordination between all actors. Our studies further use a variety of tools stemming from the transdisciplinary nature of the network, including measurements, simulations, data analysis, policy and legal analyses, and process tracing, among others. OSI Fellows and Junior Fellows publish their work in leading academic journals, respond to governmental calls for comment, and serve as subject matter experts.

The goals of the Outer Space Institute are closely aligned with the goals of COPUOS and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. First, we aim to support and advance scientific and technical knowledge related to human use of the space environment and the solar system by encouraging and facilitating related research, information exchange and policy discussion. Additionally, we also provide public education on matters related to the human use of outer space, through lectures and workshops and through creation and dissemination of related print and electronic media.

We recognize the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to be the only current forum discussing and providing guidance on multilateral issues dealing with challenges in relation to the peaceful uses of outer space as the global utilization and expansion of this domain accelerates. As a Permanent Observer Organization, we hope to be able to assist the Committee with insights and suggestions based on our transdisciplinary research and regular international workshops.

Thank you again for considering this application and for your time and attention.