



For All Moonkind, Item 6
Statement to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
67th Session, 19-28 June 2024

Thank you, Chair. It is a great honor and privilege for me to submit this statement on behalf of For All Moonkind. I take this opportunity first to express our deep appreciation of your leadership and our gratitude for the incredible work of the Secretariat and the entire staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs.

Distinguished delegates, For All Moonkind is the only organization in the world focused on achieving the recognition and safeguarding of human heritage beyond Earth. Protecting cultural heritage is a hallmark of the progressive development of civil society and a recognition of human kinship that transcends the geopolitical. Today, we urge this Committee to embrace this objective as a vital means to maintain space for peaceful purposes as this Committee has been directed to do by UN General Assembly Resolution 77/121, adopted in December 2022.

In 2017, the UN Security Council in its Resolution 2347 highlighted “the central role played by [the] UN[to] promot[e] culture as an instrument to bring people closer together and foster dialogue.” It reflects the UN Charter’s Article 1 which establishes one of the purposes of the UN as the “achieve[ment of] international co-operation in solving international [challenges] of a cultural character.” The Charter provides the framework and the onus for our global community to work through UN auspices, including this Committee, as “a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of ... common end[s],” including the safeguarding of our common heritage beyond Earth.

Since the establishment of the UN in 1945, protecting cultural heritage is increasingly relied upon on Earth to “maintain[] international peace and security and [to] promote[] international co-operation and understanding.” The promotion of cultural heritage is a formidable facilitator of peace and since 2015 also an interoperable tool for the promotion of the UN *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Cultural heritage is a driver of social cohesion and sustainable development. In September 2022, the Ministers of Culture met in Mexico City at the UN World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development and “stress[ed] the importance of integrating cultural heritage and creativity into international discussions[,] recognizing culture as a global public good with an intrinsic value to enable and drive sustainable development,” including the critical 16th SDG for peace.

Cultural heritage beyond Earth is particularly special and recognition of it will be a powerful tool in the maintenance of peace in space. In 1958, at the 992nd Meeting of the 1st Committee of the UN General Assembly, the delegate from El Salvadore, Mr. Vega Gomez, reflected upon the expansion of humanity into space. Mr. Gomez recognized that the technological triumphs of reaching space were “not the triumph of a handful of quiet” individuals, but “the result of culture accumulated through centuries.” Human exploration of space is the triumph of human intellect – “the human that is part of us all.” No single accomplishment beyond Earth can be claimed by a single nation. They all derive from millennia of collective human ingenuity. They celebrate and memorialize an intergenerational yearning to know the cosmos. It is our collective responsibility to safeguard cultural heritage in space in appreciation of our ancestors, in respect for our future generations and in honor to ourselves.

We call on the space community to recognize that outer space heritage is our common heritage. It belongs to each of us regardless of national borders. We call on this Committee to affirm the longstanding and growing international commitment to protect and promote cultural heritage in all its diversity, including as it exists and continues to develop beyond Earth. Recognizing contributions of all cultures to cultural heritage beyond Earth honors humanity's triumphs in space exploration and creates conditions for mutual understanding, dialogue and peace - both on Earth and beyond it.

As indicated by the 2022 MONDIACULT Declaration, “a systemic anchoring of culture in public policies, through the adaptation of development strategies and frameworks ... [i]s an enabler and driver of resilience, ... inclusion[,] growth and social development.” Seeking to develop principles to recognize and safeguard cultural heritage beyond Earth allows us to consider a framework for the management and governance of space resources and space activity from a position of inclusivity and cooperation rather than from exclusion and exploitation. And because every human has an interest in our common heritage, it necessarily assures that all States have a vested interest in the discussion.

Distinguished delegates, the opportunity to recognize and protect cultural heritage beyond our Earth offers a unique opportunity to celebrate our collective achievements as humans and to utilize that spirit and those efforts to ensure peace in outer space. We urge this Committee to take advantage of this opportunity.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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