

STATEMENT BY MICHELLE L.D. HANLON
For All Moonkind
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Of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
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Thank you, Chair. Distinguished delegates and representatives, it is as ever a great honor and privilege for me to submit this statement on behalf of For All Moonkind. I would first like to convey from all of us at For All Moonkind, our congratulations to the new UNOOSA Director Aarti Holla-Maini, and our deep appreciation for the entire OOSA team for their always incredible work in organizing and managing these meetings. We are grateful for all the kind assistance and guidance we have been provided.

Distinguished delegates, For All Moonkind is an entirely volunteer international, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization. Our volunteers include more than 100 space law, heritage law and policy experts from every inhabited continent. 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, the site of Chang’e 4, which marks the first ever robotic mission to the far side of the Moon and the site of Chandrayaan 3, the first soft landing on the lunar south pole – and similar sites and objects 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.

Distinguished delegates, when we advocate for the protection of cultural heritage sites that are beyond Earth, we advocate not for recognition of a national achievement or one technological breakthrough, but out of recognition and respect for the diversity of cultures

that have contributed to these human accomplishments. Our achievements are built on our history.

Distinguished delegates, Paragraph 6 of the Chapeau to the Zero Draft Pact for the Future pledges a new beginning in international cooperation with a new approach. Delegates promise to “cooperate to manage risks and harness opportunities for the benefit of all, guided by the principles of trust, equity, solidarity, and universality” and to “collectively strive for a world that is safer, more peaceful, more just, more equal, more inclusive, more sustainable, and more prosperous.” Placing culture at the heart of space exploration and resource development is one way, perhaps the best way, to assure a world that is safer, more peaceful, centered, inclusive and more equal. For All Moonkind urges the international community to embrace a concept for space that has already been accepted by virtually every nation on Earth: the preservation of cultural heritage.

Distinguished delegates, Paragraph 147 of the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future is also significant. It recognizes the need to urgently develop frameworks for international cooperation in, among others, the exploration, exploitation and utilization of the Moon and other celestial bodies through this COPUOS and in consultation with relevant bodies of the United Nations system.

Activity on and around our precious Moon is accelerating exponentially. We are running out of time. The next stage of human development relies on this Committee’s ability to make substantive and unified progress. New principles must be adopted to assure success and sustainability, and, importantly, to avoid conflict and harmful interference. This is not a challenge for the COPUOS. This is the obligation of the COPUOS. We applaud this Committee for all of its incredible work including the work of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. We support the Conference Room Paper

submitted by Canada last year, [document A/AC.105/C.1/2023/CRP.17] which asks this Committee to consider extending the consideration of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities to activities in deep space including discussion on preserving space heritage.

We also support the Conference Room Paper titled [document A/AC.105/C.1/2024/CRP.15] Promoting the long-term sustainability of lunar activities through good practices encouraging due regard to lunar science and ethics. We urge you to review and take into consideration the Conference Room Paper [document A/AC.105/C.1/2024/CRP.14] titled Protection of Astronomy and Science on the Moon which states that a process for the allocation, coordination around, and protection of lunar sites is needed to assure successful multiple long-term and sustainable scientific uses of the Moon and its orbital environment. And finally, we support and celebrate the non-paper submitted by Romania proposing a Consultative Mechanism for Lunar Activities. As noted in the document, we must create the opportunity to share information regarding the nature and location of lunar sites of significant scientific or cultural significance to assist in the identification and protection of such sites and to form an inclusive foundation for all lunar activities that embraces the universality of our human endeavors. Today, we also again urge this Committee to commence the process to formally consider the adoption of measures to recognize the existence of human cultural heritage in space.

I thank you for your kind attention.

[FOR THE WRITTEN SUBMISSION ONLY]

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.