

FOR ALL MOONKIND – AGENDA ITEM 4  
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Thank you, Chair. Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates and representatives, it is my honor to share with you this statement on behalf of For All Moonkind. It is indeed a privilege to be here albeit virtually, and we thank all of you for allowing For All Moonkind the opportunity to be an Observer to this august and important Committee.

We would like to begin by congratulating the Secretariat and the entire staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs for the perseverance, flexibility, patience and endurance they continue to demonstrate through these unique times. We thank you for the grace and attentive consideration everyone involved with UN OOSA displays regardless of the circumstances.

For All Moonkind is an international, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization. We are the only organization in the world focused on ensuring that historic sites in outer space are recognized for their outstanding value to humanity. Put another way, we seek to promote the recognition of, and appropriate memorialization or protections for, human cultural artifacts and sites in outer space.

We are space lawyers, space archaeologists, policymakers, industry stakeholders, scientists, engineers and communicators from around the world. We cut across geographic, cultural and generational bounds. And our Leadership includes many names you will recognize from many varied disciplines, like the former Chair of the COPOUS, Dr. David Kendall, renowned space lawyer and academic Dr. Ram Jakhu, noted lunar geologist, Dr. Philip Metzger, and Dr. Joseph Pelton, prolific and award-winning author of more than 35 books in the field of

space systems, and the Director Emeritus of the Space and Advanced Communications Research Institute at the George Washington University. Together, we are working to develop reasonable and practical protocols that will balance development and preservation and include systems to select, manage and study historic sites in space. I should mention, too, that we are entirely volunteer. For All Moonkind pays no salaries or consulting fees. Our passion speaks for itself and demonstrates how strongly we understand the fundamental truth that we must protect our history in order to protect our future.

Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates, we well recognize the COPUOS and its Subcommittees as unique platforms for international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, for the global governance of outer space activities and the development of international space law and for the promotion of the increased involvement of all countries in space activities, including through capacity-building initiatives. We applaud the important work that has been concluded within this body, and the work that continues, especially in respect of the new working group on space resources.

In situ resource utilization is indispensable to future space exploration. We have some time before large scale resource utilization operations begin on the Moon or any other celestial body, and the COPUOS is wise to take advantage of that time and start considering the development of management strategies to avoid conflict and strife. But we cannot forget that cultural artifacts on the Moon are already vulnerable to any activity on the Moon.

It is known as the plume effect. During the powered landing of spacecraft on the Moon, rocket exhaust plumes interact with the surface. Dust and rocks are blown away at high velocities, potentially spreading abrasive particles across the entire surface of the Moon, creating hazards to the spacecraft itself, and nearby hardware, including cultural artifacts.

We urge the COPUOS to approach space resource utilization through the lens of conservation and sustainability, rather than exploitation. As the COPUOS considers the use of space resources which must include taking into account the plume effect, we urge you to formally recognize and consider how to protect humanity's greatest treasures in space, starting with humanity's firsts on the Moon – including, for example, Luna 2, first hard landing, Luna 9, first soft landing, Apollo 11, first crewed landing and Chang'e 4, humanity's first soft landing on the lunar far side. These are human triumphs accomplished as a result of contributions from centuries of human innovation and development in science, math, engineering and dreaming.

As we have learned on Earth, development need not be halted by preservation efforts. Today we must acknowledge that humans have been given a unique gift in the 50-plus-year gap between crewed visits to the Moon. The sites of our own momentous evolutionary accomplishments sit pristine, waiting for our return. We will never know for certain where our ancestors took their first bipedal footsteps, where we first harnessed fire, or where we made our first tools. But we know where our first human-made object impacted the Moon, and where exactly our first off world footsteps were taken. These sites memorialize our birth as a spacefaring community. They form the cradle of our spacefaring species. Future generations demand their protection.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, I thank you for your kind attention.