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A U.N. FLAG ON THE MOON: FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE SPACE GOVERNANCE FOR A
RESILIENT EARTH

Abstract

As humanity prepares to return to the Moon, we face a defining moment to implement sustainable space governance and reshape our shared values. The 1969 Moon landing was a “giant leap for mankind,” and today, with the Artemis Accords and the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS), our journey represents a step forward for all the Peoples of Planet Earth. These missions transcend national borders, embodying unity, peace, and cooperation in a divided world. Responsible outer space development is closely linked to Earth’s resilience. Space Renaissance International (SRI) and the Space 18th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Coalition propose a powerful gesture: planting a United Nations flag on the Moon alongside national flags. This gesture represents humanity’s commitment to harmonious interchange and collaboration as we explore the unknown. From outer space, astronauts experience the power and awe of the Overview Effect— which Frank White has described as a “profound realization of Earth’s interconnectedness without borders or divisions”. Displaying the U.N. flag would set a precedent for responsible space utilization, reinforcing global security and peace. In an era of geopolitical tensions, the unique and symbolic U.N. Lunar Flag would serve as a bridge between cultures, marking our transition into a new spacefaring age where cooperation prevails over conflict. Outer space development must benefit all of humanity, not just a few nations. While international cooperation has led to successes like Apollo-Soyuz, Mir, and the ISS, space launch, and spacefaring capacities remain dominated by a

few nations. Planting the U.N. flag would affirm space as a shared frontier, ensuring equitable access to its opportunities. This proposal supports the addition of an 18th SDG to the U.N. 2030 Agenda, advocating sustainable civilian space development to address global challenges like poverty, inequality, and environmental sustainability. Beyond science, returning to the Moon is a symbolic step toward restoring faith in a shared future. A U.N. flag would inspire generations to envision a world where collaboration uplifts all. The Moon is the place where humanity's highest ideals will shine. A flag "by humanity, for humanity" would demonstrate our unity in diversity and commitment to a better world. SRI has formally proposed this historic gesture to leaders of the Artemis Accords and the ILRS, also advocating for NGOs participation in this transformative lunar endeavor.