

The UN flag on the moon, a direction for the way forward

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Abstract

Historically flags provide the universal and symbolic representations of human culture. National flags will convey many attributes for diverse civil society populations, including allegiance and the sense of cohesiveness and national pride. Flags speak to national language and identity and are a respected and acknowledged part of the governmental and political discourse in all parts of the world. In many senses of the word, they are considered sacred representations.

The proposal for a UN flag to be displayed alongside the national flag of nations landing on the moon is not a lighthearted suggestion. In reality if accepted, this proposition would represent a continuing acknowledgement of the durable value of the Outer Space Treaty during a time of international fragmentation and the dangers of an ever advancing new cold war. The emerging technologies of our modern age will provide many techniques for security and stability in space, yet although a considered process of interchange and agreement is viable and readily available, the essential discussion remains as a latent potential. Escalation around the nuclear arms issue in the 60's brought forward the principle of MAD, mutually assured destruction, even so international arms control within treaty based frameworks, remains the valid objective, and such a perspective has now segued towards the outer space continuum.

Providing a fully internationalized opening for the dialog "Peace in Space" is easily done. The placement of a lunar UN flag will signal readiness and availability for such a historic step. The Lunar UN Flag was initially ventured by NASA, but national sentiments took precedent over internationalized perspectives. "In January 1969 President Richard Nixon set an international tone for the Appollo program in his inaugural address: "As we explore the reaches of space, let us go to the new worlds together – not as new worlds to be conquered, but as a new adventure to be shared." This inspired an idea within NASA to have astronauts plant a United Nations Flag on the first landing. Officials at NASA were surveyed, and the overwhelming consensus was to plant an American flag." However, we are not suggesting that either/or is the case. Both national flags and the UN flag carry profound significance, and it is the opinion of Space Renaissance that both can be planted on the lunar terrains at the same time by any landing nation.

The policy perspectives of space development have become very different from those that were advanced in the 60's. Although national competitiveness will play a part, it is widely acknowledged that international alignment and the adherence to treaty based guidelines will have a significant role. The opening phase of such an important civilizational dialog can be readily initiated by the placement of the UN flag within the many lunar landings which lie ahead.

Paper

The concept of peaceful collaboration for human development is an essential and universal ideal. Considered as the underlying principle and the founding legal tenant of the UN body, the ethical basis of such a formative dimension is well established and well accepted. Yet there is no reason to suppose that the concepts which drive world affairs are not variable ones or that they will not shift and change according to purpose, conditions and economic pressures. Because of the natural complexity and status of national objectives, strategic outlooks in pursuit of equitable outcomes have historically been limited by both political frameworks and the innate capacity for referencing

and analysis. Yet since the first lunar landing and over the past decades, the advent of a technological global network enabling mass communications and informational flows across all nations and places will rapidly expedite potentials and purposes. The progressive nature of space based attributes provides an authentic medium for capable diplomatic engagement, policy orientation, and the equitable consolidation of essential global informational assets.

The provision of a plausible juncture that will lead into a stable global outlook has so far proved elusive. The division of the world into oppositional dynamics continues, as the objectives for a truly internationalized world view are subjected to historical antagonism and economic and environmental pressures. We need to find the universal focus that can pass across and consolidate many confrontational political and territorial perspectives. Such an essential point of reference is readily available within the UN engagements for outer space. The proposal for a UN lunar flag is not superficial or a matter of inconsequential window dressing. It may clearly mark the beginning of a rapid process of technological rapprochement, the collective impetus towards achievement of a stable and durable space continuum within the near terms

The UN lunar flag will be symbolic, although it is a simple and unique representation it carries an immense content. The flag bears the significant weight of many messages for a world facing the tensions of climatic stress and environmental change. It informs the global audience in many ways. To confirm that the lunarscape itself provides basis for the furtherance of the equitable terms of the Outer Space Treaty. To acknowledge the enduring values of this formative basis and to ensure the availability of space development for human advancement. What can be achieved by the UN fora on outer space will be an essential part of the transformational age that lies ahead. In many ways the medium is the message, space usage can inform and guide humanity beyond remote historical shadows.

The moon is a formidable taskmaster, it is known as the “magnificent desolation” its surface is extinct and sterile, and bombarded by radiation. In many ways it is the actual personification of our end point, the terrain that lies beyond the danger of nuclear annihilation. Yet our dialog for the moon is resurgent and full of expectation. The technologies that drive lunar development and permanent settlement comprise profound sciences that will drive high levels of terrestrial economy. These technologies extend over many fields, and they describe the formative basis of a nascent cis- lunar industrialization process. The objectives for cis- lunar infrastructure will be brought forwards together with the lunar landings as an integral part of emerging technological frameworks by both government and commercial interests.

A short summary can describe the types of the cis lunar research and development prospectus. These include solar power and related beamed laser utilities, which have immense potential for both energy sources and debris identification and mitigation. Ultrafast laser based communications provide a dramatic advancement, carrying information across space, between utilities and for terrestrial usage. Space based vehicles and fueling depots will service and extend the life of satellites. Orbiting habitats and labs will be built supporting genetic and materials investigation. Space based manufacturing techniques in low gravity will develop unique quantum assets for computational methodologies. The remarkable cis-lunar maps represent the framework of an original global economy, now leading out in many ways including through the propositions for space based data servers with onsite AI configurations, informing earth observation and communications assets. The lunar landings will clearly illustrate both the cis- lunar industrial objectives as well as the terrestrial insights.

Over the next few years, the many phases of international engagement which can be initiated through the narratives underlying the Lunar Flag attributes will lead out past 2030 and reach across future generations. What happens on the moon is also what happens on the earth. Cis-lunar industrialization represents an entirely new and upcoming phase for international affairs and the global economy. The growing techniques and applications of outer space usage have become extremely pertinent. Re-alignment under the UN auspice for worthwhile regulatory frameworks and equitable and peaceful development provides a sympathetic and realistic purpose. It is apparent that the upcoming technologies of space will have profound societal impacts, therefore ensuring that economic trends follow developmental pathways is an immediate necessity.

The UN Lunar Flag fully signals the intentions of our global society, it represents not only the international purpose for lunar settlement but also indicates the pathway towards the upcoming phases of a comprehensive cis-lunar development. It represents both the sciences that will lead out and the collaborative international dialog that will enable and empower the peaceful implementation of such advancements. The youth of today holds hope for the future, in facing the critical realities of our time. Providing the accessible medium that supports and enables such hope is a clear responsibility. The Lunar UN Flag should be flown many times by many nations over the years ahead. It is an immensely meaningful gesture to be acknowledged in all places, continuing to address the role and purpose of the extraordinary space faring journey.