



## Appointment of the Chair of the International Moon Day Group



**Vienna, Austria - (January 17, 2022) –**

On Monday January 17 2022, the Moon Village Association (MVA), announced the appointment of Dr. Nasr Al-Sahhaf as Chair of the International Moon Day Group (IMD-G).

Because MVA has been an early advocate of the concept of the IMD celebration, MVA is taking the initiative to organize its implementation by setting up the IMD-G within its organization. The IMD-G is the body which leads the management of the celebration of the International Moon Day.

Dr. Nasr Al-Sahhaf has over 30 years of practical experience ranging from Academic and Scientific Research to Government and Diplomacy, culminating in 2019 with the post of advisor to the Royal Private Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, he is an active member of Global Expert Group on Sustainable Lunar Activities (GEGSLA), and serves as chair for the Responsible Governance sub -group. He was Co-Principal investigator for one of the largest projects at the time at NASA/Ames Research Center in California, resulting in the optimum design for windows (Contributions of Windows and Isovists to the Judged Spaciousness of Simulated Crew Cabins) in what later became known as the copula in the International Space Station.

Dr. Al-Sahhaf proudly represented his country at the UN Committee for Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in 2008, and established the National Space Geodesy Center, KACST in 2009. Realizing that the Middle East was devoid of any GPS-like system of its own, Dr. Al-Sahhaf then set out to establish 16 Continuous Operating Receiver Stations (CORS) at less than 500 km apart (as phase one of three

to culminate in a total of 66 CORS) and was the principal investigator for (COGNET) the first of its kind project in the region. Also, under his supervision a team of engineers and technicians was able to successfully build a much-needed atomic clock in-house, thus, reviving the Saudi Arabian Laser Ranging Observatory (SALRO).

In 2005 Dr. Al-Sahhaf established the GIS Center within the Commission for the Development of Mecca, Medinah, and the Holy Sites, and served for 2 years as its director. Prior to that he served as Assistant Professor at the Space Research Institute in Riyadh. Dr. Al-Sahhaf holds several scientific degrees including one in business management from St. Martin's, three in engineering, two from University of Washington, Seattle, as well as a PhD in Geography from the University of California, Santa Barbara, 2000, and was a graduate of the inaugural class of the International Space University at MIT in 1988.

### **International Moon Day**

The Moon Village Association submitted a proposal for the proclamation of the International Moon Day during the UN-COPUOS 64<sup>th</sup> Session in August 2021. The proclamation has been approved on December 9 2021, by the UN General Assembly.

The International Moon Day is an annual event, held every year, starting with 2022, on July 20, the anniversary of the 1969 first human landing, from the United States of America, with the Apollo 11 mission, taking into consideration the achievements of all States in the exploration of the Moon.

The IMD will be celebrated with the general public across the planet, in cooperation with UNOOSA. MVA believes that the International Moon Day is a good opportunity to educate the public and promote and raise each year, at the international level, the awareness on the status and prospects for humanity, the sustainable Moon Exploration and Utilization of the Moon and the need to act together to regulate activities on and around the Moon.

This event will foster increased global cooperation between stakeholders all around the world, as well as promoting increasing participation to this goal of the future generation. Nine Lunar Missions are planned worldwide, in 2022 alone, and the public needs to be part of this global endeavour.

Giuseppe Reibaldi, President of the Moon Village Association, stated: “The appointment of Dr. Al-Sahhaf will provide a strong foundation to the implementation of the International Moon Day and thanks to his experience will foster the involvement of all world in the IMD including new space faring nations”.

For more information about organizing events for the International Moon Day, please contact:  
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## **About the Moon Village Association**

The Moon Village Association (MVA) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Vienna, founded in 2017. Its goal is the creation of a permanent global informal forum for stakeholders like governments, industry, academia and the general public interested in the development of the Moon Village. The MVA is the assembling of all efforts from private industry, governments and others aimed to explore and use the Moon in a sustainable manner. The MVA fosters cooperation for existing or planned Moon exploration programs, be they public or private initiatives. It comprises more than 800 participants to MVA activities and 27 institutional members from more than 60 countries, representing a diverse array of technical, scientific, cultural and interdisciplinary fields. The MVA partners with non-space organizations to promote international discussions and formulation of plans to foster the development of the Moon Village, and is creating international, national and regional networks to engage civil society around the world. The Moon Village Association's mission is unique, bridging together both spacefaring and non-spacefaring nations offering them the opportunity to play a role in its realization. There is no other organization on the international scene having such a mission.

For more information, visit the website at: [www.moonvillageassociation.org](http://www.moonvillageassociation.org) .