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Refugees and the role of space communications/Status and Practice of Charter for Man-made Disasters (3)

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**COPERNICUS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES: LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE USE OF
SATELLITE IMAGES****Abstract**

Open and free of charge policy of satellite images has impacted on its acquisition pattern leading to the increase of its usage. In 2010 the European Commission along with the European Space Agency established the Earth Observation Programme Copernicus (former GMES) for civil purposes with a regulatory framework on the mentioned open and free data policy. Its mandate relies in serving the society under the topics of environmental protection and security using satellite capabilities of the Union under the framework of Article 189 (2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), whereas the security provision is targeted on preserving the safety of citizens in case of man-made disasters. To this end, the Copernicus Programme launched the Copernicus Emergency Management Services (EMS) core service. This is one of the six core services aiming to assist decision makers and humanitarian organizations in case of human-made disasters. As satellite images can now be at disposal to any actor due to its open access, risks could also present, such as misinterpretation of data, therefore, legal implications of its use could rise. This paper intends to identify the possible legal implications in case of misinterpretation of information in satellite images for disaster relief distributed by the Copernicus EMS core service and how this misinterpretation could affect legally the Copernicus users and distributors in case of damage to third parties.