

IAF EARTH OBSERVATION SYMPOSIUM (B1)
20th Anniversary of the Disaster Charter: History, Status and Future of this Powerful and Productive
International Cooperation (6)

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ACTIVATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHARTER FOR MAJOR DISASTERS THROUGH THE
UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Abstract

The International Charter for Major Disasters has been founded in 1999 by the French, European and Canadian space agencies (Cnes, ESA and CSA). It started its operation in 2000. Its action is focused on the immediate response when a disaster occurs, making possible the delivery of value added maps within one or two days after the Charter has been activated. The end user (a management disaster Authority) gets this precious information free of charge and is therefore in a position to organize the relief operations.

Even though the Charter members rapidly extended from 3 to 17 members, it became obvious that something had to be done to spread the benefit of the Charter over countries/organizations outside the limited circle the Charter Membership. This initiative, called the Universal Access, has been put in place in 2012. It allows any national disaster management authority to become an Authorized User. Once the conditions are met and the training properly done, the new Authorized User has the possibility to activate the Charter when a major disaster strikes.

In parallel, the Charter partnered with UNOOSA/UN-SPIDER, UNITAR/UNOSAT, Sentinel Asia in order to enlarge worldwide the possibilities to activate the Charter.

This Universal Access initiative has been successful since its inception. As of February 2020, 25 countries (this figure is constantly evolving) have been granted the status of Authorized User.

This presentation will provide information about the Universal Access initiative and how to become a Charter Authorized User.