The International Charter Space and Major Disasters
NEWSLETTER

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CNES Charter Leadership

The French Space Agency (CNES) became leader for the Charter in October 2025, succeeding Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)

KOMPSAT-7 Launch

Launch of the Korean high-resolution Earth observation satellite KOMPSAT-7.

The CO3D mission and the Charter

Presentation of the mission characteristics and its potential use within the Charter.

SATELLITE DATA TO SUPPORT DISASTER RESPONSE WORLDWIDE

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CNES six-month leadership

For the seventh time since its creation, the French Space Agency (CNES) took the responsibility of the Charter leadership in October 2025, succeeding the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

The 54th Charter Meeting (7th to 11th October 2025) took place in Strasbourg, France with around 60 participants from all over the world. A PM/VA training was organized in parallel of the Charter week to benefit from the Charter members presence and experience. The 25th Charter anniversary was celebrated in the oldest house of Strasbourg (dated back from 1427) with a 25 years retrospective. It was the occasion for all Charter members to reiterate their wish to continue this fruitful international collaboration. At the end of the week, a technical visit to SERTIT was organized to present its main areas of intervention (Rapid Mapping, Risks and Reconstruction, Water, Forestry) and a dynamic presentation of specific departments (Rapid Mapping, Security, Fires, Water, AI, SAR, Training). Afterwards, Charter members visited the ISU premises to discover its summer programs and master's program, a tour of the library, a view of the ground station from the roof, a tour of the Almaz space capsule, the CNES telescope, the prototype extreme environment habitat, the planarian worm laboratory, the operation of the ground antenna, and discussions with students.

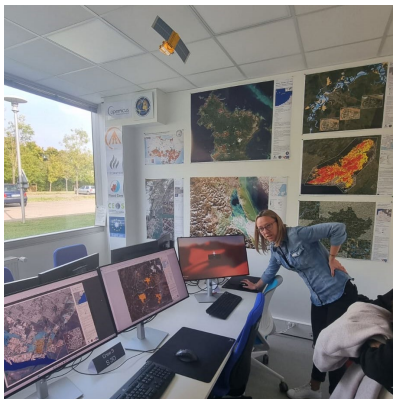
In terms of activations, the beginning of the leadership was a busy period due to storms (October and November 2025, with 8 activations each). Over the 6-month period, the CNES Team has handled a total of 38 Activations / 43 Calls and the closure of 32 activations. In details, 4 calls have been escalated from Sentinel Asia and 7 have been collaborations with CEMS. No activation without Value-Added Products (753 VAP were provided in total).

2 new Authorized Users (AU) namely Kyrgyz Republic and Libya were added to the Charter, thus increasing the recognition of the Charter's role in disaster management. The application of Moroccan CRTS (Centre Royal de Télédétection Spatiale) was received in April and will be assessed jointly by CNES and UAESA. The Charter Board received the official membership application of Pakistan (SUPARCO) and is currently working on its assessment.

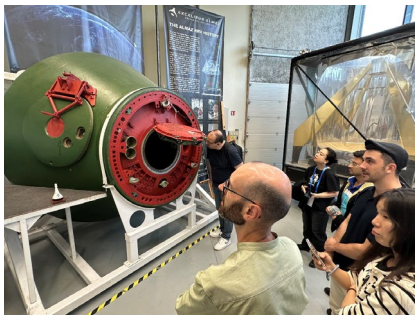
In the outreach domain, the New Standard Charter Presentation was released by CSA and we have finalized the last publishing of the series of anniversary webstories. The transition to the 1000th activation was done under CNES leadership. This marked a key milestone for the Charter and it was communicated via the website and social media.

The lead role will be given to the United Arab Emirates Space Agency (UAESA) and the European Space Agency (ESA), during the upcoming 55th Charter meeting, to be held half in Paris in April 2026 and half in Abu Dhabi, Emirates in June 2026.

Charter members group photo
Credit: CNES



CEMS/Charter crisis operational room at ICube/SERTIT
Credit: Emilie Bronner



Visit of the Almaz capsule, located in ISU
Credit: ICube-SERTIT

CNES Charter Leadership Team composed of CNES and ICube-SERTIT members.
Credit: @Lisa Marie Photographie 2025

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Highlights on PM/VA training and objectives of new training subgroup

On the occasion of the presence of Charter members in Strasbourg (France) for the 54th Charter Board meeting, a training session was organized for PM and VA on 6-7 October 2025. 6 trainees were present and motivated. Some were newcomers, others were more experienced PMs looking to improve their knowledge of the Charter.

The first day was dedicated to the presentation of theoretical aspects such as an overview of the Charter, various disasters scenarios, satellites of the Charter, an introduction to the Charter Operational System (COS-2), PM/VA roles and responsibilities and finally Value-added products.

The second day of the PM/VA training, primarily dedicated to practical training sessions was held in ICube-SERTIT in Illkirch-Graffenstaden, in the suburbs of Strasbourg. 5 instructors were involved in this second day. All the trainees seemed to enjoy the training and they showed great interest and dedication during the exercises. They particularly enjoyed learning about the Charter Mapper, a complete tool for image visualization, pre-processing, information extraction, vectorization, map editing, COS-2 data feeds, etc. The day concluded with an excellent and informative presentation from Samir Belabbes (UNOSAT), which was very well received by the trainees. The CNES Team would like to address a warm thank you to the instructors and to the SERTIT colleagues for helping with the organization, guidance, and preparation of this successful meeting.

Training participants with Mathias Studer (ICube-SERTIT), Vittorio Trivigno (ESA contractor) and Samir Belabbes (UNOSAT)
Credit: ICube-SERTIT

Theoretical training by Charter members on 6th October 2025
Credit: ICube-SERTIT

Training room for the second day 7th October 2025
Credit: ICube-SERTIT

Training participants on the ICube-SERTIT rooftop
Credit: ICube-SERTIT

In the summer of 2025, an Executive Secretariat subgroup dedicated to training aspects was created. Different roles were assigned to volunteers and actions list and monthly meetings have been set up.

The objectives of this group is to schedule and organize Charter trainings (AU, PM, VA, MPP, ECO and quickview images). Whether in person or online, the group has to create, update, modernize training material in a consistent manner (dynamic ppt, online learning platform, video, etc.). Members are also looking for solutions to reach out to a higher number of trainees (e.g. potential sponsorship for training travel fees).

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Korea Marks Major Milestones in Launch and Earth Observation with Nuri-IV and KOMPSAT-7

In late 2025, the Republic of Korea achieved two major milestones that further strengthened its contribution to space-based disaster monitoring and response: the successful fourth launch of the Nuri (KSLV-II, Korea Satellite Launch Vehicle-II) launch vehicle and the deployment of the high-resolution Earth observation satellite KOMPSAT-7 (Korea Multi-Purpose SATellite-7).

On 27 November 2025, successful completion of the Nuri mission from the Naro Space Center in Goheung, Korea, marking Korea's first nighttime launch, demonstrated the enhanced operational stability and reliability of the country's indigenous launch capability. The vehicle accurately deployed its payloads into a sun-synchronous orbit, releasing the primary satellite, CAS500-3 (Compact Advanced Satellite-3), together with 12 CubeSats within 18 minutes after liftoff. In a historic achievement, all 12 CubeSats successfully established communication with ground stations by early December, confirming a 100% mission success rate for the secondary payloads. This milestone reflects a close cooperation between private industry and national research institutes in manufacturing, integration, and launch operations.

In the same period, Korea further expanded its Earth observation capacity with the commencement of the KOMPSAT-7 mission at 2:21 am KST on 2 December 2025. Launched aboard Arianespace's Vega-C rocket from the Guiana Space Centre in Kourou, French Guiana, the satellite successfully completed its first communication shortly after separation at 3:30 am KST, confirming normal deployment and system health.

KOMPSAT-7 is equipped with an ultra-high-resolution optical payload capable of distinguishing objects down to 30 cm, complemented by an infrared sensor for monitoring under diverse environmental conditions. The satellite is designed to deliver high-quality imagery for disaster and hazard monitoring, environmental surveillance, public safety, and urban heat analysis.

Together, the successful launch of Nuri and the deployment of KOMPSAT-7 reflect Korea's maturing space capabilities, positioning the nation to contribute more effectively to the global space community through reliable data sharing and international mission partnerships.

KOMPSAT-7, as shown during the KASA's live broadcast after approximately six months of in-orbit calibration, KOMPSAT-7 is expected to begin delivering high-precision Earth observation imagery in the first half of 2026.
Credit: KASA.

Korea's launch vehicle Nuri (KSLV-II) lifting off from the Naro Space Center during its successful fourth launch.
Credit: KARI.

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Presentation of the CO3D mission for a worldwide one-meter accuracy Digital Surface Model and potential use within the Charter

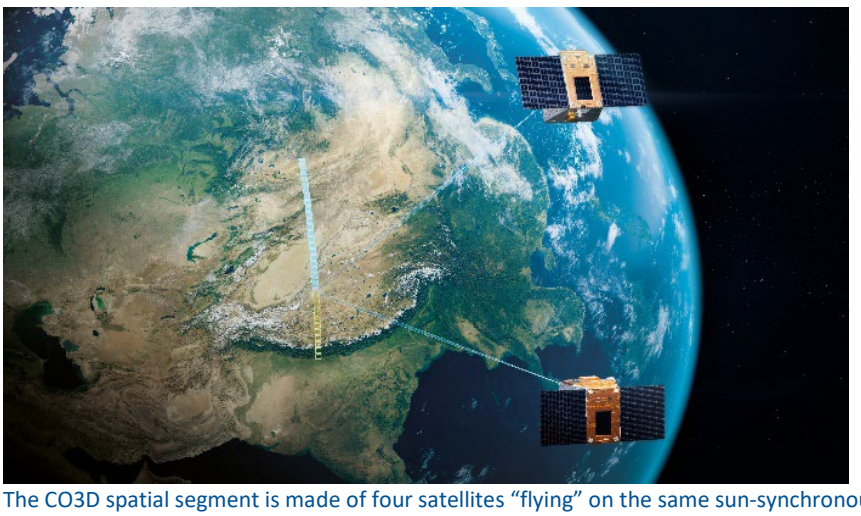
The aim of the CO3D (Constellation Optique 3D) mission is the full-automatic production of a worldwide accurate DSM (Digital Surface Model). This DSM is generated from stereo acquisitions obtained from 4 high-resolution optical satellites. The DSM accuracy is one meter in relative height for moderate slopes and four meters in absolute height with a one-meter grid space. Satellite images have a 0.50 m resolution in red, green, blue and near-infrared bands. The satellites resource is shared by the French institutions (government, scientists concerned by global Earth monitoring) and ADS (Airbus Defence and Space). The constellation was launched on July 26, 2025.

The DSMs fulfill many civil and defense user needs (floods prevention, glacier melting, damage assessment in case of natural disaster, cliff subsidence, mining activities monitoring, territory development and cartographic maps update, airplanes and drones low altitude flight, etc.).

The launch was followed by a 6-month IOT period to calibrate the satellites devices and the Image Quality on-board and ground parameters, and then by an 18-month demonstration phase prior to the commercial phase in order to assess the system performances. The orbit altitude is 502 km and the mean local time is 10h45 AM as shown in the top-right figure. Images are acquired thanks to matrix sensors according to the so-called “step and stare” guidance scheme. The footprint of each sensor is about 7 km x 5 km and the satellite great agility allows in one pass 2000 km² dynamic acquisition patterns. The ~6000 Tbytes data needed to cover the world landmasses in less than 4 years shall be produced thanks to a dedicated architecture running in a secured cloud.

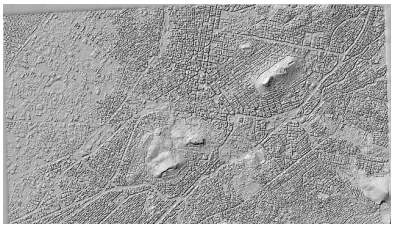
At the end of 2025, the mission first results obtained during the IOT (In-Orbit Test) and demonstration phases were published. It concerns the Image Quality performance, the 3D product accuracy and coverage capacities but also brand new products obtained through innovations and their combination as, for instance, night videos or synchronous 3D videos.

CO3D will be fully operational by the end of the Pleiades mission (end of 2028), meaning this could be the new French contribution to the Charter proposing better resolution images (50 cm vs 70 cm), in complement to SPOT and Pleiades Neo. These HR data and 3D capability can be very helpful in the case of disasters in urban areas to distinguish details and to assess altitude change (such as the collapse of part of the floors in a building). CNES and ADS are currently revising the mission specifications in order to adapt parts of the ground segment to allow on-demand rapid programming, fast processing and delivery in order to meet the Charter needs/requirements.

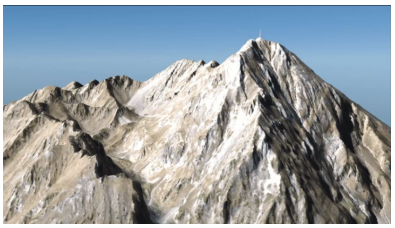


The CO3D spatial segment is made of four satellites “flying” on the same sun-synchronous orbital plane and working by pair to acquire bi-sat stereo images.
Credit: © CNES/ReactiveProd, 2025

CO3D constellation in-orbit configuration
Credit: CNES/CO3D



First CO3D DSM over Athens, Greece
Credit: @CNES/Airbus, 2025



CO3D DSM over Pic du Midi, France
Credit: @CNES/Airbus, 2025