



SATELLITE TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR GLOBAL DISASTERS

**ESOA & UNOSAT cooperate on the use of satellite telecommunications
for disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery**

Brussels, 12am, Wednesday 21st November 2007

21st November 2007 – When disaster strikes, you need to act fast, and after emergencies, technical support and innovative solutions can make a difference in rehabilitation and reconstruction. The European Satellite Operators' Association (ESOA) represents an industry that delivers critical communications services to areas hit by crisis, often with hours. UNOSAT, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Operational Satellite Applications Programme, is in charge of providing satellite-based solutions and support to the international development and humanitarian communities.

After beginning to collaborate one year ago, UNOSAT and ESOA have now decided to formalise their cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. This MoU constitutes a framework within which the two organisations plan to work together to identify the appropriate satellite resources to optimise the deployment and use of satellite solutions for international development and emergency response. In addition they will further raise awareness within the user communities of the unique ability of satellite technology in the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of the crisis management cycle.

This collaboration is a notable step forward in bringing more efficiency and coordination to the cooperation between the international humanitarian and development communities and private operators. Efficiency and coordination will be achieved through a common definition of user requirements, aggregation of user demand and harmonised service provision worldwide.

Christodoulos Protopapas, Chairman of ESOA and CEO of HellasSat, said: "As the earth observation community has already done, I am very proud that the satellite operators of

ESOA have come together to offer the international community a coordinated approach to respond not only to emergencies with the best and often only telecoms solution that works when all others are either overloaded or destroyed but also to help the UN humanitarian missions all over the world with reliable and inexpensive satellite communications.”

Alain Retière, Director of UNOSAT, said: “So far we have been working hard to provide satellite imagery and data to the field as fast as possible. This needs to be completed by telecom features. Especially in the context of large disasters occurring in geographically isolated places, satellites are not only a reliable communication resource while handling difficult emergency operations but they can also offer a great opportunity to bridge the digital divide during the post-disaster recovery phase. I am confident that working with ESOA will contribute to developing the satellite communication community’s social responsibility and enhance UNOSAT’s role as a key player in the provision of satellite based solutions to the international humanitarian and development communities.”

Thanks to the co-operation between ESOA members and government agencies, satellite communications play a critical role in establishing essential links for relief agencies and deliver communications services that provide instant infrastructure, logistics support, telemedicine, tele-education, media coverage and continuity of business all over the globe.

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About ESOA

The European Satellite Operators' Association was formed in March 2002 to represent the interests of the industry with the European Commission, Parliament, Council and the European Space Agency as well as other international organisations, national governments and regulators. ESOA's goals include ensuring that satellites benefit from the appropriate political, industrial and regulatory environment to fulfil their vital role in the delivery of communications. ESOA is governed by a Board of Directors made up of the CEO's of its Member Companies.

The activities and other details about ESOA can be found at www.esoa.net. Members of ESOA are: Astrium Services, Eurasiasat, Eutelsat, HellasSat, Hispasat, Inmarsat, SES, SES Sirius, Telenor and Telespazio. Arianespace, Astrium Satellites, Avanti, International Space Brokers, Mansat, Marsh, Thales Alenia Space and Willis are Supporting Members of ESOA.

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About UNOSAT

UNOSAT is a United Nations initiative launched in 2000 by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) whose mission is to provide the UN family and the international community its member states with satellite based solutions through the development and provision of satellite applications, GIS and training for humanitarian relief, disaster management and prevention, and early recovery (www.unosat.org). UNITAR was established in 1963 by the United Nations General Assembly (resolution 42/197) with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in achieving the major objectives of the Organization, in particular maintaining peace and promote economic and social development (www.unitar.org)

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