

DR. CHARLES ELACHI

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Dr. Charles Elachi was elected to the Board of Trustees of The Aerospace Corporation on December 7, 2016. He is professor emeritus of electrical engineering and planetary science at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), and from 2001 to 2016 was the director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and vice president of Caltech. At Caltech, he taught the physics of remote sensing, and was principal investigator on numerous research and development studies and flight projects sponsored by NASA. He is currently the team leader of the Cassini Titan Radar experiment and a co-investigator on the Rosetta Comet Nucleus Sounder Experiment and the Europa Clipper Mission.

During his 16-year tenure as JPL director, JPL launched 24 missions: Genesis, Jason 1, and Mars Odyssey (2001); GRACE (2002); GALEX, Opportunity, Spirit, and the Spitzer Space Telescope (2003); Deep Impact and the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (2005); Cloudsat (2006); Dawn and Phoenix (2007); Jason 2 (2008); Kepler and NEOWISE (2009); Aquarius, Curiosity, GRAIL, and Juno (2011); NuStar (2012); OCO-2 (2014); SMAP (2015); and Jason 3 (2016).

Elachi received a bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Grenoble, France, and the Diplome Ingenieur in engineering from the Polytechnic Institute, Grenoble in 1968. He earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in electrical sciences from the California Institute of Technology in 1969 and 1971, respectively. He later received an MBA from the University of Southern California in 1979, and a master's degree in geology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1983.

Elachi is the author of more than 230 publications in the fields of space and planetary exploration, Earth observation from space, active microwave remote sensing, electromagnetic theory and integrated optics, and he holds several patents in those fields. He has authored three textbooks in the field of remote sensing.

Elachi has received numerous honors and awards, including the RNASA National Space Trophy; IAF Allen D. Emil Memorial Award; National Academy of Engineering Arthur M. Bueche Award; Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, France; Space Foundation J.E. Hill Lifetime Space Achievement Award; AIAA Carl Sagan Award Sigma Xi William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement; International von Kármán Wings Award; the Royal Society of London Massey Award; the Philip Habib Award for Distinguished Public Service; the American Astronautical Society Space Flight Award; the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, Outstanding Leadership Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, and Exceptional Scientific Medal; the Wernher von Braun Award; and the IEEE Medal of Engineering Excellence, among many others.

Elachi is the chair of the St. Exupery Innovation Council in Toulouse France, and is a member of the United Arab Emirates Space Agency International Advisory Council, the Commission on DOE National Laboratories, the Visiting Committee for the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics at MIT, the UCLA Sciences Board of Visitors, the International Advisory Board of King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia, the International Academy of Astronautics, and the International Advisory Board of the University Oman. He is a fellow of IEEE, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), and the California Academy of Sciences.

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