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**UNITED NATIONS
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**Noon (New York) / 4 p.m. (Geneva), Wednesday, 9 May, 2007
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UN Secretary-General Appoints Prof. Konrad Osterwalder of Switzerland as Rector of United Nations University

Following consultations with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Koichiro Matsuura, and with his concurrence, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed Professor Konrad Osterwalder of Switzerland as the next Rector of United Nations University.

Professor Osterwalder will be the fifth Rector of United Nations University. He is expected to assume his position at the University's headquarters in Tokyo on 1 September 2007. The decision to appoint Prof. Osterwalder was taken after an extensive international search process. Prof. Osterwalder will succeed Prof. Hans van Ginkel, a geographer from the Netherlands, who has served as UNU Rector since 1997.

Prof. Osterwalder, a Swiss physicist, is the current Rector, as well as President ad interim, of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich. He earned his doctorate in theoretical physics at ETH in 1970. He has held positions at the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University, Harvard University and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. He has been a visiting fellow at a number of universities and research institutes around the world. Prof. Osterwalder was appointed as a full professor at ETH Zurich in 1977.

Prof. Osterwalder's research has focused on the mathematical structure of relativistic quantum field theory, elementary particle physics and statistical mechanics. He has taught the natural sciences and engineering for more than two decades. Since 1995, Prof. Osterwalder has served as the Rector of ETH Zurich.

In addition to his duties at ETH Zurich, he has been Editor of *Communications in Mathematical Physics*, Treasurer and President of the International Association for Mathematical Physics, a member of the visiting committee of the Harvard Department of Physics, President of the IHES National Committee of the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences, and member of the advisory council of the Euler Institute in St. Petersburg. He also has served as Vice-President of the Conference of Rectors of Swiss Universities, as President of the Conference of European Schools of Advanced Engineering Education and Research and as a member of the International Academic Advisory Panel of the Government of Singapore.

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Prof. Osterwalder is currently President of UNITECH International (a collaborative initiative between seven European technical universities and more than 20 internationally active corporate partners). He is a member of the Swiss Academy of Technical Sciences and holds an honorary doctorate from the Helsinki Technical University.

“I greatly value the importance of UNU, and intend to promote and enhance the collaboration of this key institution with leading institutions around the world”, said Prof. Osterwalder.

United Nations University is an international network of scholars that serves as a think tank for the United Nations system. The UNU system comprises UNU Centre in Tokyo, a global network of 13 research and training centres and programmes, and several hundred cooperating research institutions and academics from more than 90 countries. The University’s research, capacity development and knowledge sharing activities are focused on issues of peace and governance, and environment and development.

For more information, or to request a photo of Prof. Osterwalder, please contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: media@unu.edu).