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UNIVERSITY

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United Nations University Ranked Globally as a Top-Ten Government-Affiliated Think Tank and Top-Ten International Development Think Tank

The United Nations University (UNU) ranks among the world's top-ten Government-Affiliated Think Tanks, and its World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) among the world's top-ten International Development Think Tanks, according to the *2010 Global Go-To Think Tank Ranking* report released on 18 January 2011 at UN Headquarters in New York. This "Think Tank Index" is based on a worldwide survey of some 1,500 scholars, journalists, policy makers and peers from almost 120 countries conducted by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

The 2010 rankings are distilled from a universe of 5,491 nominated policy organizations from every region of the world. UNU was ranked as number 7 in the "Best Government-Affiliated Think Tanks" category, and through its institute UNU-WIDER as number 7 in the "International Development Think Tanks" category — two of 29 functional and regional categories covered by the report.

Prof. Dr. Konrad Osterwalder, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Rector of UNU, welcomed news of UNU's ranking, saying "even though we know that such rankings have to be taken with a grain of salt, we are very pleased that the United Nations University was evaluated so positively. It confirms the success of our continuing efforts, as an academic and research organization within the United Nations, to serve as a bridge between the UN system and the international academic and policy-making communities."

The United Nations University is active in five interlinked, interdependent thematic clusters: (i) Peace, Security and Human Rights; (ii) Development Governance, Development Economics; (iii) Population and Health; (iv) Global Change and Sustainable Development; and (v) Science, Technology and Society.

Professor Finn Tarp, Director of the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research, joins Rector Osterwalder in warmly welcoming the new ranking, and states "we highly appreciate this recognition of UNU-WIDER's work. Our stakeholders can count on UNU-WIDER as a high-quality, policy-oriented research and capacity building institution. We are dedicated to achieving the central goals of the UN system, including poverty reduction and sustainable and equitable development." UNU-WIDER, located in Helsinki, Finland, is as the name says, focused on development economics. It is one of the global UNU system of 14 research and training institutes located in 12 different countries.

"We provide very practical results in the field of user-focused science," noted Rector Osterwalder. "Moreover, the interdisciplinary, problem-oriented and global perspective provided by the UNU worldwide system of institutes is unique in the academic world as well as among think tanks. This appreciation encourages us to enlarge our activities further, from research into postgraduate education. I very much believe that having UNU's own postgraduate students will strongly enrich and strengthen our research and think tank activities. Along with the application of our knowledge and capacity development, especially in developing countries, we will continue to develop true partnerships in education."

"We appreciate the care the thoroughness of the analysis of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program," he added, "and we are very much aware that there are many other worthy think tanks who merit inclusion in such a ranking."

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Background:

The **United Nations University (UNU)**, founded in 1973 as an autonomous organ of the United Nations General Assembly, is the academic and research arm of the United Nations system. Its goal is to develop sustainable solutions for current and future problems of humankind in all aspects of life. Through a problem-oriented and interdisciplinary approach, UNU aims at teaching, applied research and education on a global scale. This is the basis on which it builds its think tank function. UNU comprises a headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and more than a dozen institutes and programmes worldwide.

The **2010 Global Go-To Think Tank Ranking** is compiled by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program at the International Relations Program, University of Pennsylvania. Initiated in 2006, these annual reports seek to evaluate performance and to identify leading think tanks throughout the world. In the 2010 current survey, 6,480 think tanks were invited to participate; out of those, 5,491 think tanks were nominated and then ranked in 29 categories.

The judgment criteria included the institution's ability to retain top-level analysts and scholars, the richness and rigor of its research, its access to policy makers, and its ability to influence policy decisions in such diverse domains as international security, globalization and governance, the international economy, the environment, poverty reduction, and global health.

Further Information:

A video of a presentation by Dr. James G. McGann, Director of Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program and Assistant Director of the International Relations Program, University of Pennsylvania, which took place at UN Headquarters on 18 January 2011, is available online at <http://www.onu.unu.edu/events-forums/new/CA/2011/2010-the-global-goto-think-tank.php>.

For more information about UNU, go to <http://www.unu.edu>.

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