

INTERNATIONAL INTELLIGENT ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION CENTER OPENS

The opening ceremony of the NTU International Center of Excellence on Intelligent Robotics and Automation Research (NTU-iCeIRA) was held at the Center for Condensed Matter Sciences on May



4. Fittingly, a robot that resembled Einstein at 27 presided over the event as the master of ceremonies, while the educational and entertainment robot RenQ served as an usher for the event's honored guests.

In addressing the audience, President Si-chen Lee noted that the second phase of the Aim for the Top University Project commenced last year, and that, although the Ministry of Education did not set any targets for the project, NTU itself has set the goal of entering the ranks of the world's top 50 universities. President Lee also expressed his gratitude to the National Science Council's (NSC) International Research-intensive Centers of Excellence (IRICE) program for creating the opportunity to use an institution-to-institution approach to rapidly enhance NTU's standing. He said that the NTU-iCeIRA plays an important role because it was established in cooperation with three major French institutions—the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), the French National Institute for

Research in Computer Science and Control (INRIA), and Pierre and Marie Curie University (UPMC). He concluded that there were three important points in establishing the center: first, cooperating with the European Union; second, cooperating with the three French institutions; and third, creating a close alliance with industry.

Taiwan's Vice President Vincent Siew stated that the establishment of the NTU-iCeIRA is not simply a major event for NTU, it provides



great inspiration for Taiwan's multinational enterprises. He added that everyone knows that Taiwan's enterprises need to upgrade and transform, that they must make improvements in many industrial technologies. He also pointed out that robotics and automation are vital and necessary technologies for the survival of Taiwan's industry.

The CNRS is the main representative of the French parties in this cooperation project. The directors of the three French institutions, in accordance with



NSC regulations, signed letters of commitment pledging to join the NSC and NTU with each providing one-third of the funds to support the operation of the international NTU-iCeIRA for five years.

Also during the ceremony, it was announced that 25 enterprises and institutions in Taiwan will sign memoranda of understanding with the NTU-iCeIRA. These include such major Taiwanese and international companies as Foxconn Technology Group, National Instruments Corp., and Shanghai Commercial and Savings Bank. With the support of these major enterprises, it is expected that the NTU-iCeIRA will make a powerful comprehensive impact in speeding up the development of Taiwan's robotics and automation



technology research standards and assist industry in transforming and upgrading to raise our international competitiveness.