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Prof. Michael Best Appointed Director of UNU Institute on Computing and Society, Macao, China

The United Nations University is pleased to announce that Professor Michael Best has been appointed as Director of the newly launched UNU Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS). Prof. Best took up the Directorship post, which encompasses overall responsibility for management of the Institute, on 17 January 2015.

UNU-CS, based in Macao, China, focuses on the key challenges faced by developing societies in the field of computing and information technologies. The Institute seeks to enhance capacities in computing and the innovative application of information technology through policy-relevant research programmes as well as doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships.

The goal is to nurture the next generation of computer and social scientists with the ability to participate in, shape and benefit from the rapid development of the global information society. Established in 2014, UNU-CS supersedes the United Nations University International Institute for Software Technology (UNU-IIST), which had a twenty-year history of developing research capacities in computer science.

Commenting on his appointment as Director of UNU-CS, Prof. Best stated: "I am honored to have been selected to lead the UNU Institute on Computing and Society as it begins a new phase of research. My goal is to raise the profile of the Institute as a centre of excellence in the UN system effectively responding to the needs of the developing world in this crucially important area."

An American by birth, Prof. Best is an associate professor at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs and the School of Interactive Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology, where he directs the Technologies and International Development Lab. He is also a faculty associate of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, as well as co-founder and Editor-in-Chief Emeritus of the widely read journal *Information Technologies and International Development*.

He holds MSc and PhD degrees from MIT, and has served as director of Media Lab Asia in India and head of the eDevelopment group at the MIT Media Lab. Prof. Best's undergraduate degree was a BSc in Computer Science and Engineering from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Prof. Best has written extensively on the implications of information and communication technologies (ICT) for social, economic and political development. His research interests also include the impact of ICT on the development–security nexus, particularly in the context of post-conflict peace and reconciliation.

"I am very pleased to welcome Prof. Best to the UNU system. I am confident that with his background in information technologies and international development, he will make a very significant contribution to the research of UNU and to policymaking of the United Nations as a whole", said the Rector of UNU, Prof. David M. Malone.

More information about UNU-CS is available online at <http://cs.unu.edu>.

To request an interview with Prof. Michael Best, please contact the UNU Media Relations Coordinator, Ms. Aska Maki (tel.: +81-3-5467-1212; email: media@unu.edu).