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Prof. Dr. Bart Verspagen of The Netherlands Appointed as Next Director of UNU-MERIT

The United Nations University (UNU) is pleased to announce the appointment of Prof. Dr. Bart Verspagen as the next Director of the UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT). Director-Designate Verspagen will take up the post on 1 September 2012.

Prof. Verspagen will succeed Prof. Dr. Luc Soete, founding Director of the Institute. Having served in that post since 1988, Prof. Soete is leaving UNU to become Rector Magnificus of Maastricht University.

UNU-MERIT, based in Maastricht, Netherlands, explores the social, political and economic factors that drive technological innovation, with a particular focus on creation, diffusion and access to knowledge. Following the integration of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (in December 2010), the Institute functions as a unique research institution and graduate school covering all aspects of governance in domestic and global organizations, and as a UN think tank addressing a broad range of policy questions on science, innovation and democratic governance.

"I am honored to be given an opportunity to serve the institute in this way", said Director-Designate Verspagen. "I will strive to further develop UNU-MERIT's role in the global academic and policy debate about development."

Prof. Verspagen is an economist specializing in the economics of technological change. After receiving a PhD degree from Maastricht University (1992), he worked for five years (1993–1998) as a Research Fellow with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW). He subsequently worked as Research Professor of Economics and Technology, Maastricht University (1998–2001); Professor of Economics and Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology (1998–2008); and Visiting Professor, University of Oslo (2001–2011).

Since 2008, he has been Professor of International Economics, Maastricht University, and concurrently a Professorial Fellow with UNU-MERIT. Prof. Verspagen's research interests cover a broad range focusing on the process of economic growth and its relation to technological change, and encompass such areas as international trade theory, industrial dynamics, economic and technology history, and applied econometrics, statistics and mathematical modelling.

"I am happy to welcome Prof. Verspagen to the UNU family. I am confident that under his leadership UNU-MERIT will sustain and enhance its high level of quality and activity," said UNU Rector Konrad Osterwalder.

To request an interview with UNU-MERIT Director-Designate Bart Verspagen, please call or e-mail one of the media contacts listed above.

- Further information about Prof. Verspagen, including his curriculum vitae and publications list, is available at <http://www.verspagen.nl/>.
- For more information about UNU-MERIT, see <http://www.merit.unu.edu/>.
- For information about the global UNU system, see <http://unu.edu>.