

**Dr. Torsten Wiesel receives the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun  
— Award Ceremony at the Japanese Ambassador's Residence in Sweden —**

Dr. Torsten Wiesel, President Emeritus of the Rockefeller University, the 1981 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, and Co-chair of the OIST Board of Governors, was awarded [the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun](#) by the Government of Japan at a ceremony on December 14, 2009 at the residence of the Japanese ambassador to Sweden in Stockholm.

Citing Dr. Wiesel's contribution to the promotion and the development of the joint research program advocated by the Japanese government as the reason for his award, the Government of Japan expressed its appreciation for Dr. Wiesel's role as Secretary General of the Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP) from April 2002 through June 2009.

The award ceremony was attended by Dr. Wiesel, his family, members of the Karolinska Institute, and the embassy staff. Upon receiving the award from Ambassador Akira Nakajima, Dr. Wiesel first thanked the embassy for holding the ceremony for him and expressed his appreciation for the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, as well as the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry for their long and generous assistance and support. Describing HFSP as a Japan-initiated organization, Dr. Wiesel commended its importance in funding research, as well as its great and unique contribution to establishing a global network of researchers. He also referred to the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology as a very exciting initiative by Japan to launch a research center of science and technology in isolated Okinawa. Citing his ongoing role as the co-chair of the OIST Board of Governors, together with Dr. Akito Arima, former president of the University of Tokyo, Dr. Wiesel added that he has a strong belief that this exciting project will succeed.

OIST President Dr. Sydney Brenner congratulated Dr. Wiesel's award. Citing the increasing importance of international cooperation in science, Dr. Brenner commended Dr. Wiesel's role as the HFSP Secretary General and co-chair of the OIST Board of Governors, saying that Dr. Wiesel has played a key role in establishing a framework to achieve the international cooperation with emphasis on the quality of the research and opportunities for young investigators.



Dr. Wiesel and Ambassador Nakajima



The ceremony at the Ambassador's residence

Born in Sweden in 1924. After receiving his M.D. from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm in 1954, Dr. Wiesel held academic positions at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Harvard Medical School, where he became chairman of the department of neurobiology in 1971. In 1983, Dr. Wiesel joined The Rockefeller University and later served as president for seven years until he stepped down in 1998. Dr. Wiesel served as secretary-general of the International Human Frontier Science Program Organization from April 2000 through June 2009. He has been a BOG member of OIST since 2002 and the BOG co-chair since December 2006. He is the 1981 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine.



Dr. Torsten Wiesel