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Press Release

## **Professor Theodor W. Hänsch becomes Honorary Member of OSA**

**The Optical Society of America (OSA) Board of Directors has selected Prof. Th. W. Hänsch, Director at MPQ and Chair of Physics at Ludwig Maximilians University, and Prof. Roy J. Glauber, Professor of Physics at Harvard University, as new honorary members of the society “for their extraordinary contributions to the field of optics”. In 2005 Prof. Hänsch shared one half of the Nobel prize for Physics with Prof. John Hall (University of Colorado at Boulder), the other half went to Prof. Glauber. The OSA, an organization uniting 70,000 professionals from 134 countries, reserves the honorary membership “for those individuals who have a profound and lasting influence on the optics community”.**

Professor Hänsch was born in Heidelberg in 1941. He studied physics at the University of Heidelberg, earning his doctorate in 1969. He went on to post-doctoral study in the United States, and was a professor of physics at Stanford University from 1975 to 1986. Since 1986 he has been Director at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics and Professor of Experimental Physics at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich.

His main research fields are the high-precision laser spectroscopy of hydrogen and similar elements and the investigation of ultracold quantum gases. His early work includes the first narrowband tunable dye laser, the invention of commonly used techniques of Doppler-free laser spectroscopy, and the first proposal for laser cooling of atomic gases. The Nobel prize was awarded to him for the development of the frequency comb technique.

Professor Hänsch has received many scientific prizes and awards. Among others he was awarded the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft in 1988. Twice – in 1998 and 2000 – he received the renowned Philip Morris Research Prize. In 2006 the Große Bundesverdienstkreuz mit Stern (Great Cross of Merit with Star) of the Federal Republic of Germany was conferred upon him. In June 2008 he became member of the 'Order Pour le mérite' which was established by the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV in 1842. [O.M.]

### **Contact:**

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