

Calling all researchers

MASSIVE €3M COMPUTER INAUGURATED AT CYPRUS INSTITUTE

By **Demetra Molyva**

Cyprus took a step closer to becoming a research centre for the wider Eastern Mediterranean region with the inauguration yesterday of the pioneering Cy-Tera project, a High-Performance Computing Infrastructure for the local and regional academic community.

The Computation-based and Technology Research Centre (CaSToRC) project was inaugurated by former President George Vassiliou at the Cyprus Institute and is co-funded by the EU, the Republic of Cyprus and the Research Promotion Foundation.

It costs €3.5m but will generate benefits of €4m, apart from the new jobs that will be created. Cyprus Institute president George Papanicolas described the project as "a major research infrastructure and tool."

"It is a large computer, tens of thousands of times stronger than the computers we know in our daily life, which gives us the possibility to contribute to the implementation of research, technology, health and development," he said at a news conference.

"This research tool is unique in the Eastern Mediterranean

region and the EU is funding the project - beyond the Research Promotion Foundation- so that it is regional. It is a step forward towards the realisation of the vision to turn Cyprus into a regional research centre," he added.

The chairman of the board of trustees of the Cyprus Institute, professor Edouard Brezin said the inauguration marked a major milestone in the development of the Cyprus Institute, not only in terms of short or mid-term scientific research outcome even more so, in terms of the build-up of its research capacity.

"The Cy-Tera project comprises high-level research thrusts in fields such as climate science, water desalination, biophysics and high energy physics, synchrotron applications and Digital Cultural Heritage," he added.

Brezin noted the project's primary drive and focus is the setting up of multi-Teraflop high-performance computing facility, the first in Cyprus or the Eastern Mediterranean.

"Computer and data driven research have acquired such an overwhelming importance in modern science that there is no doubt that such a facility, with the associated user support and

peer review mechanisms, will have a major impact on the Cypriot and regional scientific communities, and bring enormous societal benefits in relation to many important issues such as climate change, water resources, preservation of cultural heritage, as well as to many aspects of engineering that are crucial to technological innovation and economic competitiveness."

Speaking at the launch, Cyprus University rector Constantinos Christofides said the facility was a milestone for the research community of Cyprus.

"The operation of the Cy-Tera-a High-Performance Computing infrastructure that very soon will be available to the local and regional academic community- will enable cutting edge research in a wide range of applications of science and engineering," he said.

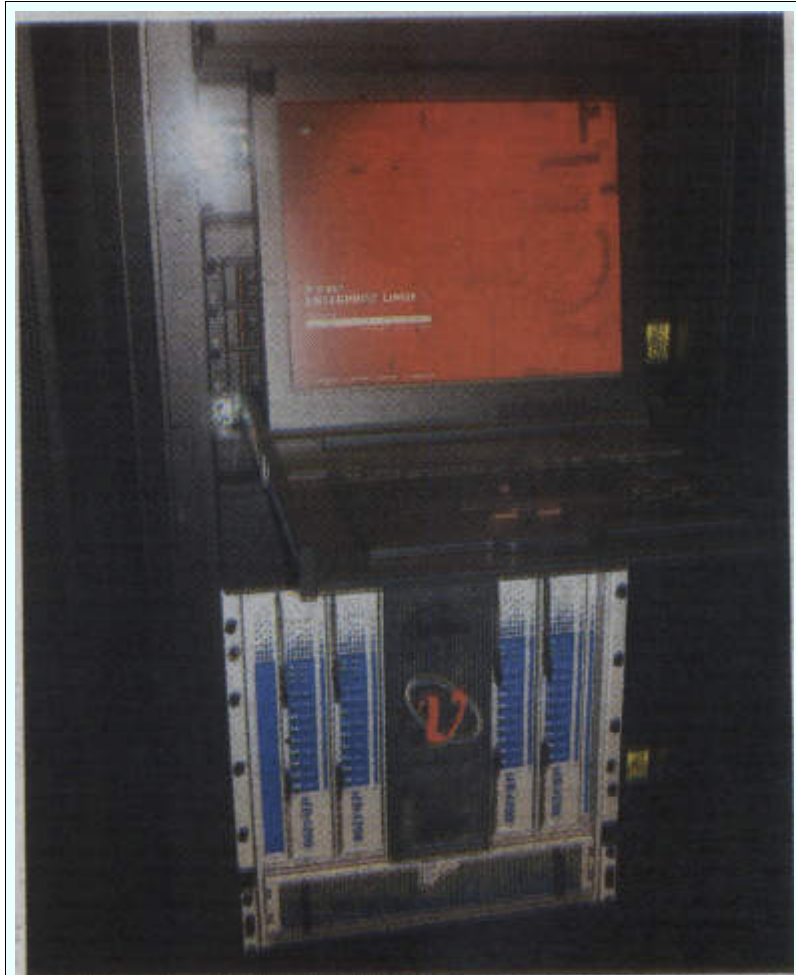
Christofides also noted that the Cy-Tera facility opens up new challenges and possibilities for all.

"In these difficult times of economic uncertainty, scientists have to share a strong and focused mission. And times of economic crisis are the right times to enhance investment in research and innovation, boost-

CYPRUS WEEKLY

Παρασκευή, 13 Ιανουαρίου 2012, p. 19





ing the country's economic growth and welfare."

Constantia Alexandrou, the project's scientific director, said it will produce a computing dynamic which will mainly sup-

port the scientific community to become competitive in Europe.

"It will also support businesses like banks which need time for big computers," she said.

CYPRUS WEEKLY

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