

**Honorary Doctoral Degree Acceptance Speech**  
**Prague, 21st of January 2020**  
**Wolfgang Wahlster**

Dear Rector Magnificus Professor Petráček, dear Minister Havlíček, dear Professor Mařík as the promotor and Dr. Velek as the laudator, dear Members of the Scientific Council, Excellences, Deans, dear Colleagues and Friends,

I feel deeply honoured by the decision of the Scientific Council of the Czech Technical University in Prague as one of the oldest and best technical universities in Europe to award me the prestigious honorary title Doctor honoris causa.

It gives me great joy and satisfaction that this award underlines the impact of Artificial Intelligence and INDUSTRIE 4.0 on the Czech and German research about advanced manufacturing as well as on the economy of both countries.

The digitalization of industrial production, products, and services plays a critical role for the future of both countries. The intensive collaboration of the two leading institutes in industrial AI, CIIRC and DFKI, ensures that both countries remain the globally leading suppliers for the next generation of smart factories.

Research on Industrie 4.0 combines many academic fields such as cyber-physical systems, robotics, machine perception, internet of things, multi-agent systems, knowledge representation, automated deduction, planning systems, multimodal dialog systems, as well as data analytics and machine learning.

I am great admirer of CIIRC, since it brings together under one roof world-class scientists for all these component technologies in an ultra-modern building.

For more than 30 years Prof. Mařík, Prof. Hajicová and I organized the collaboration and the flow of information between both universities in Prague and DFKI always as a "two-way street", profiting both sides and in many cases with a worldwide impact.

Artificial Intelligence has the power to reshape the world. But we must make sure that we maintain the control over AI systems and that we prevent the misuse of AI. I am happy that all colleagues here at my new alma mater honoris causa share my belief, that our AI systems must be human-centric, that they should support humans, and that they are committed to pursue always *our* objectives, not *theirs*.

Once again, I would like to thank the Czech Technical University very much for this distinction and for Dr. Velek's wonderful laudation. Listening to a laudation about yourself is always the most challenging part of such ceremonies. For a moment, you can consider yourself to be a saint, until your family brings you back down to earth, since they know best all of your deficits.

I am the one standing here accepting this honor but it belongs at least equally to the great teams that I have had the good fortune to work with at the various stages of my career.

Dear Rector Magnificus Professor Petráček, the enormous progress made by Czech industry over the past decade would have been unthinkable without your university.

My cooperation with your university has always been based on my deep respect for the scientific excellence at CIIRC and its partner faculties, the reliability of all Czech project partners and their very hard-working staff, as well as the shared socioeconomic values and ethical principles.

Thank you very much for your attention.