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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Initiator of the ELI project, Nobel Prize winner physicist Gérard Mourou visits ELI-ALPS in Szeged**

**A new timeline element celebration took place at the ELI-ALPS research facility in Szeged. The French physicist, Gérard Mourou, Professor at École Polytechnique, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics this year. The initiator of the ELI project was welcomed by Minister of Innovation and Technology László Palkovics.**

This morning, the French laser physicist, Gérard Mourou, who jointly received this year's Nobel Prize in Physics, visited the laser research institute in Szeged. The initiator of the ELI project met László Palkovics, Minister of Innovation and Technology. After that, the newest element of the freely-accessible laser timeline on the promenade at the entrance of the building complex of the research institute was inaugurated, which commemorates the Nobel Prize of Professor Mourou this year.

Following the press event, Gérard Mourou held a talk at the University of Szeged. In the presentation, he also recalled the 1985 publication recorded with PhD student at that time Donna Strickland about chirped pulse amplification. The publication has so far been quoted 4677 times, using the method described in it to overcome limitations in the amplification of ultra-short laser pulses.

Lóránt Lehner, Managing Director of ELI-HU Non-Profit Ltd. said, *'Professor Mourou has been awarded this year's Nobel Prize in Physics as a recognition of his decades of professional work. We are proud of him being the initiator of the ELI project in the Czech Republic and Romania as well, and we can cooperate with him in the implementation of the ELI-ALPS laser research institute in Szeged.'*

László Palkovics, Minister of Innovation and Technology, emphasized on the event, *'In Szeged, we have not only implemented the largest research and development project in*

*Hungary, but we are building concrete science. Although basic research is carried out at ELI, the results obtained here will eventually be utilized in a number of disciplines in the applied research phase. We have made ourselves visible to the international research community, to the physicists, chemists, mathematicians and biologists of the world.'*

Gérard Mourou, the initiator of the ELI project, pointed out, *'It is a true honor to be able to return to the ELI-ALPS research facility following years of hard work with the different research teams who helped to bring this project to life. To see the continual progress that is being made here each and every day in laser research and to have a part of the complex commemorated in honor of this year's Nobel Prize is truly rewarding. I was honored to have the opportunity to further explain the award-winning chirped pulse amplification (CPA) method to those here at the research institute in Szeged.'*

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The main object of ELI-ALPS (Extreme Light Infrastructure Attosecond Light Pulse Source) project is creating a unique European research center, providing the international research community with laser pulses and further sources based on them. The Szeged facility will stand out from the institutes producing the highest intensity laser pulses in the world with its highest repetition rate and shortest pulses. This facility is expected to lead to reaching outstanding results not only in the field of ultrafast physical processes but also in biological, medical and materials sciences.

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Interview:

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