

Today the United Nations flag has been officially hoisted in front of the Eurac Research headquarters, marking Bolzano's position as a new UN duty station and sealing a longstanding research partnership in the fields of climate risks, sustainable development and civil security research in mountain areas between the Bolzano research centre and the United Nations University.

In accordance with United Nations guidelines, the blue flag with the white circle of the world was hoisted in front of the red Eurac Research building in Bolzano's Via Druso. Today's UN flag raising, 25 September 2020, also indicates a final step in cementing the collaboration between the Bolzano Research Centre and the United Nations University (UNU) - the academic arm of the UN. Bolzano is now accredited as official duty station of the United Nations and the only UNU location in Italy. The strategic partnership is the result of the longstanding cooperation between Eurac Research and the Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) of the United Nations University in Bonn, finally established in the form of the jointly driven UNU programme Global Mountain Safeguard Research (GLOMOS). . GLOMOS is the only UNU programme that specifically addresses risk, safety and security research in mountain areas.

A guiding principle of the Agenda 2030 - the United Nations' strategic umbrella framework, is the recognition that global challenges can only be solved together with partners at the local level. The Agenda comprises 17 goals for sustainable development covering economic, social and environmental aspects and applies to all countries throughout the world. As a United Nations think tank, the UNU system scientifically investigates and supports the implementation of the Agenda's goals through the collaborative work of its 13 institutes and research programmes in 11 countries. "Mountain regions play a central role in the global development of agriculture, food security, the supply of fresh drinking water and the maintenance of biodiversity. At the same time, mountain regions are particularly exposed and vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and other natural and man-made hazards. This is why applied research and collaborative networking with research partners such as Eurac Research is vital for UNU," emphasised Shen Xiaomeng, UNU-ViE Vice Rector in Europe and Director of the Institute for Environment and Human Security at United Nations University (UNU-EHS), during her official visit to Bolzano.

The particular objective for Eurac Research president Roland Psenner is "to be able to bring the comprehensive findings of 25 years' of research on mountain areas to the global stage through this important partnership with United Nations University and thus contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2030". For South Tyrol, the close cooperation with UNU is not only prestigious, but also offers new opportunities, as governor Arno Kompatscher's statement underlines: "The cooperation with the United Nations opens up new possibilities for the worldwide recognition of South Tyrol as a location with many years of experience in the sustainable development of mountain regions. This will also benefit the local companies that develop technologies in this area through systematic research and business networking."

The aim is to establish a solid network of partners in key mountain regions around the world - for example in the Hindu Kush – Himalaya region,, the Andes of Latin America and the mountain regions of Southern Africa - to conduct joint research and to translate research results from the fields of climate risks, ecosystem protection, disaster preparedness and emergency response into practical applications. "In the understanding of GLOMOS, however, actual sustainable development and transformations can only be achieved through the ownership of local stakeholder and practitioners", says Joerg Szarzynski who together with Stefan

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Schneiderbauer jointly manage GLOMOS. Schneiderbauer sums up: "Therefore, a major objective of the programme is to facilitate the international dialogue and transfer of knowledge with partners from different mountain regions worldwide."

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