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Largest research centre for IT security comes to Saarbrücken

There are pressing questions for society to be taken into consideration today: What will the IT security of tomorrow look like when we have autonomous vehicles and factories? How can we protect ourselves from large-scale cyber attacks? And how is digital data protection to work in an ever-increasing interconnected world? These and many other questions will be examined in future in Saarbrücken. In collaboration with the Helmholtz Association, the federal government and the Saarland are setting up in the capital city of the Saarland one of the largest research centres for IT security. Taking charge of the centre is Prof. Michael Backes, up until now Director of the Centre for IT Security, Privacy and Accountability (CISPA) at Saarland University, which will be merged into the new centre. Minister-President Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer announced this to be the result of successful negotiations with the federal government and the Helmholtz Association.

“Today is a big day for the Saarland,” says Minister-President Kramp-Karrenbauer. “This decision is a milestone for the structural transformation of our regional state. The research centre, which will employ a workforce of 500 in the medium term, will attract worldwide interest. Saarbrücken will become the FC Bayern of IT security.” Federal Research Minister Wanka declares, “IT security is a deciding factor for digitalization. Secure digital infrastructures are absolutely essential for

our economy and society. The centre for IT security in Saarbrücken has proved its worth through its outstanding performance and is internationally recognized, making it ideally suited to place Germany at a level of excellence in IT security research worldwide. By ensuring the sustainability of the research centre, the federal government and the Saarland are making a significant contribution to this end.”

Prof. Backes, the founding director of the new centre, considers the location of the Saarland to be eminently suitable for this purpose. He says, “The Saarland provides the best possible conditions and ideal environment for such a centre. What’s more, I was born in the Saarland and I would like to give something back to my home. I am proud that our children and children’s children will be able to learn, teach and conduct research in future at a world-class research centre on their doorstep.” He adds, “Through our work in the last few years, we have laid the foundation for this success. But this result has exceeded all my expectations. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the Minister-President of the Saarland. We would never have been able to achieve such success without her. I am pleased that, thanks to her, we can now see to it that something truly great develops here.”

The centre should be set up and running this year, growing to accommodate over 500 researchers in the medium term. The existing CISPA institute will be merged into the newly founded centre, the established “CISPA” trademark remaining part of the centre’s name.

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