



## **MIT and Eni launch the Solar Frontiers Center in Cambridge**

*Cambridge, Massachusetts, 4 May 2010* – Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) President Susan Hockfield and Eni CEO Paolo Scaroni today celebrated the opening of the Eni-MIT Solar Frontiers Center (SFC). Originally announced in July 2008, the Solar Frontiers Center, headquartered on the MIT campus, promotes research in advanced solar technologies through projects ranging from new materials to hydrogen production from solar energy.

The opening of the Center comes out of an alliance signed in February 2008 between Eni and MIT. Over the first two years, the Center has produced significant scientific and technological breakthroughs including:

- Construction of the first ultra-flexible solar cell;
- Development of the first solar cell printed on paper;
- Advances in the production of virus-based metal contacts for solar cells;
- Development of solar cells that mimic the photosynthetic process;
- Advances in the understanding of how photosynthesis splits water molecules; and
- Construction of a prototype to maximize return on investment in solar thermal plants using parabolic mirrors for sustainable deployment of concentrating solar power.

The Eni-MIT Solar Frontiers Center is further evidence of the commitment of Eni to the development of cross border initiatives in the field of renewable energy, particularly solar energy. Collaboration with MIT promotes the creation of technological and cultural synergies through a multidisciplinary approach. In particular, the cooperation between MIT researchers and those of the "Research Center for non-conventional energy - Eni Donegani Institute"

promotes the exchange of expertise through the pursuit of common objectives. In addition to the Solar Frontiers Center, Eni supports projects in energy research at MIT on traditional hydrocarbons, methane hydrates, global climate change and transportation options.

The alliance with MIT has a duration of five years and involves a financial commitment from Eni for \$50 million in total, equally distributed between the Solar Frontiers program and the MIT Energy Initiative (MITEI) - the research group responsible for the study of solutions aimed at transforming the energy system to meet the challenges of the future, of which Eni is a founding member.

The partnership with MIT is the most important of the various strategic alliances and scientific collaborations signed by Eni with universities and centers of excellence worldwide. In 2007 Eni launched the Eni Award to develop improved uses of renewable energy, promote environmental research and cultivate new generations of researchers. This year, Professor Angela Belcher of MIT was selected as the winner in the "Energy renewable and non-conventional" section, for her innovative and fundamental studies on the development of natural systems able to reconvert and use energy.

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