

## **Vodafone and Sir Charles Kao recognised in FTTH Awards 2014**

*Vodafone and Sir Charles Kao have received awards at the FTTH Conference 2014 in Stockholm today for their outstanding contribution to accelerating FTTH adoption in Europe.*

FTTH CONFERENCE, STOCKHOLM, 20 February 2014 – The FTTH Council Europe selected Vodafone and Sir Charles Kao, father of fibre-optic communications, to receive this year's Operators Award and Individual Award respectively for their outstanding contributions to Fibre to the Home (FTTH) adoption in Europe.

Vodafone received the FTTH Operator Award in recognition for rolling out advanced fibre networks in Portugal, Spain and Italy as part of a large investment programme. Vodafone's organic fibre build programmes in Spain and Portugal are on-going and in Italy Vodafone already offers fibre services in 37 cities and is now planning to complete FTTH coverage in Milan – passing 0.6 million households by 2016. Currently, Vodafone Portugal has passed more than 750,000 homes with fibre and this coverage is increasing daily in a move to reach 1.5 million FTTH connections by mid-2015. In Spain, Vodafone has partnered with Orange to co-invest in fibre with the aim to reach 800,000 homes and workplaces in 2014, 3 million premises in 2015 and 6 million in 2017. The combined capital expenditure required to reach 6 million households and workplaces in Spain is expected to reach €1 billion.

Mário Vaz, CEO of Vodafone Portugal, declared: "Vodafone's investments in Portugal, Spain and Italy are a key part of our commitment to offer customers an unmatched customer service, to help them be the best connected and to enjoy all the benefits of technological innovation in and out of their homes. These existing investments will be accelerated under Project Spring, which will see Vodafone invest nearly €3 billion more in Portugal, Spain and Italy over the next two years to establish even stronger network and service differentiation for our customers. We are delighted to be recognised by the FTTH Council Europe and will continue to strive to bring the best to our customers."

In awarding Sir Charles Kao the Individual FTTH Award, the FTTH Council Europe recognised the importance of his contribution to the birth of fibre-optic communications. Professor Kao, who was awarded the 2009 Nobel Prize in Physics for "ground-breaking achievements concerning the transmission of light in fibres for optical communication", is generally considered the father of fibre-optic communications and has changed the way the world communicates. The date of international *Gimme Fibre Day* was elected by the Global FTTH Councils to be held on his birth date on 4 November.

Professor Kao's wife Ms Gwen Kao stated: "Back in the early days, when he announced that optic fibre would change the world, I laughed at him and joked about a Nobel Prize! Decades later, we live in a high-tech world so full of creativity, where products improve so fast that items become obsolete overnight. We are finally able to fully appreciate the impact of his vision. He would be very touched if he understood the event, but he has been suffering from Alzheimer's disease for the last 11 years. On his behalf, I thank you for this award."

The FTTH Awards ceremony brought to a close the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the FTTH Conference, which this year was held in Stockholm. The event, which was opened by Anna-Karin Hatt, Swedish Minister for Information Technology and Energy, attracted 3,000 delegates from 84 countries, 120 top-tier exhibitors from all over the world, and included over 160 high-quality presentations and case studies from renowned industry speakers.

This year's conference emphasized FTTH-enabled services and applications, with specific conference sessions dedicated to this topic, and live demonstrations including online gaming, 3D printing and eCare services in the exhibitions area.

Additional highlights included the keynote speech from David Bosshart, CEO of the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute (GDI) for economic and social studies in Switzerland. There were enlightening speeches at the opening ceremony by Sten Nordin, Mayor of the City of Stockholm, Göran Marby, Director General of the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) and Chairman of Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and Karin Ahl, President of the FTTH Council Europe.

The 12th FTTH Conference will be held in Warsaw from 10 to 12 February 2015.

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Notes for editors:

For pictures of the FTTH Council Europe Awards 2014, please click [here](#).

Follow highlights from the FTTH Conference 2014 on Twitter using hashtag #ftth2014.

For exclusive interviews and discussions from the FTTH Conference 2014 go to [www.tv.ftthcouncil.eu](http://www.tv.ftthcouncil.eu).

#### **About the FTTH Council Europe:**

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that enhance the quality of life, contribute to a better environment and increase economic competitiveness. The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. [www.ftthcouncil.eu](http://www.ftthcouncil.eu)

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