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**My personal perspective of sonar research at the NATO Undersea
Research Centre**

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As the first German Director of the NATO Undersea Research Centre I was contemporary to the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the unification of Germany in October 1990, the breathtaking termination of the Cold War without bloodshed. NATO's Undersea Research Centre, thirty years of age when the Berlin Wall fell, has been a key player and focal point of a most important and demanding field of defense research. It has been exemplary in combining customer oriented applied research on sonar concepts up to system demonstrators with basic research to understand, to model and to predict the variability of the ocean environment, the most difficult challenge of successful surveillance and reconnaissance. Some unique capabilities enable the Centre to serve the nations and the NATO commands: Above all, the ability to attract first class scientists to work together at the Centre for a few years and then return to their home countries, forming an ever growing international network of intense scientific cooperation. The advanced sea trial related technology and data treatment realized by a capable and flexible technical staff is no less decisive. The many high-ranking visitors, scientific, military and political underline the international standing of the Centre.