

## IFR News

With effect from this issue, *Robotica* is designated "A Journal of the International Federation of Robotics".

The International Federation of Robotics was established as a professional non-profit organisation in 1987 by robot associations from 15 countries. Since then its membership has grown to include national robot organisations in 26 countries: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, U.K. and U.S.A. In addition, most of the world's leading robot manufacturers are supporting members of the Federation.

IFR is now recognised as the major representative of robotics interests worldwide, and is on the United Nations roster as a non-government organisation. The IFR secretariat is based in Stockholm, Sweden.

IFR's mission is to promote research, development, use and international co-operation in the entire field of robotics and to act as a focal point for organisations and government representatives in activities related to robotics.

The Federation's activities include sponsoring the International Symposia on Industrial Robots (ISIR). The 26th ISIR was held in Singapore last October; the 27th will take place in Milan from 6 to 8 October 1996. The theme of the 27th ISIR is "Robotics Towards 2000". Its

topics embrace a wide variety of present and potential robot applications in manufacturing, construction, service, mining, agriculture, health care, space and other industries.

The Milan IFR will be the last ISIR. The International Federation of Robotics has recognised that robots increasingly will be used not only in industry but also in non-industrial applications such as household tasks. Accordingly it has decided that the word 'Industrial' will be dropped from the ISIR name beginning in 1997.

In conjunction with the UN Economic Commission for Europe, IFR annually compiles and publishes statistics of the world's robot population analysed by country of installation, type of robot, and principal field of application. The Federation also produces regular reports of robot trends, based upon information from its member associations.

Other activities include assisting the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) in the development of international standards relating to robots.

Professor Poo Aun-Neow of the National University of Singapore has been appointed to the *Robotica* editorial board as the IFR representative.

Future issues of this journal are planned to include reports of activities of IFR and its member associations, as well as articles describing research presented at IFR conferences.