

PRESS RELEASE

Helmut Schmidt awarded the Prize of Peace of Westphalia

"Europe must not fail because of us Germans"

Münster/Westphalia, September 22, 2012 - Former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt today accepted the Prize of Peace of Westphalia with a clear commitment to Europe. The Economic Society for Westphalia and Lippe (WWL), which awards Germany's most valuable peace prize of 100,000 euros every two years, honored Schmidt as "one of the most important pioneers of a peacefully united Europe". The Youth Prize was awarded to the organization "Children for a better World e.V.", which supports children's aid projects worldwide. Thousands of Münster residents cheered Schmidt, who appeared on the balcony in front of the town hall after the award ceremony. "Remember, we Germans still have to make great sacrifices for Europe," Schmidt warned the citizens.

"The European project must not fail because of us Germans", emphasized Schmidt in his acceptance speech. He called for greater unselfish commitment to the EU. The Federal Government, the Federal Constitutional Court and the Bundesbank should "not act as the center of Europe" and Germany must "show an unconditional will to cooperate", Schmidt emphasized.

The private financial centers must be tamed, continued solidarity must be shown and Europe must finally speak with one voice worldwide. "A single government can no longer achieve anything in this world, not even the German government," said Schmidt. "Of course it will cost a lot of money, but we have also been the main winner of European integration since 1952."

Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, Chairman of the WWL, emphasized this unceasing commitment to Europe in his laudatory speech for Helmut Schmidt. Today's peace in Europe "is thanks to people like Helmut Schmidt". "He played a decisive role in shaping the fate of the world," emphasized Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State and political companion of Schmidt, in a video message. NRW Minister President Hannelore Kraft also emphasized Schmidt's importance for political culture in a greeting: "With your straightforwardness, credibility and integrity, you are a role model for us all." Kraft described the Peace Prize as a "strong sign of reconciliation and peace that enriches NRW". Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag and member of the Peace Prize jury, then reiterated Schmidt's central message: "We Germans either have a European future or none at all."

The Munich-based organization "Children for a better World e.V." is playing a key role in shaping this future. "Peacemaking children are the peaceful future of us all,"

Helmut Schmidt referred to his fellow award winners in his speech. Founded in 1998, the organization supports children's aid projects worldwide. The decision on which projects to support is made by children's advisory boards. "We have to take children seriously in their desire to change something in the world," emphasized Dr. Eckart von Hirschhausen, presenter and cabaret artist, in his laudatory speech. This is exactly what "Children for a better World e.V." does: "Projects like yours are the best way to counteract the global imbalance. " Sören Astikainen from Hanau, who helped organize a project against child labour in northern India, Sara Ranjana Häuser from Münster, co-initiator of the Courage Children's Foundation, and Emma-Luisa Werz, a member of the Berlin Children's Advisory Council, accepted the award by way of example.

The Peace Prize has been awarded every two years since 1998 and this year, for the first time, is endowed with 100,000 euros, which will be divided equally between the prizewinners. Past winners include Kofi Annan, Daniel Barenboim, Helmut Kohl and Vaclav Havel. As in previous years, WDR broadcast the award ceremony live on television.