

## PRESS RELEASE

### Award ceremony will take place on July 14 at Münster City Hall

#### **International Prize of the Peace of Westphalia 2018 goes to the Baltic States and the Scouts**

**Münster/Westphalia, January 17, 2018** - The 2018 International Prize of Peace of Westphalia goes to three countries and a global youth movement. As the Economic Society for Westphalia and Lippe (WWL) announced today in Münster, the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as the Scout organization will receive the award, which was first presented exactly 20 years ago. The three heads of state from the Baltic states will be invited to Münster in the summer to receive the Peace Prize. The award ceremony will take place on July 14 in Münster Town Hall. The prize money of 100,000 euros - donated by the board of trustees consisting of Westphalian business personalities - is traditionally shared between the winners.

"Due to their exposed location as northern 'outposts' of the EU, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are not free from potential vulnerability today," said Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, Chairman of the WWL, quoting from the international jury's statement. "It therefore makes sense to honor and strengthen them for their special efforts towards integration in Europe."

Since gaining independence in the early 1990s, the issue of peace has moved the population of the Baltic countries at all levels. in a very special way. According to Zinkann, the heads of state of the three countries will be invited to Münster to accept the Peace Prize: Kersti Kaljulaid, the President of Estonia, Dalia Grybauskaitė, the President of Lithuania, and Raimonds Vējonis, the President of Latvia.

Together with the Baltic states, the Scouts are being honored this year. "As the world's largest youth movement, Scouting aims to contribute to the peace-oriented development of young people so that they can become involved in society as responsible citizens," explained Dr. Reinhard Zinkann. "With shared values such as living together as equals, tolerance towards others, but also respect for the environment, scouting builds on the ideal that all people can live together in peace." The prize will be accepted in Münster by young scouts and representatives of the rings of German scout associations. In terms of theme and timing, this year's award ceremony is embedded in the major project "Peace.Europe", which is being realized by the cities of Münster and Osnabrück in the European Cultural Heritage Year "ECHY 2018".

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Peace Prize Foundation, WWL Chairman Zinkann also took a look back. "Since the prize was first awarded in 1998, we have wanted to use it to keep alive the memory of what the envoys achieved in

Münster and Osnabrück in 1648," explained Zinkann. The historic treaty was inspired by the dream of peace, which moved people throughout Europe. Zinkann: "This continues to this day and gives meaning to the awarding of our Peace Prize."

Since 1998, the award has gone to Václav Havel, Helmut Kohl, Carla del Ponte, Kurt Masur, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Kofi Annan, Daniel Barenboim, Helmut Schmidt, the crews of the ISS space station and Jordan's King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein. Together with personalities or representatives of states that have become role models for peace work in Europe and the world, young people are also always honored whose actions have set an example for political, social and ecological reconciliation and thus for peace in the world. The most recent recipients of this award were Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste and the youth work of the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e. V. (German War Graves Commission).

*All further information on the International Peace Prize of Westphalia can be found at [www.westfaelischer-friedenspreis.de](http://www.westfaelischer-friedenspreis.de)*