

PRESS RELEASE

Award winners Tsipras, Zaev and Plant-for-the-Planet express regret and understanding

International Prize of Peace of Westphalia will not be awarded until 2021

Münster/Westphalia, June 23, 2020 : The festive award ceremony for the International Prize of Peace of Westphalia has been postponed to 2021. This was announced today in Münster by the Wirtschaftliche Gesellschaft für Westfalen und Lippe (WWL). "After careful consideration and with a heavy heart, the WWL Board of Directors has decided to cancel the ceremony this year due to the coronavirus pandemic," explained WWL Chairman Dr. Reinhard Zinkann. The former Prime Ministers of Greece and North Macedonia, Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev, would have been presented with the Peace Prize at a ceremony in Münster Town Hall on September 19. The children and young people from the organization Plant-for-the-Planet received the Youth Prize. EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had already agreed to give the laudatory speech for Tsipras and Zaev. "In view of the uncertain licensing situation for larger events, we simply don't have the conditions to hold the usual dignified ceremony in the town hall," emphasized Zinkann.

August 28 and October 2, 2021 are now being discussed as alternative dates.

The WWL chairman phoned the designated prizewinners to inform them of the cancellation. "They all expressed their regret to me, but of course also their understanding for the postponement," Zinkann reported. Zoran Zaev, for example, told him that he felt very honored by the award and that it was also perceived as an important signal by the North Macedonian public. "These times of great common challenges underline the need for increased cooperation," said Zaev, also referring to the agreement in the Macedonian name dispute, for which he will receive the International Peace of Westphalia Award together with Alexis Tsipras. The youth organization Plant- for-the-Planet, which also received an award, is being honoured for its active action against climate change.

Since 1998, the Peace Prize has been awarded to Václav Havel, Helmut Kohl, Carla del Ponte, Kurt Masur, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Kofi Annan, Daniel Barenboim, Helmut Schmidt, the crews of the ISS space station, Jordan's King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein and the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. 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 deeds have set an example for political, social and ecological reconciliation and thus for peace in the world.

Most recently, Aktion Sühnezeichen Peace Services and the Ringe Deutscher Pfadfinderinnen- und Pfadfinderverbände were honored here.

All further information on the International Peace of Westphalia Prize can be found at www.westfaelischer-friedenspreis.de.