

PRESS RELEASE

Festive award ceremony on September 19 at Münster City Hall

International Prize of Peace of Westphalia goes to Alexis Tsipras, Zoran Zaev and Plant-for-the-Planet in 2020

Münster/Westphalia, 19 February 2020 : The former Prime Ministers of Greece and North Macedonia, Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev, will be honored this year with the International Prize of Peace of Westphalia. The Youth Prize goes to the Plant-for-the-Planet initiative. As the Economic Society for Westphalia and Lippe (WWL) announced today in Münster, the two politicians are being honored for their agreement in the Macedonian name dispute. The children and young people from Plant-for-the-Planet are receiving the award for their active action against climate change. The award ceremony will take place on September 19 at Münster City Hall. The prize money of 100,000 euros - donated by the board of trustees consisting of Westphalian business personalities - is traditionally shared between the sponsors.

"Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev have achieved a feat of diplomacy by reaching an agreement in the decades-long conflict over the name Macedonia, thereby contributing significantly to stability in the entire Balkan region. Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, Chairman of the WWL, quoted from the international jury's statement. On February 12, 2019, Macedonia changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, settling a bitter conflict between the neighbors that had lasted for over three decades. Greece had not accepted the country name Macedonia, as a region in the north of its own country is also called Macedonia.

"Both heads of government at the time, but especially the Greek one, subordinated their personal careers to political reason, regardless of whether they would remain in office," explained WWL Chairman Zinkann. "Without Tsipras and Zaev, the name dispute would not have ended in the long term and the neighbourly feud would have continued to destabilize the entire Balkan region."

Together with the two statesmen, the children and young people of Plant-for-the-Planet will be honored this year. "The organization makes an exemplary and concrete contribution to the movements for climate goals in the world," explained Dr. Reinhard Zinkann. Plant-for-the-Planet put the issue of climate change on the agenda 13 years ago and is committed to making an effective and constructive contribution to the global climate debate through practical action.

The initiative was co-founded in 2007 by Felix Finkbeiner, a nine-year-old Bavarian schoolboy at the time. It has since grown into a global movement with more than

88,000 young "ambassadors for climate justice". Everyone who takes part in the campaign planted as part of the campaign - around 13.6 billion to date - symbolizes climate justice. The movement's major goal is to plant one trillion new trees worldwide.

"Münster Summit" at the Westphalian Wilhelms University

This year's Peace Prize ceremony will be framed by a "Münster Summit" at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität. On September 17 and 18, the topics of peace and sustainability will be explored in depth in seminars, readings, concerts and panel discussions. One of the highlights will be a panel discussion with the two prizewinners Tsipras and Zaev, in which the former Italian Foreign Minister and High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, will also take part. WWL Chairman Dr. Reinhard Zinkann expressed his delight at the cooperation with the university: "When we founded our prize in 1998, we already had the desire to deepen the memory of the great peace achievement of 1648 academically. The 'Münster Summit' will now perfectly complement our award ceremony."

Mayor welcomes selection of award winners

Münster's Lord Mayor Markus Lewe was very pleased with the selection of this year's Peace Prize winners: "They have set and continue to set the tone for the future and coexistence of us all. The prizewinners show how important it is not to stop at tomorrow, but to think about the day after tomorrow and how this day after tomorrow should be shaped." Lewe continued: "In order to relieve our children and grandchildren - as far as it is in our power - of the worry that they will have to grow up with certain restrictions on their freedom, Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev, just like Plant-for-the-Planet, are helping to create places of the future that are pioneering and outstanding for other places around the world."

Since 1998, the International Prize of Peace of Westphalia 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, the youth work of the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e. V. 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