

Text 1: H. G. Brauch: Welcome, HGBS-IWP 2024; 10.10.2024

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly welcome you and thank you for attending. I would like to thank Lord Mayor Julian Stipp for providing this room free of charge, for the reception and his staff Ms Heckmann and Ms Wendt for their excellent cooperation.

Furthermore, I would like to thank District Councillor Dr Achim Brötel, who, despite his new duties as chairman of the Association of Districts in Germany, is taking the time to attend our award ceremony and give the closing speech.

Finally, I would like to thank the prizewinners, Prof. Thaler from the USA, who was appointed to a professorship at the University of Oxford in September, and Dr. Tsilonis and all the guests.

I would also like to thank our young team consisting of Christian Seibold (films and videos), Dr. Meah Rahman (TEAMS) and Thomas Bast (beamer).

We try to solve the bilingualism of our event by projecting the texts in two languages on the wall. We can translate the spoken word into the other language for the internet.

Whether the transmission with TEAMS works depends on whether the WiFi is strong enough and the participants have access to electricity and the internet. Christian and Thomas will document the event with films and texts.

A few words about the HGB Foundation for Peace and Ecology in the Anthropocene (HGBS). I announced the founding of the HGBS on the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the liberation from National Socialism in my acceptance speech for the award of the Federal Cross of Merit by the Federal President on 14 July 2020.

Since my 75th birthday (1 June 2022), we have awarded three student prizes and, on 14 July 2023, the first science prize to Prof. Dr. Tobias Ide from Hesse, who now teaches as a professor in Perth (Australia) and Hiroshima (Japan) as well as at the TH Braunschweig.

The HGBS has been recognised as a non-profit organisation by the FA in Mosbach since July 2020. It is financed by income from the investment of my parents' inheritance, support from the school authorities and a donation from the Lions Club Madonnenland for the BG in Buchen and by private donations.

In 2024, the Foundation of the Landesbank Baden-Württemberg made us a substantial donation for the student prize and AFES-PRESS e.V. a working dinner after each award ceremony. No member of the board receives any compensation for expenses. Our young team receives modest fees. The first topics of our science prizes were:

Ø 2023: Climate Change and Conflicts (Award winner: Prof. Dr. Tobias Ide (D));

Ø 2024: Ecocide – a political and legal concept and the impact of war and/or climate change on food security (Award winners: Prof. Dr. Gregory M. Thaler (USA) & Dr. Victor Tsilonis, a lawyer from Thessaloniki (Greece)).

The term ‘**Anthropocene**’ (human age) was coined by Nobel Prize winner Paul J. Crutzen in February 2000 in Cuernavaca in Mexico.

‘**Ecocide**’: Under international criminal law, as well as European and national criminal law, this is understood to mean ‘the criminal liability of massive damage or the destruction of ecosystems through human actions as a serious crime’. The concept was introduced into international law after the US military used defoliants in Southeast Asia in the 1970s.

To date, ecocide is not defined as a criminal offence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. However, in an international armed conflict, acts that ‘cause widespread, long-term & severe damage to the natural environment’ and bring no recognisable military advantage are punishable as **war crimes**.

Ø The topic of 2023 (climate change and conflicts) examines the primarily intrastate conflicts triggered by climate change as a result of tropical storms, landslides, fires, drought, crop failures and food insecurity, leading to environmental migration in the Sahel and armed conflicts between settled farmers and nomadic livestock owners over scarce water and grazing land for their animals.

Ø The topic of 2024 examines the consequences of attacks on dams that cause flooding, crop destruction and soil contamination by pollutants. In the two current conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, the concept of ecocide was repeatedly mentioned as a criminal offence. In 2022 and 2023, the countries of East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia) were victims of the consequences of extreme weather situations, malnutrition and hunger due to an extreme shortage of supply and the rise in prices of staple foods.

Ø The causes of food insecurity were both consequential problems of climate change, such as extreme weather conditions, and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Ø The non-governmental organisation **stops international ecocide** formulated a proposal for a definition of an independent ecocide crime in the Rome Statute in 2021.

This is where Dr Tsilonis' book begins in Chapter 10 and his own proposal for a new **International Criminal Court for the Protection of the Environment (ICCPE)**.

This is what I deal with in my laudatory speech for Dr. Tsilonis' volume and chapter 10: The emergence of a **new crime within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court**.

This is what I will deal with in my laudatory speech for Dr. Tsilonis' book using the example of chapter 10: The emergence of a new crime within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

Ø This discussion under international law is of direct relevance to both current wars

The Chief Prosecutor of the Criminal Court, the British citizen Karim A. Khan, issued arrest warrants against two decision-makers from the current warring parties in two wars in Eastern Central Europe and the Middle East.