

## MEDIA RELEASE

### BDÜ Hieronymus Prize 2017: Language Experts in the Service of Peace

*Prizewinner 2017: International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia / award ceremony during BDÜ's celebration of the International Translation Day in Erfurt / nationwide campaign day for Germany*

(Erfurt, 30 September) The German Association of Interpreters and Translators (*Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer* – "BDÜ") was pleased to award the Hieronymus Prize 2017 in recognition of exemplary achievements in the field of multilingual communication, during a ceremony yesterday at St. Augustine's Monastery in Erfurt. This year, the award was bestowed upon the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia – a worthy prizewinner, working under the umbrella of the UN. Even worthier, considering the decision of the United Nations in May to officially declare 30 September as International Translation Day – a day also known as "St Jerome's Day", after the patron saint of translators – to honour the work of professional translators, interpreters and terminologists in facilitating the dialogue between nations and contributing to world peace.

In explaining their decision, the jury commented: "By awarding this prize, the BDÜ recognises not only the organisation and its work, but also the activities of the language experts who have made incredible achievements in recent years. These translators and interpreters worked in new areas of international law, medicine and forensics, dealing with military documents, the historical backgrounds of ethnic conflicts or harrowing testimonies."

In his welcome address, BDÜ President André Lindemann quoted renowned actor Sir Peter Ustinov, UNICEF ambassador and President of the World Federalist Movement, who died in 2004, with the words: "Anyone who is too talented is bound to end up as a UN translator."

John Hocking, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Registrar of the Criminal Tribunal expressed his gratitude for the award: "With the prestigious Hieronymus Prize, you have awarded a language department which has been instrumental in the delivery of justice for war crimes. As the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia completes its work and closes its doors this December, I hope that the technical and moral legacy of our language professionals will continue to inspire translators and interpreters across the world to become even better agents of intercultural dialogue and peace."

#### Media contacts

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*Reg. No. VR 22468 B – Berlin-Charlottenburg Local Court  
President: André Lindemann*

*Whilst any information provided is given to the best of our knowledge and belief, no legal validity is guaranteed.*

The prizewinner was nominated by the ranks of its in-house language service for exemplary collaboration with translators and interpreters. Maja Ružić, head of the tribunal's Conference and Language Services Section, gave a very passionate account of the last 24 years of work – work that was often emotionally distressing, highly responsible and yet fulfilling in the end, knowing that justice can be done. Speaking on behalf of her colleagues and herself, she expressed delight at the well-deserved recognition that comes with this award.

The audience was able to experience the demanding work of interpreting live, even into sign language, at the award ceremony.

The BDÜ State Chapter of the German state of Thuringia organised an exciting programme centred around translating and interpreting for St Jerome's Day. Acknowledging the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, which is being celebrated as the Luther Year throughout Germany, the award ceremony was followed by a fascinating lecture given by renowned Bible expert Professor Dr Christoph Kähler, on the challenges of a monumental translation project in which 70 Bible scholars have spent five years working on the revision of the famous Luther Bible. When Luther translated the Holy Scripture into a generally understandable German, he was “looking at the crowd’s mouth”. The same premise has been applied to the version of the Luther Bible for which Dr Kähler was responsible, and which was published to commemorate the 500th anniversary.

Not only in Thuringia are translators and interpreters in the spotlight on International Translation Day. On the occasion of its 70th anniversary, and in cooperation with the German Film Museum, the *Weltlesebühne* (a cooperative of German literary translators), and the *Untertitelforum* (subtitling forum), the BDÜ State Chapter of Hesse is focusing on subtitling and dubbing, using the film series *drunter und drüber* (literally, “below and above”) as an example. In Berlin, much revolves around all things cinematic as well. The BDÜ State Chapter of Berlin-Brandenburg invites the public to an evening discussion about the documentary “The Translator – Language is home”, about the life of Juri Elperin, on 4 October. And in Mannheim, the plaza in front of the railway station will become the stage for a so-called “freeze mob” today at 4 pm, which can be followed on social media via the hashtag #iconnectworlds. As with all BDÜ activities and events, the aim is to raise awareness of the translation and interpreting professions amongst the wider public.

[www.hieronymustag.de](http://www.hieronymustag.de)

### About the Prizewinner

#### International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was established in 1993 on the basis of United Nations Resolution 827, to give war victims a voice and bring war criminals to justice. The ICTY was the first criminal court for war crimes established by the UN, and stands in the tradition of the Nuremberg Trials, which in turn are seen as the birthplace of simultaneous interpreting. The importance of language experts in this work cannot be ignored: an average of 10% of ICTY's employees have been working in the field of interpreting and translating, providing an impressive 79,000 hours of simultaneous interpreting and around one million translated pages.

[www.icty.org](http://www.icty.org)

[www.icty.org/en/about/registry/translation-and-interpretation](http://www.icty.org/en/about/registry/translation-and-interpretation)

Acceptance Speech by Mr. John Hocking, Registrar of the ICTY:

<http://tinyurl.com/ydym15vz>

#### About the BDÜ Hieronymus Prize

Successful communication in several languages is a fundamental success factor for companies and international organisations. With this in mind, the German Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators (*Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V.* – "BDÜ") initiated the Hieronymus Prize in 2012 to provide recognition for exemplary achievements in the field of multilingual communication, and has awarded it annually ever since. When selecting the award winner, the main focus is not only on "what", i.e. the language service itself, but also on "how", i.e. the way in which translators, interpreters and customer work together. Over the years, and as a result of the prestigious roster of prizewinners, the occupations represented by the BDÜ have developed an increasingly positive image – the best practices, so to speak.

The prize is named after St Jerome ("Hieronymus" in German), the patron saint of translators.

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#### About the German Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators

##### *(Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V. – "BDÜ")*

With more than 7,500 members, the BDÜ is Germany's largest association for language professionals. The BDÜ represents approximately 80 per cent of all professionally organised translators and interpreters in Germany, promoting the interests of its members and the entire profession since 1955. Since its foundation in 1993, the BDÜ State Chapter of Thuringia has been operating as an independent professional association under the roof of the BDÜ Federal Association.

Membership in the BDÜ is a sure mark of quality for professional services in translating and interpreting, since all potential members are required to present evidence of their professional qualifications before they can join the Association. BDÜ members, who are in demand in Germany and beyond as communication experts for more than 80 languages and a large number of specialist areas, can be found quickly and easily in the online database on the association's website ([www.bdue.de](http://www.bdue.de)). A search specifically for Thuringia can be found on the State Chapter website.

BDÜ Federal Association Website: [www.bdue.de](http://www.bdue.de)

BDÜ State Chapter of Thuringia Website: [www.th.bdue.de](http://www.th.bdue.de)