



Part 1

Honouring Phyllis Omido

Environmental and human rights activist from Kenya

The Board of Trustees and the Executive Board of the ethecon Foundation Ethics & Economy honour Phyllis Omido, environmental and human rights activist from Kenya, with the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020, because she observes fundamental ethical and moral principles in the field of ethics and economy in an outstanding manner and thus protects the blue planet and defends it against the danger of becoming a dead, uninhabitable planet. In an outstanding way she opposes to oppression, exploitation, human rights violations, destruction of nature and social misery.

Phyllis Omido acts truthfully, in solidarity, with noble motives and without personal gain. For ecological and social interests, she accepts conflicts with rulers and disadvantages for her own life or her own existence without hesitation. She shows what is commonly called social responsibility and empathy.

Phyllis Omido defends the interests of humanity in a world increasingly focused on profit as the only criterion for all decision making and development, in resistance to the interests of the powerful. Often disadvantaged, marginalized and oppressed, constantly threatened and in danger, legally persecuted, arrested and almost murdered, she is one of those who strengthen humanity in the struggle for peace, justice and the protection of the environment.

Phyllis Omido has been deemed worthy and is personally honoured with the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020. She represents all those who are committed to saving the blue planet or who oppose to its decay into a dead, uninhabitable planet. May the award be an incentive for her and may her actions be a shining example to us all!

Accordingly, the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020 also sees itself as a mobilization for the commitment to peace, justice and environmental protection or for resistance against warmongering, exploitation and environmental destruction. It is intended to sensitize the public, name those who are responsible and reveal the connections.

Retaining the goals of the ethecon Foundation Ethics & Economy, the honouring of the environmental and human rights activist Phyllis Omido from Kenya with the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020 is a logical complement to the vilification of Jeffrey Preston Bezos from the USA, the extremely rich executive board member, company founder and major shareholder of the world's largest mail order company AMAZON with the International ethecon Dead Planet Award 2020.



Part 2

Justification of the award

In their decision to honour Phyllis Omido, environmental and human rights activist from Kenya, with the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board of the ethecon Foundation Ethics & Economics rely on news reports, on the facts known to the public, some of which have been known for years, on the information gathered by journalists around the world, on publicly available documents, on investigations by government agencies and social movement activists in various countries, and last but not least on the material published by Phyllis Omido.

In principle, it can be assumed that the reasons for the decision would have been even more consistent and comprehensive if all information, including the many undocumented and unpublished ones, had been available in full.

From the abundance of facts researched during the nomination process for the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020 for Phyllis Omido, the following are just a few examples:

Phyllis Omido followed her conscience as an employee of a metal refinery in Owino-Uhuru near Mombasa, Kenya, and pointed out to her superiors the enormous dangers that the melting down of car batteries for lead extraction posed to the unprotected workers and residents.

After her official investigation concerning the human and environmental poisoning caused by lead smelting was stopped by the management, Phyllis Omido continued the investigation on her own, interviewing residents and organizing costly blood tests.

When she realized the extent of the damage with regard to health and environment, she decided to give up her career in the company. She supported the women of the slum area surrounding the plant in protecting their interests and insisting on their rights. From 2010 to 2014, she organized protests, blocked highways and occupied the offices of authorities, endured arrests, intimidation, threats, slander and assassination attempts.

Even after Phyllis Omido and her allies had managed to push through the closure of the lead smelting plant in Owino-Uhuru in 2014, and her commitment had received international attention, she did not retreat into her private life: She invested the prize money from international awards and the proceeds from her book in the Center for Justice, Governance and Environmental Action (CJGEA), a non-governmental organization she founded to fight lead poisoning, clean up contaminated water and close down hazardous industrial plants throughout Kenya and beyond.



Conclusion

Board of Trustees and Executive Board declare:

The human rights and environmental activist Phyllis Omido (Kenya) defends human and environmental rights not regarding her own security and courageously opposes to injustice, state violence and corporate despotism. She resolutely stands up not only for human and environmental rights, but also for an expansion of these universal basic rights. She acts for the benefit of the human community. She upholds morals and ethics and opposes to the decline of the earth as a dead, uninhabitable planet.

In a world increasingly focused on profit as the sole criterion for all decisions and development, ethecon sees Phyllis Omido's actions as an outstanding contribution to saving and preserving our blue planet. For this admirable care and development of human ethics, ethecon Foundation Ethics & Economy honours Phyllis Omido with the International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020.

The International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020 to the human rights and environmental activist Phyllis Omido (Kenya) will be presented together with the International ethecon Dead Planet Award 2020 to Jeffrey Preston Bezos, the ultra-rich Chief Executive Officer, founder and largest shareholder of the world's largest mail order company AMAZON (USA) in a public ceremony in Berlin on 21st November 2020.



Part 3

Background

The two international ethecon Awards

Our Blue Planet is in serious danger. This can no longer be denied by politics and science. Wars, social misery and environmental ruin are spreading. The collapse of ecological systems is an imminent danger.

However, the cause is being denied. Responsible for the dangerous development for humans and the environment is the principle of profit, which is inextricably linked to the globally prevailing capitalist economic system. The destruction of fundamental ethical principles by the economy goes hand in hand with that disastrous economic law. The compulsion for the highest profit, inherent in economic law, systematically and inevitably promotes injustice, exploitation and ecological ruin. All the more so, as the profit principle is increasingly becoming the only criterion for the organization of society and environment.

ethecon is committed to anchoring ethical principles in economy and society, to shifting from the system of profit to a system of solidarity. Saving the planet will only be possible by overthrowing the profit principle.

Already in 2004, the year when ethecon was founded, the idea was born of awarding a foundation prize to promote efforts to preserve and save fundamental ethical principles. There have been and still are many prizes that honour achievements in the diverse areas of society, but there are far too few prizes that honour resistance to the abuse and the ruin of ethics and morals, both resulting in environmental destruction, war and exploitation.

The incipient discussion process about this prize, however, quickly showed that it is not enough to honour deeds in the struggle for ethics and morals, but that it is equally important to denounce misdeeds against ethics and morals. The idea of two interconnected ethecon prizes was born: The ethecon Positive Prize Blue Planet Award and the reciprocal ethecon Negative Prize Dead Planet Award. They form a unit, they are two sides of the same coin. Together they reflect the state of ethical principles that shape our world. And at the same time, they conjure up the vision of ethics and morality that makes a world without exploitation and oppression possible.

Thus, the two ethecon awards outlaw exploitation, war and environmental destruction and follow the ideals of peace, environmental protection and justice. They call for resistance, change and commitment in the spirit of these ideals; they stand up for a future worth living for this, our world. While one prize, the International ethecon Blue Planet Award, honours the commitment to the preservation or rescue of the blue



planet and draws attention to the urgent possibilities for action and the chances of change, the other, the International ethecon Dead Planet Award, denounces the violation of our earth, that is the danger of a dead, uninhabitable planet, and stigmatizes indifference and ignorance.

Together, the two International ethecon Awards show: There is hope. The strength lies within us, in each and every one of us.

Basically, only individuals and not institutions are awarded with the two prizes. This is to counteract the increasing and determined anonymity of decisions. Particularly in the case of negative developments, those responsible are only too happy to hide behind the facades of institutions and point to those alleged constraints to which the decisions are supposed to be owed, as it were, on their own. In the positive as well as in the negative, however, it always remains the same: it is always people who make decisions and bear responsibility.

In 2006, the two international ethecon prizes were awarded for the first time. Since then as a rule, the awards have been presented annually. While the elite who determine the global economy meet in each January in Davos, Switzerland, for the Economic Forum, ethecon calls for nominations for the two ethecon awards in an internationally distributed call for nominations. In a thorough selection process, the winners are chosen by the Foundation by August each year and are announced to the public on Peace Day, 21st September.

The two prizes are awarded each November in a large public ceremony in Berlin. Only the winners of the positive prizes are invited to attend, while the winners of the negative prizes are informed about their prize in an "open letter" published on the date of the award ceremony. Whereas the winners of the International ethecon Blue Planet Award receive their trophies of honour in person during the ceremony, the winners of the International Dead Planet Award are confronted with their trophies in the months after the award ceremony in the context of public activities.

As many civil society actors from all over the world as possible are being involved in the awarding activities. Not from the ruling circles and institutions, but from the resistant movements for peace, ecology and justice. This is to emphasize and make visible the inseparable connection between the two awards and the social movements and the importance of the awards concerning the commitment to these goals.

The trophies of the positive prizes are always designed by artists*. While art and culture are also increasingly subject to the dictates of profit, ethecon's artistic design of the ethecon Blue Planet trophies



enables art to take a stand in resistance to exploitation, environmental destruction and war, or in commitment to peace, ecology and justice.

When the two International ethecon Awards were born in 2005, the world-famous Otto Piene spontaneously agreed to create the annual prize trophies for the respective International ethecon Blue Planet Award as unique and valuable glass-wood sculptures.

After Piene last created the prize trophy in 2009 – then 82 years old - Katharina Mayer, the great photographic artist and Becher student (born in 1958), created the trophies from 2010 to 2018 and gave them a new unique character.

In 2019, ethecon chose a completely new way with the design of a mural as part of the trophy of the Blue Planet Award 2019. With the support of the Düsseldorf artist Klaus Klinger and the street art collective "Farbfieber", we brought the winner of the International ethecon Award 2019, her life's work and the International ethecon Honour Award into public space in a special way with a mural design on Toulouse Allee in Düsseldorf. The trophy itself showed an art print of the "Blue Planet" by Otto Piene and a photo of the mural signed by Klaus Klinger.

The respective prize trophy of the International ethecon Dead Planet Award is created completely differently. It is an industrially produced globe made of plastic. It is produced under exploitative and environmentally hostile conditions and subsequently alienated. The alienation of this object is deliberately not carried out by an artist* who creates the annual positive prize, but by an anonymous young person chosen for this purpose. In this way the defamatory trophy of the International ethecon Dead Planet Award is avoided being a work of art of a certain quality. It is guaranteed that no new value is created in our world, oriented towards usability. Especially for someone who - in the best sense of the word - has not deserved this appreciation. At the same time, as a representative of his generation, the young person stands symbolically for the endangered future of the blue planet or for all those who are threatened by a dead, uninhabitable planet. It is the youth whose future is being destroyed by the ecological, social and military ruin of the world.

It is typical that those denounced by the International ethecon Dead Planet Award tend to disregard the prize trophy awarded to them. To this day, not one of the reviled persons has personally received the abusive award and has faced up to the criticism in public. At best, the prize trophy could be handed over to a representative, such as a member of a press office. In most cases, ethecon witnessed the destroying of the reviling trophy by security staff.



ethecon Stiftung Ethik & Ökonomie
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International ethecon Blue Planet Award 2020

Justification

english german french spanish italian version

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Only by developing and implementing environmentally sound and humane economic and social models will it be possible to avert impending ecological and social catastrophes. ethecon Foundation Ethics & Economy works with vision and perspective, far beyond the generational transition.

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