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## **The UN Climate Change Secretariat appoints Bonn's Beethoven Orchestra as a "United Nations Climate Change Goodwill Ambassador"**

On Saturday, February 27, 2021, Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), appointed the *Beethoven Orchester Bonn* (BOB) as a "United Nations Climate Change Goodwill Ambassador" at the Deutsche Telekom AG Group Headquarters in Bonn, in the presence of Mayor Katja Dörner and General Music Director (GMD) of the City of Bonn, Dirk Kaftan.

"The work of the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn is testimony to the power of music to break down barriers and to build bridges between communities," said Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change. "I am delighted that the Orchestra has committed to help us in our work towards creating a more peaceful, inclusive and united world."

The presentation of the certificate took place during a recording of Beethoven's 6<sup>th</sup> Symphony, the so-called "Pastorale". The concert from the series *Beethoven Pur* will be broadcast on 29 March 2021 at 8.15 p.m. on the channel #dabeiTV on MagentaTV. The Symphony is considered an expression of Beethoven's love of nature: a praise of creation and at the same time a call to preserve and protect it.

The *Beethoven Pur* series is supported by Deutsche Telekom AG. All concerts were recorded at the headquarters of the telecommunications company. The first three symphonies could still be played and recorded in front of an audience in the fall of 2020, in accordance with Corona regulations. The final 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony will be broadcast live on April 17.

*Beethoven Orchester Bonn* (BOB) sees the award as an opportunity to take responsibility for the United Nations' Agenda 2030, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals to promote peace and protect our planet. "We understand music as an indispensable part of our lives. Music also has the power to help shape the future: in a humane way, with the goals of the United Nations guiding the way," says Dirk Kaftan, General Music Director of the BOB. A step in the direction of greater global responsibility was already taken in 2018 with the "Beethoven Moves" project, in which the BOB supports street children in Medellín together with the Don Bosco Mission Bonn.

"As the City of Bonn, we are extremely pleased that the UN Climate Change Secretariat has appointed the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn as a United Nations Climate Change Goodwill Ambassador," says Katja Dörner, Mayor of the City of Bonn. "In times when the climate crisis continues unabated, it is important to take responsibility to protect the environment for a common life on this planet. That's why I'm particularly grateful that Dirk Kaftan, together with the UNFCCC, has taken the initiative to highlight the importance of climate protection for the world."

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GMD Dirk Kaftan knows that it is not an easy task for an orchestra to act as a climate ambassador. However, he sets a good example by cycling almost daily from Drachenfelder Ländchen to his work at the Brückenforum or the Bonn Opera House.

Many different ideas for projects such as the support of *Eben!Holz e. V.*, which is concerned with the reforestation of exotic woods in Madagascar that are needed in musical instrument making, the more intensive promotion of public transport and bicycle traffic for and by concert visitors, and the use of sustainable and fair-trade products are currently being examined or are planned by the orchestra. An annual environmental charity gala on World Earth Day (5 June) in Bonn, 'charity cycling' inspired by the example of a sponsored run, and the widespread use of the UN's ActNow app by the orchestra and the public are further considerations. The BOB is already a member of "Orchestras of Change Germany" (Orchester des Wandels Deutschland e. V.) in order to contribute to climate and environmental protection in cooperation with other orchestras. The association was founded in June 2020 and promotes numerous projects for climate and nature protection with regular charity concerts - both on a regional and international scale.

"You can only change the world if you are willing to change yourself," says Kaftan. "That's why we will try to reach people's hearts with our ideas through various initiatives. As I am watching the global climatic development with great concern, it means a lot to me personally to be a United Nations Climate Change Goodwill Ambassador with our orchestra. We must try to stop climate change, and I am convinced: music can help."

The orchestra's central idea is to make concert visitors and music lovers individually aware of their opportunities to improve and protect the environment and the world.

Dr. Birgit Schneider-Bönninger, Head of the City of Bonn's Division of Sports and Culture, sees the ambassadorial role as an important step in setting the course for a climate-friendly cultural policy. "The City of Bonn is the first municipality to become a partner in the Action Network Sustainability in Culture and Media (Aktionsnetzwerk Nachhaltigkeit in Kultur und Medien, ANKM), which is sponsored by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media. Locally, we want to mobilize a shared responsibility for sustainability and exploit the emancipatory potential of the arts - for the shaping of a solidarity-based and climate-neutral society. As a UN Ambassador, the BOB can drive socio-ecological change and encourage people to change the world."

"Congratulations to the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn and Dirk Kaftan for being appointed "Goodwill Ambassador" of the UNFCCC. This award brings the UN and Bonn's culture closer together. Theater Bonn is also working intensively with the BOB and the UN on further cooperation opportunities and we look forward to announcing the result in a few weeks," said General Director Dr. Bernhard Helmich.

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Agenda 2030, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is a global plan to promote sustainable peace and prosperity and protect our planet. Since 2016, all countries have been working to translate this common vision to fight poverty and reduce inequalities into national development plans. In doing so, it is important to address the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable populations and countries - because only if no one is left behind can the 17 Goals be achieved by 2030.

ActNow is the United Nations' campaign for individual action on climate change and sustainability. It is about the individual contribution to curb global warming and to treat the earth with care. The ActNow app provides recommendations for everyday actions to reduce your carbon footprint. By changing our habits and choices, with a view to limiting negative impacts on the environment, we still have the opportunity to stop climate change.

For more information, visit: <https://unfccc.int> or [www.beethoven-orchester.de](http://www.beethoven-orchester.de)

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Impressum:

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