

***As crises become more complex, “prevention must be at  
the centre of everything we do”– on the occasion of the  
opening of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention  
in Dresden***

**Erich Marks**

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**Erich Marks**

**As crises become more complex, “prevention must be at the centre of everything we do”<sup>1</sup>  
– on the occasion of the opening of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention in Dresden –**

On the occasion of the opening of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention in Dresden, the metropolis on the Elbe River and capital of the state of Saxony, I extend a warm welcome to the more than 3,000 participants and guests.

From the list of the guests of honour, which is particularly long this year, I would like to especially welcome the following individuals as high-ranking representatives from civil society, politics, administration, science and non-governmental organisations<sup>2</sup>. I sincerely thank them and the representatives of the more than 30 partner institutions both for personally attending the congress and for their support of this year’s congress in terms of content, concept and financing:

*Dr. Andreas **Armborst***, Director of the National Centre for Crime Prevention (Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention, NZK), Bonn

*Dr. Hassan Abu **Arqoub***, Dar Al-Ifta (Jordanian Fatwa Authority), Amman

*Juma **Assiago***, Director UNHABITAT, Nairobi

*Prof. Dr. Dirk **Baier***, author of the report for the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention, Zurich

*Dr. Katarina **Barley***, Federal Minister of Justice and Consumer Protection, Berlin

*Heike **Bartesch***, Government Director at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), Berlin

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<sup>1</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/12/640812-un-chief-issues-red-alert-urges-world-come-together-2018-tackle-pressing#.WkpSkISdU1I> (last accessed 15 June 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Valid as of: 4 June 2018.

*Prof. Dr. Andreas **Beelmann***, Director of the Centre for Research on Right-Wing Extremism, Civic Education and Social Integration (KomRex) at the University of Jena

*Ralf **Berger***, President of the Sächsisches Landesamt für Schule und Bildung (Saxon State Office for School and Education), Chemnitz

*Dr. Ludovít **Biró***, Counsellor at the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Berlin

*Bianca **Biwer***, National Secretary of WEISSER RING, Mainz

*Prof. Dr. Thomas **Bliesener***, Director of the Lower Saxony Crime Research Institute (Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut Niedersachsen, KFN), Hanover

*Melanie **Blinzler***, Managing Director of the Crime Prevention Council of the city of Oldenburg (Pro)

*Achim **Brauneisen***, Chief Public Prosecutor of the State of Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart

*Prof. Dr. Marc **Coester***, President of the DBH Association for Social Work, Criminal Law and Crime Policy (Fachverband für Soziale Arbeit, Strafrecht und Kriminalpolitik), Cologne /Berlin

*Stefan **Daniel***, Executive Director of the German Forum for Crime Prevention foundation (Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention), Bonn

*Johannes **de Haan***, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer, United Nation Offices on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

*Réne **Demmler***, Deputy Commissioner in Dresden

*Günther **Ebenschweiger***, President of the Austrian Platform for Crime Prevention (Österreichische Plattform für Kriminalprävention), Hausmannstätten, Austria

*Bernhard **Egger***, Chief of the Criminal Division at the Bavarian State Office of Criminal Investigation, Munich

*Dirk **Feuerberg***, Head Senior Public Prosecutor, representative of the Chief Public Prosecutor of Berlin

*Sven Forkert*, Managing Director of the Saxony Crime Prevention Council, Dresden

*Dr. Peter Frank*, Federal Public Prosecutor General, Karlsruhe

*Prof. Dr. Ute Frevert*, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development (Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung), Berlin

*Heinz-Josef Friehe*, President of the Federal Office of Justice, Bonn

*Joachim Fritz*, Head of Department, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation, GIZ), Eschborn

*Prof. Dr. Helmut Fünfsinn*, Chief Public Prosecutor of the State of Hessen, Chairman of the Hessen Crime Prevention Council, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechensverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe, DVS), Frankfurt am Main

*Rainer Furth*, President of the Krefeld Police Headquarters

*Dr. Franziska Giffey*, Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Berlin

*Steve Goedert*, Director of Crime Prevention in Luxembourg, Luxembourg

*Prof. Dr. Christian Grafl*, Institute for Criminal Law and Criminology, University of Vienna; representative of the German Congress on Crime Prevention in Austria

*Petra Guder*, Programme Manager at the Glen Mills Academy Deutschland, Lübbecke

*Prof. Dr. Ute Ingrid Haas*, Chairwoman of the Lower Saxony Crime Prevention Council (Landespräventionsrat Niedersachsen), Hanover

*Thomas Hampel*, Inspector with the Bavarian Police, Munich

*Dr. Daniel Heinke*, Head of the Bremen State Office of Criminal Investigation

*Frank-Martin Heise*, Chief of the Criminal Division at the Hamburg State Office of Criminal Investigation

Dirk **Hilbert**, Mayor of the city of Dresden

*Prof. Dr. Ludwig Hilmer*, Vice-Chancellor of the Hochschule Mittweida (Mittweida University of Applied Sciences)

*Bernd Holthusen*, Section Head at the German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut, DJI), Munich

*Carsten Hütter* Member of the Landtag, deputy chairman of the AfD (Alternative for Germany) parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Elizabeth Johnston*, Secretary General of the European Forum for Urban Security (Efus), Paris

*Thomas Jungbluth*, Chief of the Criminal Division at the North Rhine-Westphalia State Office of Criminal Investigation, Düsseldorf

*Wilfried Kapischke*, Inspector with the Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Police, Schwerin

*Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Kerner*, Senior Professor at the University of Tübingen, Chairman of the German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechensverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe, DVS), Tübingen

*Petric Kleine*, President of the Saxony State Office of Criminal Investigation, Dresden

*Dr. Harald Kogel*, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Applied Police Sciences, Rothenburg OL

*Michael Kretschmer*, Minister-President of the Free State of Saxony and patron of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention, Dresden

*Prof. Dr. Michael Kubink*, Justizvollzugsbeauftragter des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (Prison Commissioner for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia), Cologne

*Daniela Kuge* Member of the Landtag, Spokeswoman for Family and Women's Affairs of the CDU parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Thomas Lenz*, State Secretary, Ministry of the Interior and Europe of the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schwerin

*Knut Lindenau*, Police Director for the state of Lower Saxony, Hanover

*Prof. Dr. Olaf Lobermeier*, Managing Director, proVal, Hanover

*Dr. Frank Lüttig*, Chief Public Prosecutor in Celle

*Geert W. Mackenroth* Member of the Landtag, Saxon Commissioner for Foreigners' Affairs, member of the CDU parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Dr. Susanne Mädrich*, Department Head at the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (BMJV), Berlin

*Oliver Malchow*, Federal Chairman of the Police Trade Union (Gewerkschaft der Polizei, GdP), Berlin

*Gisela Mayer*, Chairwoman of the Foundation Against Violence in Schools (Stiftung gegen Gewalt an Schulen), Winnenden

*Katja Meier* Member of the Landtag, member of the Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen (Alliance 90/The Greens) parliamentary groups in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Bernd Merbitz*, President of the Leipzig Police Department

*Gordian Meyer-Plath*, President of the Saxon State Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Dresden

*Prof. Dr. Dr. Grygorii Moshak*, Director of the Institute of German and European Law at the National Maritime University Odessa, representative of the German Congress on Crime Prevention in Ukraine

*Holger Münch*, President of the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation, Wiesbaden

*Jürgen Mutz*, President of the management council of the German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechenverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe, DVS), Immenstaad

*Dagmar Neukirch* Member of the Landtag, Parliamentary Secretary of the SPD parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Albrecht Nollau*, Superintendent of the Lutheran Church, Dresden-Nord

*Dr. Götz Nordbruch*, Managing Director, ufuq.de, Hamburg

*Andreas Nowack* Member of the Landtag, member of the CDU parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament and President of the Saxon road safety association, Dresden

*Dr. Prince Gill Ogbonna*, Secretary-General of the International Prison Chaplain Association Nigeria (ICPA), Owerri, Nigeria

*Temitope Olodo*, President of the Africa Security Forum, London

*Albrecht Pallas* Member of the Landtag, member of the SPD parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament, Dresden

*Daniel Hark-Mo Park*, Representative of the Korean Institute for Criminology (KIC), Seoul, Korea

*Thomas Ring*, Vice President of the Lower Saxony State Office of Criminal Investigation, Hanover

*Frank Ringhof*, Director of the German Armed Forces Service Centre (Bundeswehr-Dienstleistungszentrum), Dresden

*Reinhard Röttle*, Chief Public Prosecutor in Munich

*Rita Salgmann*, Chairwoman of the Commission for Crime Prevention (Kommission Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention, KPK), Stuttgart/Hanover

*Dr. Martin Schairer*, Mayor of Law, Security and Order of the city of Stuttgart, Chairman of the German-European Forum for Urban Security (DEFUS), Hanover/Stuttgart

*Joachim Schneider*, Executive Director of the Police Crime Prevention at State and National Level programme (Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes), Stuttgart

*Torsten Schultze*, President of the Görlitz Police Headquarters

*Frank-Michael Schwarz*, President of the Thüringen State Office of Criminal Investigation, Erfurt

*Dr. Peter Sicking*, Programme Manager, Lions Foundation Germany (Hilfswerk der Deutschen Lions), Wiesbaden

*Detlef Sittel*, Mayor of the city of Dresden

*Andreas Stenger*, Vice President of the Saxony State Office of Criminal Investigation, Dresden

*Gerald Stock*, Chief of the Criminal Division at the Saarland State Office of Criminal Investigation, Saarbrücken

*Hans Strobl*, Chief Public Prosecutor in Dresden

*PD Dr. Rainer Strobl*, Managing Director, proVal, Hanover

*Katrin Stüllenberg*, board of directors, Stüllenberg foundation, Münster-Hiltrup

*Sabine Thurau*, President of the Hessian State Office of Criminal Investigation, Wiesbaden

*Marten van de Donk*, Senior Manager of the European Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), Rotterdam, Netherlands

*Dr. Stefan von der Beck*, State Secretary in the Ministry of Justice of Lower Saxony, Hanover

*Dr. Chuanqi Wang*, Counsellor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Germany, Berlin

*Prof. Dr. Roland Wöller*, Saxon Minister of the Interior, Dresden

*Dr. Ulrike Zähringer*, Managing Director of the Deutsche Vereinigung für Jugendgerichte und Jugendgerichtshilfen (national association for juvenile courts and juvenile legal support, DVJJ), Hanover

*Matthias Zeiser*, Vice President of the Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei (German Police University), Münster-Hiltrup

*Dr. Pavel Zeman*, Chief Public Prosecutor of the Czech Republic, Prague

*Wolfgang Zepfer*, Chief Public Prosecutor, Schleswig

*Jörg Ziercke*, President of the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation, retired; Chairman of the National WEISSER RING organisation, Mainz

As part of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention, the 12th Annual International Forum (AIF), with English as the conference language, will also take place. I warmly welcome more than 200 foreign experts from a total of 54<sup>3</sup> countries who have accepted our invitation this year.

I would also like to mention a particular group of active congress participants whose overall number and proportion at German crime prevention congresses is traditionally very high. Allow me therefore to express special thanks to the more than 600 experts whose papers, presentations and contributions to the discussion make the extensive and wide-ranging programme of the 2018 annual congress possible in the first place.

### **German Congress on Crime Prevention network and partners of the 2018 annual congress**

The German Congress on Crime Prevention has grown over more than two decades to become the world's largest annual congress on crime prevention and related fields. It is extremely grateful to its more than 30 partner institutions for the close working relationship that has developed over many years and the associated crime prevention network. Our hosts in Dresden are the Free State of Saxony, the state capital Dresden and the Saxony Crime Prevention Council. On the part of the Federal Government, the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention is supported by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (BMJV). Our regular event partners are again the DBH Association for Social Work, Criminal Law and Crime Policy, Police Crime Prevention at State and National Level (ProPK), the German Forum for Crime Prevention foundation (DFK) and the organisation WEISSER RING. Other partners and sponsors of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention are the following institutions and organisations: Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung (Fe-

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<sup>3</sup> Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Finland, France, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iran, Ireland, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

deral Centre for Health Education, BZgA), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation, GIZ), Deutsche Sportjugend im Deutschen Olympischen Sportbund (German Sports Youth in the German Olympic Sports Association, DSJ), Deutscher Familiengerichtstag (German Family Court Committee, DFGT), Deutsches Jugendinstitut (German Youth Institute, dji), Deutsch-Europäisches Forum für Urbane Sicherheit (German-European Forum for Urban Security, DEFUS), European Forum for Urban Security (Efus), European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR), Glen Mills Academie, Deutscher Jugendgerichtstag (German Juvenile Court Committee, DVJJ), Hilfswerk der Deutschen Lions (Lions Foundation Germany, HdL), Kein Raum für Missbrauch (No Room for Abuse), Korean Institute of Criminology (KIC), Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony Criminological Research Institute, KFN), Nationales Zentrum Kriminalprävention (National Centre for Crime Prevention, NZK), Österreichischer Präventionskongress (Austrian Crime Prevention Congress), proVal, Stiftung gegen Gewalt an Schulen (Foundation Against Violence in Schools), Stüllenberg Stiftung (Stüllenberg foundation), the World Health Organisation's Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA), UN-HABITAT, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the European Union's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and Deutsche Post DHL as sponsor.

### **“Violence and Radicalism – Current Challenges for Prevention”**

The range of topics covered by the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention goes well beyond the key theme of “Violence and Radicalism – Current Challenges for Prevention”. It addresses a wide range of current questions and issues from across the whole area of crime prevention and related fields. The annual theme will, however, be the focus of special attention with a larger number of presentations and inputs. Furthermore, the key theme provides the thematic focus of the expert report for the congress, which was written this year by sociologist Prof. Dr. Dirk Baier from the Zurich University of Applied Sciences.

## Heiligenberg Talks 2018

The first Heiligenberg talks were held on 23 February 2018 in Überlingen on Lake Constance in memory and honour of the German Congress on Crime Prevention's longstanding report author and academic advisor, Dr. Wiebke Steffen, who died in the summer of 2017.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of Professor Baier's draft report, 20 crime prevention experts were involved in the talks at Lake Constance.<sup>5</sup>

Independently of the current key theme of the 2018 annual German Congress on Crime Prevention and with regard to the threefold responsibility of prevention policy, prevention research and prevention practice that the German Congress on Crime Prevention has been calling for for many years, Dr. Wiebke Steffen concluded her last official presentation at the opening event of the 22nd German Congress on Crime Prevention in Hanover on 19 June 2017 with the following words:

*“Prevention can, however, not only contribute to integration but also do this in a particularly effective and lasting manner if it itself is integrated. Allow me, therefore, to conclude by emphatically reiterating the German Congress on Crime Prevention's call for the establishment of cross-departmental crime prevention centres, a call that was also made at the 19th and the 21st German Congress on Crime Prevention. In order to meet the challenge of integrating refugees into our society, all stakeholders need to work together and develop integrative prevention strategies. For this purpose, cross-departmental crime prevention centres should be established or developed further at all levels – local authorities, federal states and the Federal Government. All areas of prevention – civil society institutions, youth welfare services, the police and judiciary, education and social policy institutions, the fields*

<sup>4</sup> Wiebke Steffen passed away on 22 July 2017, shortly after the 22nd German Congress on Crime Prevention. She and her husband lived in Heiligenberg, which is why the panel of experts met at Lake Constance. As it does each year, the German Congress on Crime Prevention has a report prepared to elaborate current facts and background information on the key theme of the annual congress. The report then forms the basis for the Dresden Declaration, which provides recommendations for politics, academic theory and field practice.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Andreas Armbrorst (Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention – National Centre for Crime Prevention), Prof. Dr. Dirk Baier (Zurich University of Applied Sciences), Prof. Dr. Andreas Beelmann (University of Jena), Karl-Günter Bilger (Wiebke Steffen's husband), Dr. Miryam Eser Davolio (Zurich University of Applied Sciences), Stefan Daniel (Stiftung Deutsches Forum Kriminalprävention – German Forum for Crime Prevention foundation), Irmtraud Eckart (ufuq.de), Michaela Glaser (Deutsches Jugendinstitut – German Youth Institute), Dr. Claudia Heinzlmann (Deutscher Präventionstag – German Congress on Crime Prevention), Thomas Heppener (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth), Anja Herold-Beckmann (Saxony Crime Prevention Council), Uwe Kemmesies (Federal Office of Criminal Investigation), Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Kerner (University of Tübingen, President of the German Congress on Crime Prevention), Saskia Lützing (Federal Office of Criminal Investigation), Erich Marks (German Congress on Crime Prevention), Andreas Mayer (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechenverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe – German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support), Thomas Müller (Lower Saxony Crime Prevention Council), Jürgen Mutz (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechenverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe – German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support), Harald Schmidt (ProPK – Police Crime Prevention at State and National Level), Céline Sturm (WEISSER RING).

*of public health, media, business, etc. – could work together in these crime prevention centres and build the foundation for a systematic and, in particular, lasting prevention strategy and prevention policy for the whole of society. In view of the major task of integration, the German Congress on Crime Prevention calls on policymakers to make appropriate funding available so that such crime prevention centres can be established and tested, particularly at the local level.”<sup>6</sup>*

## **Prevention policy is essential**

Following the parliamentary elections on 24 September 2017, the publication of the results of the Social Democratic Party of Germany’s members’ vote on 4 March 2018<sup>7</sup>, the coalition agreement released on 7 February 2018 “A new departure for Europe, a new dynamic for Germany, a new cohesion for our country: Coalition agreement between CDU, CSU and SPD”<sup>8</sup> is applied from now on for the work of the Federal Government prior to implementation. In margin lines 6306 ff, this agreement includes a separate chapter headed “Crime Prevention” containing a number of important prevention policy positions:

*“We stress the importance of social science and criminological security research, including the high relevance of studies on unrecorded crime and other empirical research, e.g. on organised crime, and want to strengthen these areas of scholarship in the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation and in academic research by universities and third parties. We advocate an evidence-based criminal policy. We want criminological evidence to be taken into account in both the preparation and evaluation of draft legislation. We support the independent German Forum for Crime Prevention. In order to get an overall picture of long-term crime trends, we are endeavouring to promptly update the Periodical Security Report. We will work together with the federal states to create a criminal justice statistics law in order to improve the quality of the criminal justice statistics. In the long term, the crime and criminal justice statistics should be aggregated to create flow statistics. A feasibility study should be commissioned for this purpose. In the growing field of Islamist extremism and terrorism in particular, we want to further strengthen prevention and deradicalisation, both nationally and at the EU level. We will curb radical Islam in Germany.*

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<sup>6</sup> 2017 Prevention Review, 22-23, <http://www.praeventionstag.de/html/download.cms?id=676&datei=TPN-2017.pdf> (last accessed 3 June 2018).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.spd.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/detail/news/ergebnis-des-spd-mitgliedervotums/04/03/2018/> (last accessed 3 June 2018).

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag\\_2018.pdf?file=1](https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag_2018.pdf?file=1) (last accessed 3 June 2018).

*We expect foreign imams to speak German. We will observe radicalised mosques and if necessary close them. We will coordinate the practical implementation of this between the Federal Government and the federal states. We will ensure that public Federal Government funds are not allocated to institutions and initiatives that evince anti-constitutional tendencies. We will continue the German Islam Conference. The state benefits provided for in the agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Central Council of Jews in Germany will be adjusted. We continue to acknowledge the special obligation we have towards the Germans in Central Eastern Europe and the successor states of the former Soviet Union who came to us as ethnic German resettlers or who live as German minorities in their regions of origin. We want to continue to support the national minorities in Germany and the German minorities in Denmark, in Central Eastern and Southeast Europe and the successor states of the former Soviet Union. We want to further develop measures to preserve the cultural heritage of the displaced, the ethnic German resettlers and the German minorities with their involvement, including structural involvement where appropriate.”*

The German Congress on Crime Prevention has repeatedly addressed the broad field of violence prevention from a variety of angles since 1995 at its previous annual congresses. The freely accessible, web-based German Congress on Crime Prevention database alone contains more than 1,000 references to presentations, documents, specialised organisations, etc. under the keyword violence prevention. In the coming years, too, the annual congresses and the DPT Institute for Applied Prevention Research will continue to address the discourse around the causes of human violence and the possibilities and strategies for real and effective prevention. Of increasing importance here is a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach in the spirit of Hannah Arendt’s statement “I want to understand” – an approach which still seems to be in its infancy. This is also true of Steven Pinker’s interesting and extensive historical perspective<sup>9</sup>, which he elaborated again last year in his latest book<sup>10</sup>, and of the highly readable, just published compact biological perspective by neuro-scientist and primatologist Robert Sapolsky.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*, (New York: Viking, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Robert Sapolsky, *Behave. The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst* (New York: Penguin Press, 2017).

It is clear that prevention practice and increasingly also prevention research have developed enormously and become more differentiated over the past years, decades and centuries – especially when we remember that Cesare Beccaria<sup>12</sup> as one of the central founders of modern criminology, argued that “it is better to prevent crimes than to punish them” as early/late as 1764.

What are now necessary and overdue are decisive input and specific, cross-departmental support measures by means of a completely new prevention policy that is based squarely on understanding. There must therefore be a push for policy priorities at the national level to go well beyond the small paragraph formulated in the aforementioned coalition agreement. Or, in the words of UN Secretary-General António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres: **As crises become more complex, “prevention must be at the centre of everything we do”**. In his acclaimed 2018 New Year’s address, the Secretary-General of the United Nations made an urgent appeal to political decision-makers around the world and called for efforts to prevent war, terror, enmity, environmental destruction, xenophobia and nationalism to be significantly stepped up. Guterres spoke of a “red alert” for our planet.<sup>13</sup>

### **On some of the DPT Institute For Applied Prevention Research’s key activities relating to the key theme of the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention**

The annual (inter-)national German Congress on Crime Prevention is closely connected with the research, transfer and communication projects of the DPT Institute for Applied Prevention Research (DPT-I).<sup>14</sup> The DPT Institute promotes dialogue between prevention research, prevention practice and prevention policy. Some of the institute’s current projects are worth mentioning here:

- On 17 June 2017 the DPT Institute together with the National Centre for Crime Prevention (Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention, NZK) held the **international conference “Building an evidence-base for the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism”**. The aim of the conference participants was to develop a reliable evidence base for political decision-makers and practitioners. Such a base is essential in order to be able to decide in future which programmes and measures are appropriate for the

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<sup>12</sup> English: [https://beccaria.de/nano.cms/en/Cesare\\_Beccaria/1/](https://beccaria.de/nano.cms/en/Cesare_Beccaria/1/) (last accessed 3 June 2018).

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.praeventionstag.de/nano.cms/news/details/2632> (last accessed 3 June 2018).

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.praeventionstag.de/nano.cms/institut>.

prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. A follow-up event for the autumn of 2018 is in preparation.<sup>15</sup>

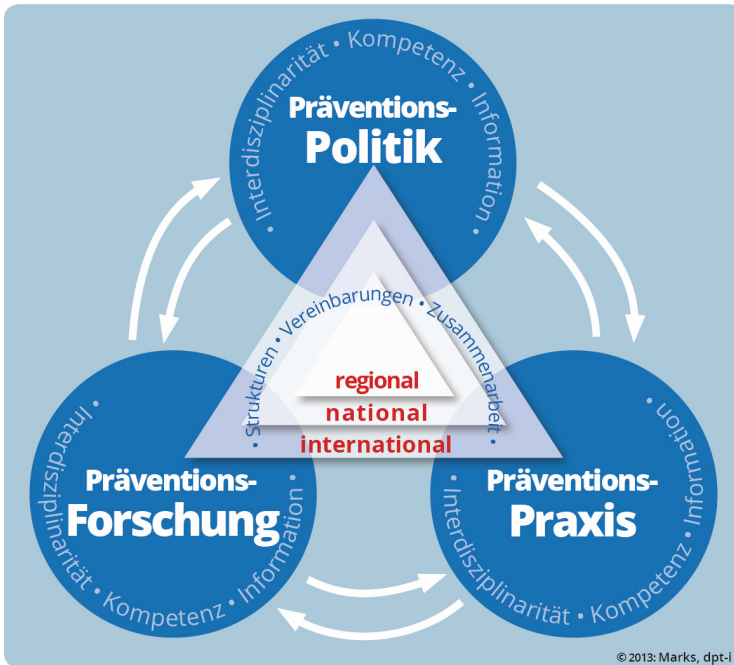
- The follow-up event to the 2016 symposium **“25 Jahre Gewaltprävention im vereinten Deutschland – Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven”** (25 years of violence prevention in unified Germany – evaluation and perspectives) was held in Hanover in November 2017 in cooperation with the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin and the Lower Saxony Crime Prevention Council. The participants discussed approaches and options for lasting prevention work in the future in the Federal Republic of Germany. Another follow-up event will take place in the autumn of 2018.<sup>16</sup>
- The DPT-I has been the associated partner in the collaborative project **“Radicalisation within the digital age – risks, processes and strategies for prevention (RadigZ)”**, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), since 15 February 2017. The collaborative project aims to draw up various prevention approaches and recommendations for action pertaining to development-related radicalisation processes. RadigZ takes particular account of the potential dangers of the internet as a central medium for the dissemination of extremist ideologies.
- On 1 August 2017 the DPT-I began a research partnership with the BMBF-funded collaborative project **“SiBa – Sicherheit im Bahnhofsviertel”** (“Safety in station districts”) under the direction of the Endowed Professorship of Crime Prevention and Risk Management at the University of Tübingen, in cooperation with the University of Wuppertal. SiBa aims to conduct a theoretical and empirical analysis of safety and security in changing station districts. The focus is on the station districts of the associated partner cities of Düsseldorf, Leipzig and Munich.
- The DPT-I began its partnership in the EU project **“Local Institutions Against Violent Extremism II”** (LIAISE 2) on 1 July 2016. The institute is working together with the association German-European Forum for Urban Security (DEFUS) for this project. As part of the collaboration, the partners hosted the webinar series “Extremist Radicalisation – Challenges for local authorities and possibilities for prevention”.

<sup>15</sup> [www.cve-conference.de](http://www.cve-conference.de).

<sup>16</sup> [www.gewalt-praevention.info](http://www.gewalt-praevention.info).

- On 1 June 2014 the DPT-I entered into an associated partnership in the collaborative project “**Aspekte einer gerechten Verteilung von Sicherheit in der Stadt**” (“Aspects of a fair distribution of safety in the city”, VERSS), funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Neighbourhoods are as diverse as their inhabitants. In VERSS the partners have developed concepts with which they hope to ensure that safety and security are distributed fairly and equitably within a city. The project ended with the publication of guidelines.
- The German-European Forum for Urban Security (DEFUS) and the German Congress on Crime Prevention’s Institute For Applied Prevention Research (DPT-I) have jointly created a webinar series examining the various aspects of the issues of extremism and radicalisation. The **webinar series** was part of the Europe-wide project LIAISE 2 (Local Institutions Against Extremism) and was funded by the EU. The title of the series was: “**Extremist Radicalisation – Challenges for local authorities and possibilities for prevention**”. In the field of preventing extremist attitudes and behaviours and in de-radicalisation approaches, a sensitive approach and sound knowledge of the conceptual differences are highly relevant. There is also a high level of interest in sharing knowledge and experience with a view to potential counter-strategies. With the webinar series, DEFUS and the DPT-I want to deepen the knowledge of stakeholders in the field of extremism prevention and thus improve the quality of prevention work. The series is aimed at specialists and employees of the local authorities who are confronted with questions relating to extremism and radicalisation in their everyday work.

## Policy, research and practice as key areas of crime prevention work



The diagram depicts, firstly, the interconnectedness of these three spheres of activity on the different levels, from the regional to the international level, and the necessity of cooperation between the areas of activity based on principles of subsidiarity (both top down and bottom up). Secondly, the fields of prevention policy, prevention research and prevention practice can only work together effectively if specific conditions for cooperation are created in each field of work:

- a. multidisciplinary working methods in each sphere of activity,
- b. determination of the position and profile of each sphere of activity, and
- c. development of information and communication strategies by each sphere of activity.

The German Congress on Crime Prevention is committed to inviting and addressing in particular those in positions of responsibility in the three key areas of prevention policy, prevention research and prevention practice. A clear sense of these three main areas is emerging only

slowly and sometimes laboriously. We traditionally know politicians for internal affairs, social affairs, foreign affairs or areas like defence as a matter of course – prevention politicians currently still struggle to establish themselves across the board and are therefore a rarity.

In both academia and practice the situation is similar. There are only a few dozen renowned researchers across Europe who describe themselves as crime prevention scholars. And in practice people still tend to speak of experts in youth issues, in social work, or perhaps addiction issues, but far too rarely of qualified crime prevention professionals.

Over the past two decades, the promotion of exchange and cooperation between these different fields of prevention work and the different levels of their activities has emerged as a central function of the German Congress on Crime Prevention.

On the horizontal axis a particular focus is on improving networking and coordination between the numerous different initiatives, institutions and organisations with their various crime prevention competencies. This refers to the local level, the level of the federal states and the national level. On the vertical axis there is a need, generally speaking, for a much better information and cooperation policy between the local, regional and (inter-)national levels. Here, nationally and internationally, there is still a lot to do and to be improved.

(Inter-)nationally it can be seen at present that everywhere particular emphasis is being placed on the importance of preventive action. Given the large number of unwanted social and political conditions and developments, there are calls for a significant increase in prevention measures, prevention orientations and prevention strategies. But these calls for “more prevention” are all too rarely combined with clear ideas, plans and indications of concrete proposals for political or practical preventive action.

As a precondition for targeted and concrete preventive action – and particularly in view of the current global social, political and climatic conditions – it is necessary to understand the situation as well as possible. The development of effective prevention and intervention strategies to combat crime and violent extremism is of course a task for the whole of society and also depends to a large extent on civil society initiatives and discourses. In the broad field of state and professional action, the areas of prevention policy, prevention research and prevention practice are therefore currently particularly called for in order to develop prevention strategies for the whole of society.

**I hope that the 23rd German Congress on Crime Prevention will be a rich source of insight and encouragement for all participants and guests for their ongoing work in the field of crime prevention.**

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