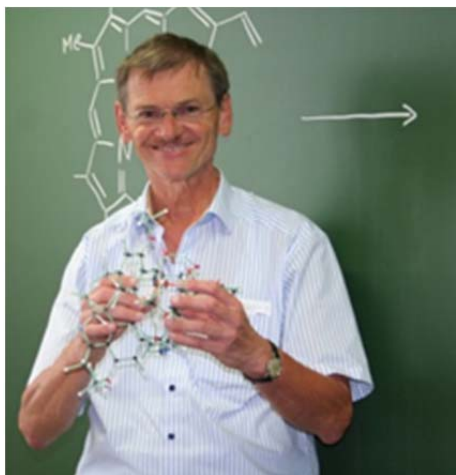


## Honorary Doctorate for Gerhard Bringmann

During the celebration of their 30th anniversary, the Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) in Goma in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has awarded the honorary doctorate to the natural-products chemist Gerhard Bringmann from Würzburg, Germany.



Gerhard Bringmann talks about bioactive agents from nature – at the blackboard and with a molecular model (photo: Ch. Froschgeiser)

In doing so, the Congolese University acknowledges the scientific merits of Prof. Gerhard Bringmann in the field of Natural Products Chemistry, his commitment in building up the Excellence Scholarship Program BEBUC in the Congo, and, in particular, his support for the university in Goma.

Goma, capital of the Province of North Kivu, is situated on the picturesque Lake Kivu, surrounded by active volcanos. But Goma is also an area of conflict in the region where the country shares borders with Rwanda and Uganda, and scene of many armed conflicts. It was all the more important for Bringmann to strengthen education right here, by the scholarship program BEBUC following its motto "Without Education no Welfare and Peace".

### About the Honorary Doctor

Gerhard Bringmann has been holder of the Chair of Organic Chemistry at the University of Würzburg since 1987. From 2003 to 2015, i.e. for the entire term of the project, he was the speaker of the interdisciplinary research network SFB 630 "Agents against Infectious Diseases".

Bringmann is Chairman of the Senate and Vice Chairman of the University Council of the University of Würzburg. From 2006 to 2009 he was the foundation speaker of the "Africa Circle at the University of Würzburg" (today "Forum Africa Center"), since 2014 he has been a founding member of the Steering Board of the *Bavarian Research Institute of African Studies* (BRIAS).

Bringmann had already received honorary doctorates from three other Congolese universities: from the University of Kinshasa, from the Université Catholique du Graben, and from the Université Officielle de Ruwenzori. At two Chinese universities he was awarded honorary professorships: at Peking University and at Jinan University in Guangzhou.

He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and of the African Academy of Sciences. Bringmann received numerous other distinctions and awards, not only for his scientific research, but also for his teaching and for his humanitarian commitment. His achievements are documented in ca. 700 publications and patents.

### The Scholarship Program BEBUC in Goma

The ULPGL was founded in 1985 as a Protestant Theological Institute and was transformed into a university in 1990. At present, there are a little more than 3,000 students and, according



Accepted the honorary certificate on behalf of G. Bringmann: Prof. V. Mudogo (photo: B. Nkombera Miruho)

to the "4icu University Web Ranking", it is on the third rank among the 18 best universities of the Congo. Besides the already existing six faculties, a faculty of medicine has been founded only recently.

The scholarship program BEBUC has been existing in Goma since 2012. Today, already six students from different faculties and two pupils from the associated secondary school Metanoïa are being supported.

The objective of the scholarship program is the reconstruction of Congolese universities, hence, BEBUC is at the same time a motor for the reconstruction of the country. The program is being supported mainly by the foundation Else-Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung, as well as by many personal sponsors and by the foundation Holger-Pöhlmann-Stiftung. Presently BEBUC supports 165 scholars at 24 Congolese partner institutions.

Together with the introduction of the scholarship program in Goma, Bringmann initiated a partnership contract with the University of Würzburg. In the same year, the Rector of the ULPGI, Professor Leopold Kambale Karafuli, visited the Chairman of BEBUC in Würzburg, and together they were welcomed by the President of the University of Würzburg, Alfred Forchel. In 2014, Bringmann sent more than 10 tons of scientific books to Goma. These materials are designated especially for the new Faculty of Medicine.

### Solemn Ceremony

The donation of the honorary doctorate was embedded in the three days' celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the ULPGI, which presented itself as a *Development Factor for the Region of the Great African Lakes*.

For health reasons, Bringmann could not travel to Goma. On his behalf Virima Mudogo, professor of Chemistry at the University of Kinshasa, accepted the award. Mudogo has been a close collaboration partner of Bringmann's for more than 20 years and co-founder of BEBUC. Jointly they received various distinctions, among them the Civic Medal 1st Class of the Congolese People in Gold, and the Gusi Peace Prize.

During the ceremony Mudogo read a personal greeting of Bringmann. He also presented Bringmann's scientific presentation: a video about the discovery of Mbandakamine A, a novel alkaloid with an extraordinary structure and a promising antimalarial activity, named after the Congolese town of Mbandaka. He highlighted Bringmann's scientific and humanitarian merits and conveyed regards of the President of the University of Würzburg.

The certificate of the honorary doctorate was handed over by the Rector of the ULPGI, L. Karafuli. In addition, the ULPGI conferred further honorary doctorates, i.a. to the Governor of the Province of North Kivu.

### Thanks by the Honorary Doctor

"I am grateful for this distinction and I am looking forward to the further collaboration with our partner university in Goma and their competent Rector Léopold Karafuli concerning science and the support of young academics", says Bringmann. "My thanks is also due to my collaboration partners Virima Mudogo, Karine Ndjoko, and Hypolite Mavoko, without whom all our achievements would never have been possible.

### Contact

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On the Scholarship Program BEBUC and on the NGO *Förderverein Uni Kinshasa e.V.*:  
[www.foerderverein-uni-kinshasa.de](http://www.foerderverein-uni-kinshasa.de)



Presented the new honorary doctor and his scientific and humanitarian merits: V. Mudogo  
(photo: B. Nkombera Miruho)



The traditional robes illuminated the celebration (from the left): Pastor Dr. Ph. Kakule Molo, Representative of the Baptists, V. Mudogo, J. Paluku Kahongya, Governor of the Province of North-Kivu  
(photo: B. Nkombera Miruho)