

Mr. Pranas Kūris was born in Šeduva, Republic of Lithuania, on 20 August 1938. From 1956 to 1961 studied Law at Vilnius University. After graduation from Faculty of Law with honours Mr. Pranas Kūris stayed there as a lecturer. In October 1963 he entered post-graduate studies in Moscow M. Lomonosov University and in April 1965 defended his thesis for a candidate's of law degree "The Status of the Free City in International Law". After he had returned to Vilnius, gave lectures in Faculty of Law at Vilnius University. From October 1967 to August 1968, he undertook advancement training in the Institute of International Studies at Paris University and from July to September 1970 at the Research Center of Hague Academy of International Law. In 1973 Mr. Pranas Kūris was awarded Dr. Hab. of Law for a thesis "Responsibility of States and its Foundations in Modern International Law" at Moscow State University. During the periods of 1969 - 1971 and 1974 - 1977 was Dean of Faculty of Law at Vilnius University and since 1975 – a Full Professor in International Law. As the 1977-1991 Minister of Justice of Lithuanian S.S.R., Mr P. Kūris worked as a professor in Law Faculty at Vilnius University, and delivered the course on International Law, as well as acted as a supervisor for diplomas and candidate theses. In 1990 on the recommendation of the Senate of Vilnius University prof. P. Kūris was elected a corresponding member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and in 1996 became its full member.

The focus of prof. Pranas Kūris' scientific research has been International Law.

His major works analyse the theme of responsibility of a State for its internationally wrongful acts. More than 60 of works were published on this subject, the most recognized of which is a monograph in Russian "Violations of International Law and Responsibility of States". The United Nation International Law Commission made use of the monograph conclusions when drafting the project on the International Convention on State Responsibility (prof. R. Ago - special speaker). The works reveal the modern content of international legal responsibility of States, its character and functions, the questions related to internationally wrongful acts as a basis for responsibility have been analysed in detail: elements constituting wrongful act, classification of wrongful acts, problem of "law abuse" etc. The total number of works on international law published in Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, French, English and other languages reaches 100, including 6 books. While disseminating the knowledge of law the author published about 200 articles in encyclopedias and periodicals.

Much of prof. P. Kūris' research is devoted to improvement of laws of the Republic of Lithuania, questions related to legal system reform. He was the head of draft legislation commissions and work groups, as well as a member of the groups for Constitution, Citizenship, Referendum, International Treaties, Diplomatic Service et cetera. He frequently presented conclusions on projects of laws as an expert.

Prof. P.Kūris was the editor and supervising translator into Lithuanian of most important international legal documents, which include: Statutes of

United Nation Organization and the Statute of International Court (1981) (second edition in 1994); “Protection on Human Rights. Major International Instruments” (1989); and “Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights” by V.Berger.

Prof. P. Kūris has read a number of scientific reports in different international conferences in Paris, London, Delhi, Caracas, Jerusalem, Moscow, Brussels, Louvain, the Hague, Rouen etc.

Prof. P. Kūris was the head of co-ordinative Council on Problems of Law under the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. In December 1995, during the session of general meeting of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, he made a leading report on legal system reform in the Republic of Lithuania. Prof. P. Kūris was a member of dissertation committees, participated in the work of Dr. Hab. thesis defending committee.

In 1990–1991 Prof. P. Kūris was a member of the Delagation of the Republic of Lithuania for Negotiations with the USSR, designed projects of negotiation documents. From 1992 to 1994 he was appointed as an Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and granted the title of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. Prof. P.Kūris took part in many international forums in Brussels, where he had given information on the economic and political situation in Lithuania, its legal system and foreign policy. Since April 1994, Prof. P.Kūris was elected Judge at the European Court of Human Rights by the European Council Parliamentary Assembly (Starsbourg). He took part in trying about 500 international cases, was a member of editorial committees of a number of judgements. From 1 January 1995 to October 1998 was President of the Supreme Court of Lithuania. Acting as a head of the Senate of Judges took part in preparing explanatory statements of laws, enabling to establish the unified court practice.

Prof. P. Kūris’ research and pedadgogical activities as well as activities in State institutions was of great use in forming up the diplomatic corpus of the Republic of Lithuania. A number of his former students have been appointed ambassadors or hold other responsible positions within the public service of the Republic of Lithuania.

Prof. P. Kūris is a Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas Second Order Cavalier and awarded the Order of Great Cross of the Kingdom of Norway.

For a tremendous contribution in the restoration of the State, fostering the national legislation, improving the image of the Republic of Lithuania in Europe and the world, for the implementation of human rights’ protection and raising new generation of lawyers, the Senate of the Law University of Lithuania under the resolution No 53 of 12 February 2001 granted Prof. P. Kūris the title of Doctor Honoris Causa.



* Photo: Council of Europe