

**Embargo: 9 November, 14:00 hours CET**

## **Hungary Wins International Danube Art Master Competition**

VIENNA, 9 November – Four Hungarian kids have won the 'International Danube Art Master 2007' competition, announced Gyula Hollo, Head of the Hungarian Delegation to the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) today. Mr. Hollo made the announcement at Budapest University of Technology and Economics.

The winning submission was created by Vanda Csege, Nikolett Rozsnaszki, Kitti Ottlakan, and Virginia Dendök from the Móra Ferenc Primary School of Mályi, Hungary. Their creative, artistic sculpture depicted the Danube Fairy hoisting anchor to collect people's waist in the river. The entry convinced the judges due to its beauty, linked with a clear message not to litter our rivers. The fragile sculpture, which is made of wood, grass and flowers, was inspired by the old Hungarian folk song "The wind is blowing from the Danube".

The International Master is selected from the winners of the national 'Danube Art Master' competitions in 14 Danube Basin countries including Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. All children and schools from these 14 countries were invited to apply. Some 3,000 applications were submitted.

Honour Awards are also handed over by Coca-Cola Hungary and Global Water Partnership Hungary.

The "International Danube Art Master 2007" competition was announced on Danube Day on 29 June, 2007. The competition was linked to the event's central theme – "The Danube – Celebrating Cultures" – to illustrate the cultural richness of the Danube river basin and how rivers and culture connect people.

Children were encouraged to visit local rivers and surrounding environments and to think about their importance in cultural terms. They were then asked to reflect their thoughts and inspirations through environmental art using materials from in and around the river.

Other examples of prize-winning submissions at the national level included Bulgaria's 'Fishermen' made from straw, and Czechs 'Bridal tangle' of mud and leaves on a river shore.

The competition was jointly organized by the ICPDR and the Danube Environmental Forum (DEF), the largest network of environmental NGOs in the Danube Basin.

"We believe that this competition encourages children to learn more about the Danube and help protect it," said ICPDR Executive Secretary Philip Weller. "It is also an artistic reminder for adults and the representatives of Danube national governments of their joint responsibility to ensure that the Danube is protected for future generations."

The award ceremony in Budapest was attended by the Danube Art Master winners, Mr. Gyula Hollo and representatives from the Danube country embassies represented in Budapest. After the ceremony, the winners joined a three-day environmental programme, supported by Coca-Cola and organized by the Global Water Partnership Hungary and the Hungarian Ministry of Environment and Water, which includes trips to the Budapest Zoo, the Esztergom Danube Museum, to the Nature History Museum and a boat visit to the town of Szentendre.

**International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)**

*The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) is an international organization consisting of 13 cooperating states and the European Union. Since its establishment in 1998, the ICPDR has grown into one of the largest and most active international bodies of river basin management expert in Europe. ICPDR deals not only with the Danube itself, but also with the whole Danube River Basin, which includes also its tributaries and the ground water resources.*

*The ultimate goal of the ICPDR is to implement the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC) and make it a living tool. Its ambitious mission is to promote and coordinate sustainable and equitable water management, including conservation, improvement and rational use of waters for the benefit of the Danube River Basin countries and their people. The ICPDR pursues its mission by making recommendations for the improvement of water quality, developing mechanisms for flood and accident control, agreeing standards for emissions and by assuring that these are reflected in the Contracting Parties' national legislations and applied in their policies.*

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For further information and photos of the winning artwork, contact:

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