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TURKISH PRIME MINISTER’S WATER PRIZE WILL BE GIVEN

FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE 5th WORLD WATER FORUM

Turkish and foreign media have been informed in detail at Istanbul’s *Su Ada* (Water Island) about the 5th World Water Forum which will take place on March 16-22, 2009 as Istanbul will become the capital of water during that week. It was announced that Turkish Republic Prime Minister’s Water Prize would be given for the first time during the Forum.

The Turkish Prime Minister’s Water Prize is in the amount of 40.000 Euro from which one Turkish and one foreign media representative will share the award. Exceptional journalistic articles that underscore the Forum’s theme ‘Bridging Divides for Water’ and raise awareness of water issues and solutions will be considered for the award. Applications and article submissions are being accepted via the Forum’s Virtual Meeting Space (<http://portal.worldwaterforum5.org>). The selection of the International Jury is underway.

On the *Su Ada* today, a short press briefing was held with the President of the World Water Council (WWC) Mr. Loïc Fauchon, the Secretary General of 5th World Water Forum Prof. Dr. Oktay Tabasaran and Vice Secretary General Prof. Dr. Ahmet Mete Saatçi. Following the briefing, a question and answer period was held at a press dinner with journalists from the international press agencies. During the press events, the characteristics of the 5th World Water Forum and the differences from previous World Water Fora were emphasized.

FORUM CHARACTERISTICS

The 5th World Water Forum, the biggest water event of the world has the theme of ‘Bridging Divides for Water’ as Turkey, and particularly Istanbul, stands

at the point where cultures, continents, and people meet. The Forum has as its goal to bridge all divides in regards to water resources management. The main actors involved in the Forum's organization are the World Water Council (WWC), General Directory of State Hydraulic Works (DSİ), Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB), and Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (İSKİ). The Forum venue is the Golden Horn Congress and Exhibition Centre, as well as the Feshane Registration and Fair Centre. Water resources and management, **drought and global changes**, sectors such as health, energy, and agriculture **that are directly** related to water, new technologies and solutions are high on the **agenda for the Forum discussions**.

DIFFERENCES FROM PREVIOUS FORA

Many key new initiatives have been integrated into the preparations of the 5th World Water Forum which set it apart from previous Fora, including:

*** HEADS OF STATE/GOVERNMENTS PROCESS: Political process and Ministers' Conference** will bring together heads of state/government. With local elected officials, parliamentarians and ministers they will discuss 'Water Management Adaptation Strategies for Global Changes, including Climate Variability/Change'. The main objective is to create the political will to take action.

*** MAJOR GROUPS OF AGENDA 21:** Systematic participation of Major Groups of Agenda 21 is the target. Special efforts will be made to ensure that the nine Major Groups, namely women, youth and children, business and industry, local governments, science and technology, workers and trade unions, indigenous people, farmers and NGOs, are integrated into the different platforms of the Forum.

*** GREEN FORUM INITIATIVE:** The Green Forum Initiative is a new feature of the 5th World Water Forum that aims to reduce the environmental footprint, including waste and emissions, resulting from the preparation and organization of the event. As part of this initiative forum co-organizers have committed to plant a tree for every participant at the Forum.

* **ISTANBUL URBAN WATER CONSENSUS:** Local authorities will gather within the framework of political process to develop and sign the Istanbul Urban Water Consensus. It is a non-binding document of principles designed to strengthen the commitment of mayors and to bring the issues and solutions to the attention of governing bodies, legislators and the international community.

FORUM PREPARATION

The World Water Forum takes three year to prepare. It is the synthesis of regional, national and international meetings. The 5th World Water Forum Secretariat has participated at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD-16), Stockholm Water Week, EXPO Zaragoza and will participate at the International Water Association's (IWA) Conference of Sustainable Water Management in Vienna from September 7-12. The first Preparatory Committee Meeting of Political Process in Paris September 11-12. Dozens of regional and local meetings also provide inputs to the Forum's preparatory process, such as a local conference in Konya, Turkey (September 11-12, 2008) will discuss drought and aquifers. Tomorrow TÜSİAD's 'Sustainable Water Management Conference will take place at Ceylan Intercontinental Hotel. The President of WWC Mr. Loic Fauchon and General Secretary of the 5th World Water Forum Prof. Dr. Oktay Tabasaran will make keynote addresses.

World Water Forum comes to Istanbul after Morocco (1997), the Netherlands (2000), Japan (2003) and Mexico (2006) and it will be the event of the year 2009.

The Forum welcomes politicians, professionals, NGOs, in short everyone with an interest in water issues. Contributions to the preparation of the Forum, as well as registration to attend the Forum can be made via the Forum's Virtual Meeting Space (VMS) at <http://portal.worldwaterforum5.org>.

DIRTY WATER KILLS 4500 CHILDREN EVERY DAY

Worldwide over 1.1 billion people (roughly 20 % of the world population) lack access to safe drinking water. 2.6 billion people lack sanitation. Lack of clean water is the leading cause of disease in the world resulting in 4500 children

dying each day, or 5 million lives each year. This data is a stark reminder of the importance of the 5th World Water Forum.

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