

**Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Katalin Annamária Bogyay at the
side event organized by UNESCO and Honduras entitled
An Ocean without history? - The importance of underwater cultural heritage**

Monday, 5 June 2017

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Your Excellences, Distinguished Colleagues,
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In recent years, underwater cultural heritage has attracted increasing attention from both scientific community and general public, being an invaluable source of information on humanity's history, and a driver for social and economic development.

Hungary ratified the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage in 2014. It was my great pleasure to personally submit the instrument of ratification as Permanent Delegate of Hungary to the UNESCO in Paris at that time. With that, Hungary joined the efforts on raising awareness about the importance of providing the same type of protection to underwater cultural heritage as that already accorded to land-based heritage. Our goal is to increase cooperation in the protection of underwater cultural heritage from pillaging and commercial exploitation also in landlocked states.

Hungary has got a wide potential on river and lake underwater cultural heritage and underwater archaeology, as well as important cultural links to the shipwrecks resulting from the naval endeavors of the Austro-Hungarian fleet. It is of symbolic value to my country that the international team of divers who explored the shipwreck of Saint Stephen's battleship that shrank in 1918 was composed of representatives from the diverse nations of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, working all together on this historic cultural heritage, ninety years later in 2008.

We welcome that today's side event co-organized by UNESCO and Honduras raised awareness about the importance of underwater cultural heritage by highlighting the role of ocean history as well as underwater cultural assets and natural resources for achieving ocean sustainability and fully implementing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 on conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources.

As co-moderator of the Working-Level Dialogue under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly on improving the integration and coordination of the work of the United Nations on the water-related SDGs, I am pleased that UNESCO participated at both dialogue meetings. UNESCO enriched the discussion by disseminating their successful work on the World Water Development Report, as well as their Hydrological Program. After the second successful dialogue that we just held with Tajikistan in the Trusteeship Council on 30 May, we are seeking guidance by the President of the of the General Assembly on possible next steps. It is clear that there is willingness by Member States to continue the dialogue in some form.

Cooperation on oceans and other natural resources management, such as surface and groundwater is of particular important in preventing conflicts. Water connects us all. This has been the motto of the Budapest Water Summit of 2013 and 2016, reflecting Hungary's engagement in linking policy makers to all stakeholders, who are active in the international water arena, including on strengthening the science policy interface.

I have been promoting mutual understanding by looking at convergences when bridging positions and working towards a closer science-policy interface.

Hungary has been in the forefront of raising the profile of water in the scientific community through organizing and co-hosting the World Science Forum with UNESCO from the very beginning, dating back to 1999, when the first World Science Conference had been initiated by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and UNESCO with the support of the Government of Hungary. At this year's forum taking place on 7-11th November, in Amman, dedicated sessions will deal with the energy and water nexus. I will lead the panel on Women in Science, where we are going to tackle the water related aspects as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I encourage you all to reinforce our joint efforts in linking science and policy, so as to bring together people from the political, researcher and implementation levels for closer cooperation among our countries and nations to do more on prevention, and thereby contributing to peace and achieving stability.

I thank you for your kind attention!