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Henri, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, was awarded the international Charles IV Prize in Karolinum - the historical seat of Charles University - on Friday 13th May 2016. This prize is awarded to personalities of importance who have achieved significant recognition in Europe through their cultural, scientific or political work, and have contributed to the positive direction of the current civilisation.

The Grand Duke of Luxembourg received the prize - which is awarded by Charles University and the capital city of Prague - one day before the 700th anniversary of the birth of Charles IV. Interestingly, the Grand Duke is only the sixth person to receive this important award so far. In the past, significant personalities from the fields of philosophy, music or medicine were laureates of the prize - including Paul Ricoeur, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, Mstislav Leopoldovich Rostropovich, Ivan Moravec and John Foxton Ross Kerr.

The Rector of Charles University, Tomáš Zima, spoke at the event: "I am very glad that Henri, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, became the next laureate of the international Charles IV Prize for his activities in the fields of politics, ecology, social affairs, culture and sport. This prize was renewed after fourteen years, and this year's 700th anniversary of the birth of Charles IV has been a unique occasion, awarding it to a representative of the Luxembourg line - the members of which had played an essential role in the history of Czech lands."

Furthermore, the Mayor of Prague, Adriana Krnáčová, followed: "By awarding the prize to Henri of Luxembourg, the capital city of Prague voices its gratitude to the Luxembourg dynasty for the role its members played by its formation. It was this family that gave Prague the fundament on which the unique ensemble was able to grow, which is nowadays admired by the whole world. In a symbolic way we hereby renew the connection between Prague and Luxembourg and we lay a new foundation to future close relations."

The connection between the capital city of Prague and Charles University is not accidental. The Bohemian King Charles IV was not only a great statesman - who was able to complete the development of the Bohemian state of the Přemyslids and connect the Bohemian Royal and Holy Roman Imperial thrones - but he was also a creator and founder. It was his achievement that Prague became the residential city of the Holy Roman Empire and it was also thanks to his incentive that the first university in the area of Central Europe was founded here.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Executive Board of the Charles IV Prize to select the person to be awarded with the international Charles IV Prize, and this Board is made up by a combination of the representatives of the capital city of Prague and Charles University. The selection of the laureate is confirmed by the Rector of Charles University and the Mayor of the capital city of Prague after they have made a joint decision and then proceed to solemnly declare the prize.

Anna Kindness is a 3rd year English and Film student from Edinburgh, Scotland, who is studying for one semester at Charles University in Prague. Anna has a variety of interests, including arts and culture, adventure, travel, the great outdoors and writing. The decision to write for iForum was an easy one to make, as it is an excellent opportunity to develop both writing and editing skills within a work environment, whilst simultaneously getting to meet like-minded people.