

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

The crises that are shaking the world are numerous and it may sometimes seem totally unrealistic to hope to settle them all.

Between rising infant mortality in some regions and collapsing financial sectors in others, between the hunger of millions of human beings and renewed tensions around certain natural resources, between lasting poverty and the relentless advances of climate change, it may be tempting to undertake a selection of specific issues.

In reality, such crises are often closely interlinked. They all result from the same difficulty in organising human life sustainably in order to respect both people and the environment and offer progress for all without jeopardising the future.

Behind such crises lies a single model for civilisation that is being questioned today. For centuries, this model enabled unprecedented advances to be made to provide billions of men and women with access to health care, hygiene, culture, well-being and exchanges. In recent years, however, we have learned that this model has its limitations.

These limitations are those of our Planet's resources, which cannot be exploited indefinitely, while the global population and its needs have constantly undergone exponential growth.

At the heart of our model of civilisation, the crises it must face and the tensions surrounding natural resources, the stakes are the same : energy. It is for me the main challenge of our century, linking economic crisis and environmental crisis, the fight against poverty and the struggle against climate change.

This is the reason why it is a very special pleasure for me to be with you this evening, for this joint initiative shared by the United Nations Foundation and my own Foundation in the context of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative launched by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

At the heart of these multiple crises I was just evoking, the commitment of international institutions in favour of reorienting our energy model is indeed essential. Given stakes that concern the entire Planet, we must combine initiatives, support them on a worldwide scale and share all hopes and successes.

It is also necessary to mobilise public authorities, whose responsibility in this matter they cannot deny, and work closely with economic players and civil society.

In Monaco, with our specific constraints, we focus our resources on reducing the use of carbon-based energy as we aim to become carbon neutral by 2050. This is an ambitious goal, but, since my accession to the Throne, I assign this objective to our public services with the implication of the private players.

Indeed, solutions already exist to help achieve considerable reductions in greenhouse-gas emissions, without hindering the will for progress, to which all human beings legitimately aspire.

I am thinking of all the renewable energy sources being developed today. Wind, hydraulic, underwater wave turbine, tidal, solar, geothermal, biomass or agrifuels... All of these provide major advances, which, although they cannot yet give us hope to stop using hydrocarbons immediately, should incite us to persevere in our efforts.

We know that the search for clean, inexpensive energy in sufficient quantity for everyone will be extremely laborious. This is why we must multiply initiatives and explore all possible options.

My country stands out for the massive use of heat pumps using the thermal potential of seawater, which today provides 17% of all our energy needs today.

In addition to renewable energy, another major orientation for reducing carbon emissions is that of energy efficiency, which entails first and foremost making better use of the resources available today.

My Foundation, whose fight against climate change is a priority, actively strives to this end, both through the promotion of simple principles and exemplary behaviour on its premises.

The combination of these two orientations – innovative energy sources and energy efficiency – proves to us, in Monaco and elsewhere, that the tools in favour of progress are already available and it is our duty to promote them now.

This is why today's meeting, which places energy efficiency at the heart of the issue of renewable energy, strikes me as extremely promising, and why I wanted to participate to share my hopes with you and listen to your own experiences and your proposals.

Thus, we will be able to work together to meet the formidable challenge of environment-friendly non-polluting energy for today and future generations and answer the call of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who invited us last January "to turn on the heat and lights for every household in the world, however poor, even as we turn down the global thermostat."

Thank you