

Dear Isaac Kalua,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

Many fascinating things have just been said about the project that brings us together today. I will therefore be very brief and won't go back over the details of the action undertaken. Instead I would like to emphasize the importance of our meeting for me and the pleasure I have in being among you today.

As you are no doubt aware, my Foundation supports over eighty-five projects across the globe; these concern extremely diverse topics. Each project conforms to the local reality, supported by partnerships with players working in the field. Each brings concrete hope.

But since I see most of them only through files and figures, sometimes photos or a short film, it is often quite difficult for me to truly appreciate the facts; the efforts of the men and women who create, manage and give life to these projects.

Yet that is the goal we are pursuing: to improve the lives of those living in the environments where we take action, those who are the first to suffer from their deterioration and also the first to be able to protect them.

That is why being with you here today is so invaluable to me. To see that the 3 000 tree nurseries, the 10 000 acres, the 6 000 000 trees planted are not only lines on a sheet of paper, but actual living landscapes. To see that income generated from such cultivation, the training given and jobs created are not abstract ideas, but concrete improvements in the lives of those I have met today.

In this, for me and for all of us, there is a huge cause for satisfaction, as well as hope. In the difficult context that has hit Kenya over the last few years, these achievements must make our determination even greater.

Jatropha cultivation, we know, is a solution for the future, not only to meet the needs of the local populations, but also to offer alternative energies on a greater scale. The technologies developed here, the partnerships formed and the political avenues pursued for the development of biofuels prove to us that even greater achievements are still possible.

That is why I was eager to be among you today, to tell you how satisfied I am to see the success of my Foundation's actions, but above all to encourage you to persevere and continue along this productive, inventive and noble path.

Thank you.