

*Ocean Elders Dinner,  
New York, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013*

Dear Gigi,

Dear "Ocean Elders",

I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words during this moment of conviviality and fraternity.

What brings us together this evening is much more than a one-off initiative. What brings us together is the same awareness of our common destiny, common to the whole of humanity. We are gathered here because we are all aware of being the children of the same nature and the same ocean.

It is up to us to do everything in our power to preserve this ocean, whose ancient mythologies make it the mother of all things.

We cannot achieve this goal alone. This is precisely the point of our meeting. We are not in a position to claim that we can change the outcome solely by our power or determination. It is a question of making every effort to alert, propose and convince.

The challenges that currently concern the oceans affect the life of every inhabitant on Earth. We must convince each individual to be involved in order for us all to be able to act, invent new ways of living, in sustainable harmony with the oceans.

Therefore we need more than ever to approach our contemporaries, speak to them and alert them. We need to understand their difficulties but also make them understand the even greater difficulties that our oceans will face.

It is an important, compelling and exciting mission. I am proud to be able to undertake it with you.

Thank you.