

*Reception for Zayed International Prize for the Environment - Dubai - 7th May 2014  
Address of H.S.H. the Prince*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

First of all I would like to say how proud and moved I am to receive this eminent award, the Zayed International Prize for the Environment.

Being honored here today, after so many prestigious awardees and among so many outstanding candidates, is for me a source of great satisfaction, and moreover tremendous encouragement.

Environmental protection is a cause that is both too important and too vast for us ever to sit back, thinking that we have accomplished our duty. There are too many things to do, too many crises to address and too many problems to resolve - in fact, an ever-increasing number! - to enjoy any sense of achievement.

That is why the rare opportunities to rejoice - such as the one you are offering me today - should be appreciated to the full: as an incentive to persevere.

The example of the United Arab Emirates is in itself a source of inspiration for all those who are concerned by the future of Planet Earth. In the tradition of Sheik Zayed ben Sultan Al Nahyane, who was a pioneer in sustainable development, your country is carrying out remarkable work today, which I would like to applaud here.

Be it Masdar, the extremely important ecocity project, the development of solar infrastructure or your ongoing commitment to promote renewable energies, as demonstrated by your playing host to IRENA or the organization of the World Future Energy Summit, the United Arab Emirates has been paving an exemplary path for several years.

This path is marked by concern for the long term which, I believe, forms the basis of any large-scale environmental action.

Our era, we are all aware, suffers first and foremost from our difficulty to look beyond ourselves. Fascinated by the tumult of the news, captivated by the urgencies of our contemporaries and also governed by our habits, we too often fail to stand back and look at things from a broader perspective.

In the face of the crisis we are experiencing, there is however no solution other than to learn to think beyond the immediate. To stop disregarding future generations solely for the benefit and comfort of our current generation; to take into account the needs of those who live in other latitudes; not to believe that we alone own nature; to understand the importance of the balance with other animal and plant species: it is by adopting this less selfish outlook that we can progress.

At least this is what I am doing, both as Head of the Monegasque State and in my personal commitment, with my Foundation.

The Foundation is working for climate change mitigation or adaptation, for improved water resource management and for the preservation of biodiversity. It instigates or supports initiatives, both local and international, based on the reality in the field and on support for the players involved, politicians, from the business community, or scientists, as well as simple environmental activists.

Because confronted with a challenge of such magnitude, I know that it is essential to use all the tools available, to take action at every level and to mobilize as many people as possible.

As the last part of the latest IPCC report recently reminded us, the efforts to be made in the field of climate are considerable if we want to limit the increase in global temperatures to below 2 degrees centigrade, which if exceeded would cause serious disruption. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 to 70%, as recommended by IPCC experts, will mean radically changing many of our habits.

That is why it is essential to anticipate such changes, as you are doing here, by investing in science, innovation and progress. And that is why it is also necessary to work collectively and to draw the attention of as many people as possible to the crisis which is threatening us and the ways of preventing it.

A low carbon economy, which alone will enable us to save the Planet, is within reach. With the necessary resources, audacity and tenacity, we will succeed in achieving this, but time is running out!

Your country is firmly committed to this, as is mine, which has made great efforts in this respect and aims to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. As ambitious as this may seem, this target is by no

means utopian, since we have already managed to reduce our emissions by over 20%.

Despite the difficulties and doubts that may sometimes emerge in the face of such a task, I know that we can succeed, create together new growth, invent a new model and at long last reconcile humans with the Earth that feeds them.

The French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote, "As for the future, your task is not to foresee it, but to enable it".

This is what you are doing here and it is what I will continue to do, my determination strengthened by the trust you have shown me today.

Thank you.