

Steve Howard,

Ladies & gentlemen,

Friends,

Electric vehicles are a useful solution to the vast array of issues at the heart of negotiations at this event.

As we expected, COP 15 provides us with an opportunity to gauge the scale of the work that lies before us. We are anxious to grasp the chance of leaving a viable planet for our children but we know that the task will be tough and will require much more than international negotiation.

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Above all we know that it will be necessary to review the foundations on which we have built our prosperity over the past decades.

The rise of the car has left its mark on contemporary societies, occupying a defining role at their very heart.

The car has been, and, indeed, remains, a vehicle of freedom and opening, a tool for social, economic and cultural progress.

It is a role that it will continue to play for many years to come.

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This is why it would be absurd and deluded to bet on it disappearing any time soon, or purely and simply being replaced by other means of transport. Our civilisation is a civilisation founded on exchange and freedom of the individual.

Therefore, today, it is necessary for the car to evolve, move towards clean energy consumption and, more ambitiously, usher in a sustainable way of organising the mobility so indispensable to us.

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Clean vehicles are a key part of the objective of a coherent lifestyle to which we should aspire. Economic policies, transport, town planning all have a role to play in terms of our responsibility towards our planet.

I am particularly delighted to see this central issue on the Climate group agenda. We can safely say that it is a subject which well and truly merits the attention of the international community, private players, manufacturers, investors and research laboratories.

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For its part, for fifteen years, Monaco as a country has been committed to a clean mobility policy which promotes the adoption of the use of electric or hybrid vehicles.

This policy has long been hampered by an offer lacking in diverse, quality products, an issue which will no doubt be addressed today. However, the uptake of hybrids, the emergence of an offer comprising a new generation of electric vehicles – motorcycles, cars and light utility vehicles – is very encouraging for the future.

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Such progress will be even greater with positive political will behind it.

These prospects encourage me to believe that we are in a period of transition: moving from an era of hope to one of real progress.

I am delighted that this is the case and there is no doubt in my mind that your discussions and work will contribute to it.

Thank you.