

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Chers amis,

Dans le cadre de notre Monaco Ocean Week, je veux vous dire ma grande satisfaction de participer au lancement du programme *Arctic Marine World Heritage*, d'autant que, comme vous le savez tous, l'Arctique est avant tout un espace océanique.

Aux côtés de ma Fondation, la présence de l'UICN, du NRDC et de l'UNESCO, dont je salue chaleureusement les responsables, est une garantie d'excellence en même temps que d'efficacité et de rayonnement.

Je suis d'autant plus attaché à votre projet en raison de la démarche dont il témoigne. Cette démarche, c'est d'abord celle d'une prise de conscience de l'importance de l'Arctique, pour l'Humanité.

Cette région constitue une part essentielle de notre patrimoine commun. Elle joue un rôle déterminant dans de nombreux équilibres de notre planète, notamment climatiques. En raison de sa fragilité, l'Arctique mérite toute notre attention, toute notre détermination.

The *Arctic Marine World Heritage* project is the assertion of a need: the need to identify and protect the most endangered and most precious areas.

Areas that more than others, allow us to guarantee the vital functions of the Arctic, those that our duty is to protect and to pass on to our children.

The dangers that currently threaten the Arctic are multiple, multifaceted and sometimes indirect. In addition to global warming, and its consequences, we can see year after year other threats developing.

They take the form of new maritime routes, oil drilling operations, intensive fishing or quite simply a greater number of human activities.

These dangers have essentially a single cause: our propensity to exploit unreasonably natural resources.

We need to take action, and in particular through international institutions such as UNESCO. The fact of identifying areas of outstanding universal value and as such being able to place them under the protection of the 1972 World Heritage Convention will enable us to institute more substantive and more efficient protection. This Convention indeed offers us a unique way to guarantee the safeguarding of these areas for future generations.

It provides us a framework for action, even though we have limited time. We are now aware of the dangers threatening the Arctic but we also have the means of mitigating or countering them.

Action needs to be taken now and the *Arctic Marine World Heritage* initiative provides us both with the opportunity and resources.

That is why I am keen to express my support here and to tell you how important your work is for our Planet.

Thank you.