

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Chers Amis,

Soyez les bienvenus à Monaco, et soyez les bienvenus à cette huitième édition de la Monaco Blue Initiative !

Je veux vous remercier très chaleureusement de votre participation à cet événement, et vous remercier plus encore de l'engagement dont elle témoigne, au service des mers et du nouveau mode de développement qu'il nous faut construire, avec elles et par elles.

Construire un nouveau mode de développement plus respectueux des mers, profiter de leurs richesses sans pour autant les appauvrir : tel est depuis l'origine le but de la Monaco Blue Initiative. Un tel objectif ne peut être atteint que par le dialogue et la coopération.

C'est pourquoi, avec ma Fondation et avec l'Institut océanographique, nous avons eu il y a sept ans l'idée de ce format original, adapté aux enjeux maritimes. Ces enjeux, si l'on veut les traiter de manière pertinente et efficace, nécessitent en effet au moins trois conditions.

First, have a transversal vision of the issues at stake. The seas cover various realities. They fall under extremely diverse jurisdictions. They concern countless issues.

Between the law of the High Seas and the exploitation of coastal areas, between the exploration of the seabed and the development of marine energies, between aquaculture and the limitation of plastic pollution, there are multiple issues but one single vision.

It is this vision we need to bear in mind when we work together on these topics; a local and global, a concrete and universal one.

By bringing together players with various skills, and by intermixing the issues, the aim of the Monaco Blue Initiative is precisely to reconcile these two demands for local efficiency and global ambition.

The second condition to which this initiative hopes to respond is of course peaceful dialogue, free as far as possible from immediate interests.

If we want our actions to form part of a global ambition, we all need to learn to see beyond the pursuit of specific objectives. And to achieve this, I know no formula other than dialogue.

For seven years, the successive editions of the Monaco Blue Initiative have brought this dialogue to life and have proved how productive it is. Because this dialogue extends beyond this annual few days event, thanks to the ties it forms between players who do not always have the opportunity to meet each other on a regular basis.

Last, the third condition is long-term sustainability.

The temporality of the oceans is not the one of current affairs. Although, following some dramatic news event, they are sometimes recalled to our minds, but oceans evolve extremely slowly.

The damage they suffer takes usually centuries to appear. Mending such damage generally also requires centuries. This is the great complexity of the ocean. Nevertheless but it is also an opportunity for their defenders as this often leaves us time to take action - even if we have already waited far too long.

To take effective action, it is therefore essential that we bear in mind this long-term dimension which the Monaco Blue Initiative, through its successive editions has enabled us to take into consideration.

Year after year, we have focused on issues which are always similar, and which provide us with the understanding and a strategy on the long run.

Once again this year, themes such as sustainable aquaculture, marine protected areas and the High Seas, effectively perpetuate our discussions from previous years.

This long term vision also enables us, and I will conclude on this positive note, to assess the progress made.

For the issues mentioned, we can seize how far things have progressed since 2010. Marine protected areas have developed, innovative and eco-friendly aquaculture solutions have proved their worth, High Seas regulations have been the focus of advanced international negotiations....

Above all, these issues have increasingly been over the years at the forefront of our contemporaries' minds, on the agenda of leaders and economic players from across the globe.

Tout ceci doit donc nous inciter à avancer avec plus de détermination que jamais, et à poursuivre longtemps encore l'aventure de la Monaco Blue Initiative !

Je vous remercie.