

*Address of H.S.H. the Prince
"Pristine Seas" Meeting, Monaco 4th March 2014*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I have great pleasure to welcome you to Monaco. I am always delighted to be the host to champions of the sea, especially when people as talented as you, dear Enric, are involved!

The Principality is proud to associate its name with your initiative, in favour of the protection of the marine environment.

The cause bringing us together today is one that is of great importance for us. Your initiative is of great interest to us because it relates to the inhabitants of this Planet concerned about their living environment, their future and that of future generations.

The question put to us by the pristine seas is indeed a universal question: *how can we ensure that these precious, still preserved areas are not subjected to vested interests, but remain the common heritage of humanity?*

I will limit myself to identifying three aspects, which in my view are decisive for the collective acceptance of these crucial issues: **Knowledge, Awareness and Power.**

The first requirement is indeed Knowledge.

To be able to understand these seas, we need to improve our knowledge of them because our view of these areas and of the seas in general is still very incomplete. It means giving scientists, who alone can enlighten us, the means to explore, understand and analyse them.

That is an essential issue for which my Government as well as my Foundation are very much involved in achieving.

The second requirement, which ensues from the previous one, is Awareness.

In order to be able to mobilise resources, chart a course and achieve results, we need to bring stronger forces into play than the ones currently threatening us. We need to mobilise, as widely as possible, civil society, public opinion and political authorities, of course, as well as economic forces who need to understand that their interests do not lie in the destruction of the ecosystems.

Sharing these issues with as many people as possible is at the heart of your initiative.

The third and final point: Power.

To be effective, this mobilisation must give us the opportunity to implement shared and sustainable management tools for these fragile regions. These tools do exist and they are the exclusive economic zones and marine protected areas which have proven their value across the globe.

Unfortunately, with 8.3 million square kilometers currently

under protected status, representing 2.3% of the world's oceans, we are still far from the 10% target that the international community defined and that many scientists consider should be around 20%.

I hope that the meeting today will contribute in mobilizing all our efforts. I am keen to tell you how personally committed I am to achieve this objective.

Science, Awareness and Power: These, dear friends, are the elements we need today in order to save the pristine seas. They are goals which must bring us together and spur us into taking action together and I wish to thank you for your efforts.

The future of us all depends on these efforts.

As the former US President Bill Clinton said, "We know that when we protect our oceans we are protecting our future."

Thank you.