

Distinguished Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

May I say how proud and delighted I am to be attending this meeting with you today.

First and foremost, I am proud of the work accomplished over the last three years, during which the Principality of Monaco acted as co-chair of ICRI.

These three years were marked by substantial collective efforts, for which I would like to thank all the members of ICRI, especially Australia and Indonesia, who alongside us assumed co-chairmanship. I would also like to extend my thanks to the permanent Secretariat.

The joint efforts made over those three years have led to progress being made in regard to several important issues.

I would like to point out the IPCC's special report on the ocean and cryosphere which was released in Monaco two years ago. This report has, among other things, enabled us to gain more precise knowledge of the coral situation and the dangers they face. However, the IPCC's grim forecasts did not stop us from taking action, on the contrary.

The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network's report, a summary of which is being handed out today, is a very significant step forward. This much awaited report is the first in twelve years and is based on over a million and a half observations from seventy-five countries.

A global and accurate insight into the situation on the ground, cross-cutting analyses, and joint efforts to collect data and analyse the policies pursued are what is needed. Cross-functional expertise is what is needed.

Faced with such vast and complex issues, it is essential to compare observations, share know-how and pool resources.

This is one of the reasons why we were particularly pleased to welcome a number of new members to ICRI over those three years. I would like to acknowledge them and tell them how valuable their involvement is.

And, since we are always so much stronger together, in conclusion, I would like to say how delighted I am to see the United States of America and Jamaica take over as chair.

Due to the importance of their maritime sector, their expertise and scientific and operational power, as well as their ability to set an example and to unite and involve many forces, the United States is for us a particularly valued partner.

Therefore I would like to thank them and thank you all for the outstanding work accomplished by ICRI over the last few years.

This work will continue. I will certainly always actively support you, with my Government and my Foundation.

Thank you.