

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I would like to thank Professor Töpfer for his enlightening input.

I am delighted to be among you today on this beautiful island, Sylt, for this moment of conviviality, exchange and hope, where the paramount importance of the power of the climate and beauty of the sea can be seen so clearly.

In a country I admire for its environmental commitment, I am pleased that my Foundation, thanks to its German branch, is able to bring together great names and goodwill around issues we all hold so close to our hearts. I would like to extend my warmest and sincerest thanks to the management team present here who organized this meeting, in particular Dr Bernd Kunth, the President of our German branch and the board members.

For almost ten years now, my Foundation has developed its activities on values such as solidarity, responsibility and generosity which you embody today.

These values have enabled us to be present across every continent, implementing and supporting concrete action to combat climate change, to protect biodiversity and to preserve water resources. My Foundation is involved in close to three hundred and fifty projects, some of which are focused on the oceans, on their future in the face of global warming and their protection.

I was able to see how urgent it was to turn our attention to these immense expanses of water which represent over 70% of our Planet. Despite their size, despite the impression they manifest of overwhelming power, the oceans are currently the victims of the severe disruption we are inflicting on our climate and our environment.

We are directly dependent on them, not only the inhabitants of this island, who, like Monegasques, are used to laying their eyes on marine landscapes every day and seeing a symbol of our existence.

No, all human-beings, irrespective of their geographical situation, irrespective of their distance, also depend on these seas.

the oceans represent a global challenge now more than ever before as :

- 40% of the global population lives less than 60 kilometers from the shore, eight of the world's largest urban areas are located along the coastline,
- 80% of all transcontinental trade is by sea, the development of marine resources is more than ever necessary in order to meet the needs of an increasingly growing world population.

Yet their situation has continued to deteriorate, in particular due to the irresponsible activities of humans and their consequences:

- pollution which weakens a large number of ecosystems;
- overfishing which destroys certain species;
- exploitation of hydrocarbons which is increasingly threatening fragile and precious areas;
- global warming, which is raising many concerns and dangers;
- ocean acidification already recognized by scientists and some maritime stakeholders, especially aquaculturists. As it was shown as early as 2009 in the Monaco Declaration, signed by one hundred and fifty scientists from around the world, the concentration of CO₂ reduces the pH level of ocean waters : it results in a modification of the living conditions of many species, including coral reefs and shellfish in particular, and in the long term upsets the balance of all the marine ecosystems.

When speaking of global warming and its effects, I am also thinking of extreme climate events which are on the increase both on and off shore, and are giving us a foretaste of what a deregulated climate would be, if we do nothing to prevent it.

I am thinking of course of the ice melt, especially in the "three Poles" - the Arctic, the Antarctic but also the Himalayas - all of which pour off millions of cubic meters of water into the seas every year. These glaciers are not the only ones to be melting. The ice from European and American glaciers is also diminishing.

In total, every day more than one billion tons of ice melts on the world's surface. So much water, which is scarce where it once was found, flows into the oceans wreaking havoc on many land and water ecosystems.

However, the ecosystems are not alone in being threatened by rising water levels. Having frequently travelled across the world for international meetings and my Foundation's projects, I have been able to measure the dramatic effects on the populations confronted with the relentless progression of water levels.

Although climate change may seem, in our part of the world, just an abstract and distant danger, these rising water levels already represent a true disaster in many regions.

They devastate entire regions such as Bangladesh where torrents of water flowing down from the Himalayan glaciers erode the coastline month after month.

They are ruthlessly endangering small island states, in the Pacific in particular, with whom we work on a regular basis. Our own countries are being hit, more and more recurrent, with unprecedented violence, with extreme weather events, floods and coastal storms.

Part of the Arctic has already been disfigured by them as I was able to witness when I visited the region. The threat is likely to become even greater as new shipping routes and new opportunities for commercial exploitation open up.

There are also great concerns with the Antarctic continent which is seeing drastic change occur at an alarming pace.

The outlook for the decades to come is even more grim. Some show no hesitation in predicting a sea level rise that could reach several meters within the next two hundred years if nothing is done to stop global warming.

I was in Washington ten days ago, with scientists from the National Geographic who particularly alarmed me when showing that in 2050 the question of hazardous navigation through the North East and North West passages of the Arctic would no longer arise because quite simply, the North Pole would be ice-free in the summer.

Faced with this situation, it is no longer a matter of questioning the reality of climate change and the rising sea levels, but of limiting their extent and adapting to their effects.

Adapting to their effects means first and foremost taking action at a local level, as my Foundation does, helping those who are threatened, developing appropriate solutions and supporting research and innovation.

I will not reiterate here the various technical prospects which are currently being developed to address the adverse changes to our weather conditions and oceans. I would like to focus on the opportunity they represent, both with regard to the mitigation of global warming and dealing with its effects.

In a world whose context has radically changed, because it is now a question of protecting and preserving what we once thought was eternal, our duty is to invent a new economy.

Adaptation to rising sea levels, as well as the development of carbon-free models represent fantastic opportunities.

Not only for creating new industrial breakthroughs, but more widely, for inventing a new production model, coupling human progress with respect for nature.

Accordingly, the new awareness we have of the dangers threatening the Planet should be seen as an historic opportunity: to reconcile the economy and ecology for the good of the widest audience possible.

Because it is a question of adapting to the effects of climate change, it also means preventing it and doing everything in our power to keep it below the fateful threshold of 2°C, beyond which the disruptions we are experiencing today may well seem minor events.

This involves primarily the development of the carbon-free economy I just mentioned and which now requires everyone's involvement and energy.

In our European states in particular, where we so often face crisis, it is up to us to invent green and blue growth, which is currently the only long-term prospect capable of restoring our sense of challenge, our taste for innovation and our ambition to build a better future.

This new growth cannot be imposed spontaneously, at least not quickly enough given the urgency. There are too many habits to change, too many automatic reflexes to discard. That is why it is essential that we succeed in imposing binding international rules.

This is the aim of the difficult negotiations being conducted for several years at the Climate Change Convention. It is above all the aim of the next conference in Paris, COP 21, to be held in December this year.

Much tenacity, persuasion and conviction will be needed to succeed but I believe that we are at long last capable of making progress! The moment has come despite the difficulty.

In this respect, I would like to commend Germany's commitment, recently reaffirmed on several occasions, including at the Petersberg dialogue, held for its sixth edition some days ago in Berlin.

I would especially like to note the importance, highlighted by the German Government, of the creation of a green fund to combat climate change and its effects, in particular in the countries most affected, which are often the most fragile economically.

We need - the world needs - an extremely clear and extremely concrete commitment, including

financial, of the most powerful states, without whom nothing will be possible.

In order to encourage such will, we need the mobilization of all society's forces: corporations, NGOs and scientific laboratories, but also of the public. More than ever before we need your mobilization!

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends,

The rising sea levels confront us with a huge, and at the same time, vital task. This involves changing the rules of our world, to make it better, in other words more sustainable.

It will not be an easy process. The changes will take time, they will be complex and sometimes painful. But we must not give in, because we have no choice.

The future of our Planet and its inhabitants - our future - is at stake.

"It is not enough to take steps which may some day lead to a goal", said Goethe "each step must be itself a goal and a step likewise."

Given the multitude of difficulties ahead, but above all given the huge opportunities which are opening up, Goethe's phrase should guide our action, encourage us to persevere and convince us that progress is possible.

Thank you.