

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

First of all, I would like to express my sincerest, warmest and most amicable thanks to you all for joining us here this evening for this important moment in the life of my Foundation.

I would like to give a special thanks to everyone who helped organize this wonderful evening. Some did so from Monaco, others within our Spanish branch, under the presidency of Mrs Carolina Portabella Settimó. They have all done a remarkable job.

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It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you this evening, as it is each time, I have the opportunity to travel to this beautiful country!

As we will honor heroes in environmental protection this evening, the opportunity is given to me to express my gratitude to all our teams for the work they carry out throughout the year.

I would also like to thank our current 10 foreign representative offices, their Presidents and their members. They all contribute to the success of our initiatives, to the impact of our action and to the strengthening of our resources.

Naturally I would like to thank our benefactors, without whom nothing would be possible. Their support is vital for us, because of the resources it provides us, and perhaps more importantly the trust it reflects.

Finally, these thanks would not be complete if I did not mention all our partners: the NGOs, the commercial companies, the scientific institutions with whom we have worked so well for the last thirteen years.

Some are here this evening and I would like to stress the importance of the actions we accomplish all together.

This common endeavor, is an essential aspect for the success of our work.

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As we all know - confronted with threats of global proportions, it would be ludicrous to try and act alone.

Confronted with climate change, with all forms of damage to biodiversity, with water issues, it would be absurd to think we can achieve any action alone.

However, this collective need embraces far more than efficiency issues.

The fact that I attach so much importance to being united, in large numbers and interdependent, is not only to act more efficiently.

Above all it is to do the appropriate action.

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Engaging the appropriate action means first and foremost creating a common sense of destiny. It means making everyone with whom we share this Planet understand that their future is interlinked. Inextricably. Just as we are

linked to the generations who will follow us, and with whom we should feel profoundly interdependent.

This very room is a fine example, where nationalities and ages, commitments and disciplines, come together. It shows us how strong our unity is. It demonstrates the need to refuse to accept selfishness, segregation and a focus on immediate interests. To seek collective benefits first.

And these collective benefits should not be limited to our human siblings. They should also include the other species with which we share this Planet. Without them, our life would not be what it is.           ../..

This is what Professor Lister and Doctor García Aguayo have understood and exemplify, to whom I will be presenting our Biodiversity Award jointly in a few moments. Thanks to their work and their commitment, they have highlighted the vital interdependence needed to connect us to endangered species. This requires us to protect them by every means possible, as they have been doing for so many years.

In addition to this unity of destiny which we need to understand, and thanks to this, we must focus on a unity of purpose.

It is not enough to be aware that we share the same Planet. We also need to share the same purpose in protecting it.

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At a time when our world is affected by extremely powerful centrifugal forces, this unity of purpose should be a priority for all of us. It is no longer acceptable to have people believe that the environmental issue is a luxury.

We need to join forces, in order to combat pollution, to protect threatened ecosystems, to save endangered species and to mitigate climate change.

A few weeks ago, I was on the Normandy beaches, where the heroism of the soldiers who risked their lives to liberate Europe seventy-five years ago, was being celebrated. Faced with barbarism, faced with the risk of destruction, the people of the world united, setting aside their differences and joining forces.

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Of course, the nature of the threat is not comparable but we must be capable of the same joint efforts, unified under the UN leadership, if we really want to save our Planet.

I am delighted that our special Award this year is being presented to Mrs Christina Figueres. Former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. For over twenty years she has fought to ensure that greater consideration is given to the climate within UN bodies. As such, she has played and still plays a key

role in ensuring this essential unity exists and transforms into concrete action.

We must pursue a unity of action.

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A unity that refuses to believe that a choice has to be made among causes, or hierarchies established among priorities.

The unity of action upon which environmental commitment is based, is one which seeks human progress as much as it does nature protection.

It is one that encourages NGOs and private sector, States and scientific laboratories to work together towards a common goal.



It is one that is not limited to environmental protection which would likely be detrimental to freedom, or to health.

It is one that inspires institutions as different as the Water Tribunal in Valencia and the Ørsted company.

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The Water Tribunal is a remarkable institution, boasting ancestral knowledge and capable of resolving water-use conflicts by reconciling interests. In a moment, I will be presenting this institution our Water Award, through their President, Mr José Font Sanchis.

The Ørsted company is a pioneer as far as green energies are concerned, choosing to abandon fossil energies and developing unrivaled expertise and power. It is a successful model of change, capable of offering wide-scale solutions to climate-related challenges. I am delighted to present them our Climate Change Award through their Vice-President, Mr Jakob Askou Bøss.

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Through the initiatives, personalities and institutions we are honoring today, I believe that we are showcasing the ability of our world to unite for the benefit of all.

I hope that this unity will continue to inspire our actions: those implemented by my Foundation, but also yours, and the actions of each and every one of us.

This is a vital need, which should be a constant source of inspiration, particularly in these times of crisis and uncertainty.

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Almost seventy-five years ago, while he was ill and could see victory on the horizon in a war for which he had given so much, the US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt expressed his thoughts as follows: “We have learned that we cannot live alone, at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away. (...)We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community. »

I hope that his words will inspire us to take action against division, which blurs bearings and prevents action, against selfishness, which leads to abandonment, against whatever is threatening our Planet, its climate, its biodiversity and its water resources.

Thank you.