

*Robert Calcagno*

Your Highness,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear friends,

First and foremost thank you all for joining us here today for the seventh edition of the Monaco Blue Initiative which is held alternately every year either in Monaco or a foreign country connected to the sea.

Since 2010 we have united scientists, economic players, political leaders and environmentalists to deliberate freely about the state of our oceans and above all their future.

Our goal is to bridge any divisions that may exist between the various players working on maritime areas in order to identify practices and concrete solutions that are likely to meet consensus.

Admittedly this is not always easy but we are keen to point out how satisfied we are about the extremely significant changes we have seen emerge and develop over the past seven years with a near consensual awareness of the need to take action for the truly sustainable management of our maritime areas.

2015 was a memorable year which saw the international community united around the Oceans. First of all the United Nations adopted a sustainable development goal specific to the Oceans: goal n° 14 in which you, Your Highness, were very much involved and which was not initially foreseen in the UN papers. .Subsequently came the agreement regarding the opening of negotiations to establish a legal instrument on the preservation of biodiversity on the High Seas, which represent over 60% of all ocean spaces and still today are not governed by any international law. Here again Monaco made a great deal of effort and we welcome the fact that negotiations finally began in New York eight or so days ago. Mr Segura and Mr Bernal will go into more detail later on today regarding the key issues at stake as far as these two major decisions are concerned.

Finally at the end of the year COP 21 specifically took into consideration the role the Oceans play in climate regulation and the impact of climate change on the living resources

living there. This is why we thought it would be useful to focus on these topics in detail in our afternoon sessions.

***Bernard Fautrier***

However, having discussed the use of the ocean's living resources at previous editions, today we will give further thought to the role that aquaculture can play in response to the increasing demand for sea products, in particular in Latin America. We will also discuss its place in an ever-changing economy and where waste, the scourge of modern society, is increasingly becoming a raw material worthy of interest.

Of course we won't be able to wind up the debate on such issues in just one day, but I am convinced that our discussions will enable us to return to our offices, laboratories and businesses with a few new ideas and a few certainties to be put into place.

As far as we are concerned, the action implemented by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, as well as by the Oceanographic Institute, is largely fuelled by the input of the Monaco Blue Initiative, through its discussions and meetings.

Theoretical input thanks to the work carried out together. Practical input thanks to the sharing of experiences and solutions. And operational input too, thanks to the ties we have forged and maintain at these annual events.

The last aspect we will focus on is to thank you all once again for taking the time to join us: it gives us particular pleasure, together with all the teams of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and the Oceanographic Museum to see you here for this important moment which we have been working towards for months.

In conclusion, I would like to thank first of all the State of Sao Paulo and its governor for their welcome at this prestigious venue. But also all our Brazilian partners from the Forum das Americas, without whom nothing would have been possible here in Sao Paulo. And finally, a special thanks to our loyal partner, the Rolex Group represented here by Mrs Sara Turbian. Rolex has been loyal to us since the beginning of our adventure showing its interest in marine issues and we would like to express our gratitude once again to Arnaud Boetsch, the director of communications for his support.

There is no doubt in my mind that our discussions will once again be marked by a spirit of friendship, an awareness of the common good, and a quest for progress together with commitment to efficiency.

May I wish you all an excellent and successful day!