

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

I would firstly like to thank you for attending this dinner dedicated to energy efficiency.

I would also like to thank the United Nations Foundation and its leaders, who are involved in this event alongside the COP 17. My thanks also go to our friends at the International Copper Association who are supporting us in our efforts.

The subject that brings us together this evening is, I believe, one of the major challenges in our current struggle against global warming. Although the headlines tend to focus on the issue of energy sources, the promotion and development of greater energy efficiency are key challenges.

Indeed, this issue affects the daily lives of every one of us, especially with regards housing. It enables everyone to live a more responsible lifestyle and make the practical progress to which they aspire.

If the effort to improve energy efficiency can be used to unite goodwill, it is primarily because its effects are extremely quick and easy to see.

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To take an example that I know well, that of the building that accommodates the offices of My Foundation in Monaco, several targeted improvements have enabled us to decrease its energy consumption by 43% in five years, while retaining an identical level of comfort in terms of heating, air-conditioning and lighting.

Of course, this is only one example. But improving energy performance is often the sum of isolated initiatives that end up having a significant impact.

Today, this is the least expensive and most effective way to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. It is an absolute imperative. I remind you that the International Energy Agency forecasts a rise in energy consumption for our planet of 35% by 2035, generating an increase in carbon emissions of 20% mainly in transition or developing countries... Such a prospect invalidates the objective of limiting climate change to two degrees and announces dramatic consequences for the entire biosphere.

Faced with this reality, how can we not see the considerable potential of research into improved energy efficiency, not only to protect the environment, but also for the welfare of people?

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Since this legitimate aspiration of our contemporaries to live better, travel, eat and enjoy comfortable housing cannot be ignored. If we are not able to respond to it, there is reason to fear that we will not be able to mobilise them to implement a more sustainable development.

Faced with populations living in often precarious conditions and affected by the crisis, our objective must be to prove that concern for the environment does not mean economic decline or social regression.

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In a system where energy has an increasingly greater economic cost, improved efficiency in its use makes the development of renewable energies even more attractive. That is why these new energy sources must be developed, sources that have no impact on the climate and the production of which can be decentralised making it possible to improve access to energy for all those who are still deprived of it.

But, whatever the sources that we draw on in the future for our energy, no reasoning, either environmental, economic, or scientific, can exclude a real effort to rationalise our consumption.

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This effort must be driven forward on several levels. Limited, local and often private initiatives are obviously necessary. However, if we want them to develop, they must not lead to demotivation, even resignation by the public authorities.

All international arenas must be rallied around this cause.

For me, the organisation of this meeting in the middle of the COP 17 meets this awareness objective. Your presence proves that this work is progressing.

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends,

To those who want to act to protect the environment, energy efficiency follows the path of practical, varied and immediate actions.

To those who worry about the economic crisis that is shaking our world, it offers the prospect to recreate growth and create employment.

To all those who, inevitably, continue to consume energy to satisfy their needs, it promises savings that are translated into increased buying power.

To those who fear the imbalances in an increasingly tense energy market, it provides greater independence and security.

Finally, to all those who increasingly doubt our ability to act globally against climate change; it can be used to see the prospects for accessible and substantial progress.

That is why we must seize upon it, today!

Thank you.