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President and founder of the WPC

Firstly, I would like to thank H.S.H. Prince Albert II for supporting our initiative and for welcoming us in the best possible conditions. I know that many of our conference participants – or, I could say, members of our club – are here in Monaco for the first time, keen to discover '*le Rocher*' and its rich history. We are particularly pleased that Your Highness was able to join us today, having been away honouring the life of Nelson Mandela. Your thoughts and those of Princess Charlène's are still with South Africa. I too would like to add my voice to the millions of those who have paid tribute to the memory of the great man we have lost. Let his example inspire political leaders in other parts of the world which are torn by conflicts that seem insurmountable in the absence of credible and selfless leaders. I am referring here to the Middle East in particular. It would also be impossible not to mention Africa – which we will be discussing on Sunday, and which is so full of promise, yet still scarred by too many deadly clashes.

The mission of the WPC is to contribute to improving global governance, in all of its aspects. These are not empty words, as the rapid increase in interdependence is both a threat and a benefit: a benefit in the sense that controlled opening is both spiritually and materially enriching; a threat since uncontrolled connectivity multiplies the risks of disaster. The challenge with respect to global governance is to maintain the likelihood of a reasonably open world and to do so by developing instruments that allow us to overcome economic and also political shocks, of all kinds. For this, we must call upon United Nations structures, as the '5+1' negotiations with Iran have illustrated. As for the economy, we must build around the G20, which remains fragile. Regardless of whether today's international system be described as zero-polar, bipolar or multipolar, the simple reality is that the most powerful states no longer wish or are no longer capable of exercising their power. It is, in my view, more constructive to focus on the 'middle powers', as we are invited to do by the President of South Korea, whose Personal Envoy I would like to welcome to our meeting. 'Middle power' should be taken, I believe, to mean any regional power which is able and willing to expand its conception of national interest to encompass broader global public goods. This does not happen by coincidence and requires an actual participation in the cost of such global public goods. In this sense, a middle power in the 21st century is the opposite of an imperial power in past centuries. I belong to a country which wishes to be exemplary in this respect. Will it be capable of leading the necessary reforms to support this noble ambition in the long run?

I shall not go into the programme's details, which you have received. It focuses equally on politics, economics and finance. In practice, these fields are inextricably linked, whether globally or regionally. Take Asia for example, it is economically prosperous and politically frail, to the extent that some observers compare the situation to that in Europe in the run up to 1914... A major session of our conference should allay some of our fears though. For this year's WPC, several sessions have been devoted to the Middle East. I would have liked to bring together and encourage debate among the region's main actors. It is probably premature to aim for such a thing, but I am not giving up on it for the future. Even though some dialogues can still only take place remotely, they exist nonetheless. Here, I would like to thank His Excellency Ali Ahani for his presence. For me, the election of President Rouhani and the prospects which this permits, are *the* political miracle of 2013. It is a miracle and yet not a miracle, since the particularity of a miracle is that it is unexplainable. Everyone will judge for himself. His Excellence the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif of the Islamic Republic of Iran was forced to cancel his presence with us today because of a serious family matter. He requested that his Ambassador to France and Monaco speak in his place. I would like to extend my warm wishes to the Minister and his family. I would also like to thank H.R.H. Prince Turki AlFaisal for joining us. We are very much looking forward to his remarks tomorrow. Among the other topics which we will be addressing this weekend, I would like to draw your attention to the issue of relationships between politics and religions. How can we consider the future of this planet if we continue to kill one another in the name of God? And how can we call for people to believe in God if those who profess to be His servants spread and incite hate? On a more mundane note, we shall discuss a major issue of globalization: the future of the legal order, within and beyond the framework of international law. We



shall take another look at the crucial topic of cyberspace governance, which without exaggeration is at the root of all other issues. One aspect of globalization, which is clearly linked to those already mentioned, is the tension between the tendency to go beyond the nation state, within the process of European construction (this year we will be highlighting its social aspects), and the opposite tendency towards the assertion of sub-national identities, which in Quebec is referred to as 'sovereignty'. I have asked the Premier of Quebec, Ms Pauline Marois, to address us on this dialectic on Sunday.

I do not have time here to present our programme further, nor the workshops, which I am certain will be as successful as last year. To conclude, I would simply like to say a word on the ambition of the WPC. Our aim is to gradually build an international club, which takes its inspiration from Europe and which is driven by the concepts of empathy, openness towards others, respect, reconciliation – and I would also say tolerance, even though I have some reservations about this somewhat patronizing term. We want to create a club which is both informed and influential, and are convinced that the world needs initiatives of this kind. The loyalty of our sponsors and the number and quality of the public figures joining us for the next three days encourages us to persevere with this; to make it our duty.