

Dona Bertarelli, Parc de la Garenne

27<sup>th</sup> May 2014

Mr. Councillor of State,  
Mr. President of the Regional Council  
Madam la Syndic,  
Distinguished representatives of local and regional authorities ,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me, as it is for all of my family, to be here today.

Following our arrival in Switzerland in the canton of Vaud in 1973, our family - under the leadership of my father and my mother, Fabio and Maria Iris, and then my brother Ernesto and I - has always had in its heart a desire to contribute to the development of this beautiful area.

Firstly by implanting a flagship of the pharmaceutical industry, which became the first biotech company in Europe. And then contributing in various ways to the progress of Switzerland, whether in sport, science or philanthropy.

Our commitment to this region is very strong and very genuine. And that is the reason I am here today to inaugurate the beginning of a project of great importance – the new Parc Animalier de la Garenne - which is a real source of pride and pleasure to my family and to me personally.

One of the objectives of the Bertarelli Foundation is to bequeath to our children a world in the best possible condition. To this end, we helped, in partnership with the British Government, to create one of the largest marine reserves in the world in the Chagos Archipelago in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

So, when we were approached by the Parc de la Garenne about this ambitious project - which our Foundation has closely monitored during its development and throughout the many years of preparatory works – it was clear that its objectives matched our own desire to pass down to our children a natural world worthy of indeed being called natural.

Educating , Healing, Showcasing, Preserving ...

It is clear that if we are to raise awareness of the importance of preserving our world and our natural environment then from an early age an educational element is paramount. We should allow classes from the Canton and the area to come and learn – indeed, more than learn, understand as well – the importance of the protection of indigenous species in our region.

What better way to do this than to be able to present to future generations the species indigenous to our region, in order to all the more foster affection for the *local* wildlife, which is far too often overlooked.

It is then important to care and to heal animals, which often are found wounded – affected by the impact of increased human habitat, which is unavoidable, of course, but not without consequences for the frequency of incidents that affect our region's animals.

Finally, we must preserve, just as we try to do in the seas of the Indian Ocean, the ecosystems, regions, set of elements that make up what we commonly call nature.

In addition to these very rational aspects, there were also much more subjective, emotional elements to our becoming involved with this project. We have many fond memories of when, as young children, our Mother would take us to discover the residents of this wonderful park. How many times we spent our Wednesday afternoons or Saturdays at the Parc de la Garenne!

These, ladies and gentlemen are the reasons which led the Bertarelli family, through its Foundation, to invest in this project as a leader alongside other foundations, Oak and Mava, to transform an idea into a reality.

Next year Parc de la Garenne celebrates its half-century. So, long live the Parc de la Garenne and thank you to all those involved daily in this vital project for our region and for the preservation of nature. Our nature. Thank you.