

Get It Done
Anjali Appadurai

CHAIRPERSON: I'd now like to give the floor to Miss Anjali Appadurai with College of the Atlantic, who will speak on behalf of youth non-governmental organizations. Miss Appadurai, you have the floor.

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: I speak for more than half the world's population. We are the silent majority.

5 You've given us a seat in this hall, but our interests are not on the table. What does it take to get a stake in this game? Lobbyists? Corporate influence? Money? You've been negotiating all my life. In that time, you've failed to meet pledges, you've missed targets, and you've broken promises. But you've heard this all before.

We're in Africa, home to communities on the front line of climate change. The world's poorest countries need funding for adaptation now. The Horn of Africa and those nearby in KwaMashu needed it yesterday.

10 But as 2012 dawns, our Green Climate Fund remains empty. The International Energy Agency tells us we have five years until the window to avoid irreversible climate change closes. The science tells us that we have five years maximum. You're saying, "Give us 10."

15 The most stark betrayal of your generation's responsibility to ours is that you call this "ambition." Where is the courage in these rooms? Now is not the time for incremental action. In the long run, these will be seen as the defining moments of an era in which narrow self-interest prevailed over science, reason and common compassion.

There is real ambition in this room, but it's been dismissed as radical, deemed not politically possible.

20 Stand with Africa. Long-term thinking is not radical. What's radical is to completely alter the planet's climate, to betray the future of my generation, and to condemn millions to death by climate change. What's radical is to write off the fact that change is within our reach. 2011 was the year in which the silent majority found their voice, the year when the bottom shook the top. 2011 was the year when the radical became reality.

25 Common, but differentiated, and historical responsibility are not up for debate. Respect the foundational principles of this convention. Respect the integral values of humanity. Respect the future of your descendants. Mandela said, "It always seems impossible, until it's done." So, distinguished delegates and governments around the world, governments of the developed world, deep cuts now. Get it done.

Mic check!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Mic check!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Mic check!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Mic check!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Equity now!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Equity now!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Equity now!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Equity now!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: You've run out of excuses!

PEOPLE'S MIC: You've run out of excuses!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: We're running out of time!

PEOPLE'S MIC: We're running out of time!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Get it done!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Get it done!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Get it done!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Get it done!

ANJ ALI APPADURAI: Get it done!

PEOPLE'S MIC: Get it done!

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Miss Appadurai, who was speaking on behalf of half of the world's population, I think she said at the beginning. And on a purely personal note, I wonder why we let not speak half of the world's population first in this conference, but only last.

Durban, South Africa

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