

“Climate change is now”

Speech by Global Climate Ambassadors at the IPCC in Copenhagen

- We are children.
- We are from Ghana, Belgium, Nigeria, Sweden, India, Zambia and right here in Denmark.
- We are the Global Climate Ambassadors and we want to talk to you about climate change.

Climate change is here right now – in the past it was a question about our future. No More. Climate change is now. We see it, we hear it and we talk about it. We worry about our future.

- In India children are passing out from heat in the classrooms and on the street. Sea rise has already made homes and villages disappear.
- In Ghana children go hungry because it is so dry that food cannot grow on the fields. When the rain patterns change, farmers don't know when to sow their crops. Wildlife is going extinct.
- In Zambia schools are flooded and they are thinking about floating schools.

Climate change does not affect everybody the same. The countries who have caused climate change are not the ones who will suffer the most. It is just not fair to leave it to them to clean up from us. Just as it is not fair of you – the older generation – to make us – the children – clean up after you.

For us climate change is not about numbers, graphs and difficult words. It is about our world, our future and our survival. The future we will inherit from you. Climate change is about our local environment, our food and our health. Climate change is about children going hungry.

- Storm means less crops and more hunger.
- Floods lead to less crops and more hunger. Floods lead to more wet lands, more mosquitos and more malaria and dengue fever.
- Drought leads to less crops and more hunger. Drought means less plants and less wildlife. Drought means less hydro power and electricity rationing at night.

When the climate changes - our world changes. And we cannot plan our future in a changing world!

Please – we want to plan for our future!

We need you to stop at nothing to fight climate change.

We are children – and you should listen to us.

- We did not decide to burn fossil fuels but we are the ones who will feel the consequences on our bodies
- We represent the future and as the leaders of tomorrow, we are the ones will have to deal with those consequences long after you are gone.
- We are the ones who will write the history books and we are the ones will judge you by what you do, not what you say.

It seems we are the only ones with the energy – and we are the only ones open-minded enough – to take this seriously.

We still need you to lead the way – you still have time to become role models on climate change – but the time is running out and we will have to take over from you.

We need your help now, please!

- We need your help to make sure that children's views are taken into account locally, nationally and internationally.

At the UN Children's Rights Conference, you all agreed that children's views should be taken into account in decisions affecting them. Climate change will affect our entire way of living, yet nobody is listening and many children do not even know about climate change.

- We need your help to engage the younger generation by telling them what is happening in the world.

In Nigeria every student has 4 compulsory classes every week just learning about climate change. Yet they still don't feel they know enough. In Denmark we have none and we are the ones who cause climate change the most.

- We need your help to make it fun to fight climate change.

We know that fighting climate change CAN be fun and engaging. It does not need to be long reports, graphs and numbers from serious men in suits. It can be 'plant a tree', inform at a concert and on Television. It can be fun to recycle or to say Yours Treely – instead of Yours Truly. When we save energy on one continent, we might prevent a storm in another and save the homes and lives of people – just like us.

When children know about climate change, when children are heard about climate change and when children have fun fighting climate change – then we can prepare ourselves and make a lasting impact by engaging across borders and learning from each other. Climate change is global and to fight it we too must work together globally.

We can use social media to interact across the world. That is what we do in the Global Climate Ambassadors Program. We have told each other about our motivations on YouTube, we have discussed our concerns on Facebook and contributed to this very speech on Skype.

- A hundred kids,
- 8 countries on 3 continents
- One message!

Through new technology and social media we can put a face on kids from around the world and hear their stories about the consequences of climate change.

We learn about our future, we connect with other children in other countries and we engage in classroom to classroom projects to make more people want to take back our climate.

By making local actions to local problems we can fight global climate change together. But we need you to look up from your books, take our hands and walk the talk.

Thank you for listening.