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My name is Ruth Nyambura, I come from Kenya and work with the African Biodiversity Network, a member of the Climate Justice Network.

In 2007 and 2008 a devastating drought swept through my country Kenya and in its wake left 90% of the livestock of pastoralist communities dead. In 2011, another drought swept through not only Kenya but the East and Horn of Africa region, leaving 10 Million people facing starvation. This region is surely one of the most prominent faces of the inequality of climate change; barely contributing anything to the systemic and structural causes of this crisis but yet standing almost center stage in its destructive path.

You cannot ignore that people are demanding a comprehensive response to the climate crisis in the form of binding commitments, where impacted people are put first. We do not want a special outcome coming from an irregular and manipulated process that is mitigation-centric, where finance and financial obligations of the developed countries are clothed in markets, privatization and aid and finally where appropriate technology transfer and capacity building are delinked.

We desperately need binding commitments that speak to the urgent need for the poorest and most vulnerable to this crisis to effectively adapt, an agreement that is cognizant of the painful fact that for many, like the pastoralist communities of Africa, that loss and damage is no longer in our future as it has been their lived reality for a number of years.

You have a moral and logical duty to deliver on a pre-2020 commitment to scale up action immediately to deliver deep and just pollution cuts, tangible solutions for impacted people, solutions divorced from markets and by extension an economic system that created this crisis. You cannot ignore that people are demanding a comprehensive response to the climate crisis in the form of binding commitments on all of the elements of the Durban platform.

From indigenous groups in Latin America defending their territories against extractive industries to farmers in Africa reclaiming their agricultural systems, to communities in South East Asia resisting the commodification of their resources and last but not least, to the youth from all over the World marching on the streets and calling for a new, just and equitable World, it is evident that a systemic and structural change of the current system is the only way forward.

Thank You!