

Youth Statement to the COP12/MOP2 Delegates

Mtukufu Rais Kibaki, Bwana Kibwana, Wakurugenzi, Vijana wote, generations to come.

Three minutes. Just three minutes to tell the entire world what we, as youth, believe. That is why, for this short moment, we ask that you sincerely consider our words, as we try to communicate to you the true reason why we are all gathered here in this room today.

We ask all of you to close your eyes for just ten seconds, forget all political and economic agendas, and simply visualize the kind of world that you would truthfully want for your children. What do you see? Now go ahead, create it. The power is in your hands, right here, right now.

Imagine if we gathered in this room in six years to hear the following announcement:

Today, we are glad to announce that emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere have begun to drop steadily. A great change is happening for humanity, a new age in which we have realized that renewable energies and sustainable consumption benefit all.

We have this question to ask you... When making those critical decisions about future commitment within the Kyoto Protocol, did you think about your son, your daughter? Did the thought cross your mind that they will be directly impacted by your actions? We, the youth, are thinking not only about ourselves, but about our unborn children. Standing up here today in front of all of you, that is the driving force behind this passion. We are seeking the passion within all of you.

We are here to demonstrate to the world that youth are actively engaged in fighting climate change, working voluntarily all across our world. They do not work for politics or for power, but for our shared future.

YOUTH. ... You have seen us in the plenaries and contact groups. We are following the negotiations closely, we understand the policy. We have listed our views and recommendations in the policy letter you have before you. You have our Youth Stakeholder proposal in front of you. Read it. We are a partner in this process, and we request that we be recognized as such.

This year we have witnessed the birth of a new voice for Africa : the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change.

Just as climate change knows no borders and transcends generations, youth also transcends these barriers, gender, ethnicity, culture, language, class. The fact that we are youth is what unites us. Youth is a state of mind.

We want you to follow our lead. Stand united on this critical, potentially devastating issue.

We worry the lack of direction and leadership at COP12 negotiations will delay a timely response to the climate crisis. We urge you, Ministers, and your delegations to adopt a spirit of goodwill and cooperation in order to establish a post-2012 mandate.

We've been mandated by thousands, millions of youth all over the world, therefore, we are mandating you to answer our call.

Remember: You did not inherit this earth, you have borrowed it from us, just as your ancestors borrowed it from you. Let's PULL

IT TOGETHER for the next child who is born. All together in
unison

Harambee (HARAMBEE) !

LET'S PULL IT TOGETHER! (Let's pull it together!)