

Ni sa Bula Vinaka,

My name is Kya and I come from Fiji. I speak on behalf of the Youth of the Pacific as our only representative here. I also speak on behalf of youth everywhere, which means I speak for half the worlds population, who stand in solidarity with the Pacific.

I am not here to preach to you. Or tell you what you have done wrong. I am here to tell you a story. It is a simple one. A world away from here live 10.5 million proud people. Our lands may be small, but our oceans are great. So is our ability to persevere, to fight and to survive. Yet with each passing day surviving becomes harder.

Our people may not understand the complexities of climate science. The jargon, the graphs, the acronyms. What we do know is that our tides rise higher and reach deeper than ever before. Our islands are slowly washing away. Salt water has crept into our land, killing crops and spoiling fresh drinking water. Our fish and coral are dying as our seas change and grow warmer. The weather has changed so much we can no longer read it. We fear droughts just as much as we fear floods. This is our reality.

People of the Pacific are people of the ocean. We are meant to live with it, live next to it, live from it, not be drowned by it. Our people are doing all that we can to fight Climate Change. Yet we cannot do it alone.

1.5 degrees is our only hope. For us it is sink or swim. Our hope is fading fast. For some of us it is too late, making the inclusion of Loss and damage a non negotiable. 20 years have gone by in the life of these negotiations. The Pacific does not have 20 more. No matter what is done or what is not, we have drawn our red line in the sand, we will survive! Will you help us?