



CBD COP15 Part 1
High-Level Segment - Closing Plenary
Global Youth Biodiversity Network
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Delivered by: Swetha Stotra Bhashyam

Thank you Mr President, I am speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network. (Hello in telugu)

In this moment when history has its eyes on us, this moment will be remembered, for better or for worse. What will we think when we look back at this moment? Were we ambitious enough? Were we brave enough? Were we courageous?

What does it mean to be courageous?

Courage means....

Having the strength to try, to persevere, to withstand difficulty, danger or fear....

Courage means...

To listen. To listen to the people. To hear from all actors in society from the quiet to the loud, from the youngest to the oldest and from the South to the North. These are your people, and their ideas for living in harmony with nature are very different from the corporate fairytales full of greenwashing, empty promises and quick-fixes.

Courage means...

To acknowledge. To look at the state of our world with open eyes and acknowledge that we have allowed our self-importance to overpower our sense of community, of togetherness, of shared living with people and the planet.

Courage means...

To realise and to internalise... that our silence has been a green light to the same system that exploits our people and our planet for profit and power. We need to Stop the Same.

Courage means...

To critically think. To pause, take stock, go beyond seeing the symptoms and look at the root causes that got us into this mess in the first place. From here we can rebuild and realise a better future.

Courage means...

To act. To take action rather than be silently complicit, because you taught us this- actions speak louder than words. To do more than the bare minimum. To aim for ambitious goals and targets and then to do everything in your power to go beyond the global targets. Doing “Just Enough” is not the goal, the goal is harmony with Nature!

Courage means...

To persevere. The strength to continue the fight when everyday we read news of corruption, tax havens, mass extinctions, ecocide, the capture and death of environmental defenders, subsidies to fossil fuel companies and industrial agriculture and more.

In a world where more than half of young people think humanity is doomed, three quarters of us are frightened of our future and many feel abandoned, ignored and betrayed by politicians, being hopeful is a struggle. This is our reality.

Yet, we are here. Courageously.

There are still many decisions ahead of us, in the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. We know it is not easy to be courageous, to be in a room full of rigid minds, full of people happy with the status quo, full of people with hidden agendas or on corporate payrolls, and still stand up for transformative change, for a just socio-ecological transition.

In that room, you might be alone, faced with big challenges, but know that we are with you. Millions of young people are standing behind you, wishing you success, ready to help in any way possible to create the transformative change we need to see in the world.

We have your back! Do you have ours?

Do you have the courage?

Thank you!