

“LES CICÉRONNADES”

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Anglais – CYCLE 4 – Texte en prose

Greetings to you all, my name is Vanessa Nakate and I'm a climate activist from Uganda. [...]

In the first week of January 2019, I held my very first climate strike after seeing and researching about how much climate change affected the people of my country. I went ahead to find out how it specifically affects the African continent, and this is when I realised that the climate crisis is the greatest threat facing our lives right now. And why is that?

The climate crisis is already destroying vast parts of the African continent. This is tragic and ironic when you think about how Africa is one of the least emitters of CO2 emissions, and yet it is among the most affected by this crisis.

Historically, the entire continent of Africa is responsible for only 3% of global emissions, and yet Africans are already suffering some of the most brutal impacts of climate change – that is rapidly intensifying hurricanes, floods and withering droughts. This is more than weather. This is about the people.

People have lost their lives, their homes, their businesses and their farms. [...] Last year in my country, the water levels of Lake Victoria rose as a result of the heavy rainfall in East Africa. And homes were flooded again, farms were washed away, people were displaced. [...]

Yes, we are all facing the same storm of the climate crisis but we are definitely in different boats. Some boats are burning faster, some boats are sinking faster. Many communities are being impacted by the climate crisis right now, it's no longer a matter of what is coming in the future. The present itself is catastrophic. This is why we need action and justice right now. And this is why we need justice that includes everyone. [...] We need drastic action from the leaders right now. We need real action. We need real solutions and not empty promises. Remember that we cannot eat coal and we cannot drink oil.

Let us rise up for the people and for the planet because we do not have planet B.

Thank you.

Extract from Vanessa Nakate's speech (Ugandan climate justice activist) at the Earth Uprising's summit “Youth Speaks: Our Message to World Leaders on Earth Day 2021”, April 20th 2021