

UN Water Conference - Plenary: Intervention by Sofia Luna Quispe speaking on behalf of the Mayor Group for Children and Youth and Millenials Movement

Almost fifty years ago when this conference was first held, we the youth, were not even born yet, but we look at the decisions and commitments of the past and wonder, why did it take so long to realize this was a crisis, and having been warned by affected communities and scientists, why has it taken so long to realize radical action was needed?

As the youth from the global south and north, we stand with the people in Pakistan who had their homes and territories taken away because of the massive floodings in 2022, we stand with the people of Peru, my home country, that right now are suffering the devastating consequences of cyclone Yaku. Our communities are being completely destroyed, our houses are falling down, our natural resources are disappearing and our brothers and sisters are dying as a result of totally foreseeable and preventable water-related disasters.

However, while this happens, and as it was highlighted yesterday by a representative from the World Bank, 30% of national funding for water worldwide is being left unspent. Still, when youth want to advance water solutions we are faced over and over with the same lie, that "there is a lack of funding". Feel the responsibility of our deaths on your shoulders, because that is what the water and climate crisis looks like, and remember the feeling as you are making the decisions.

Advocate for water justice and funding, defend the water defenders, stand up for loss and damage, and make polluters pay. Shame to those repeating empty promises but thank you to all of those who commit and fight from the bottom up to make water and climate action a reality, our hopes and dreams of a liveable future lay with you.

Where there's a will there's a way.