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JASON MOMOA

POWERFUL CLIMATE SPEECH

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Aloha, your excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Today, I stand before you as a singular representative of all Island nations. I'm honored to represent those who continue to fight as stewards of this planet. As a native Hawaiian, born to a mother from Iowa, I have seen how one place can be oblivious to another. The issues facing an Island can feel so far removed from that place that is landlocked in the middle of our country.

However, with a foothold in two worlds, I quickly began to see how a problem for one will soon become a problem for all. As a human family, through innovation and creativity, we have elevated ourselves and perceivably stand as the most powerful beings on earth. Yet our ego, our fear, and our relentless drive for profits have made us the only species willing to force this harmony with the natural balance of our world. We are the living consequence of forgotten traditions. We suffer collective amnesia of a truth that was once understood, the truth that to cause irreversible damage to the earth is to bring the same into ourselves.

We, the Island nations, and all coastal communities are the frontlines in this environmental crisis. The oceans are in a state of emergency. Entire Marine ecosystems are vanishing with the warming of the seas. And as the waste of the world empties into our waters, we face the devastating crisis of plastic pollution. We are a disease that is infecting our planet. From the atmosphere to the abyssal zone, we are polluted.

It is a known fact that the great garbage patch floating in the Pacific is larger than the country of France. Even at the depths of the Mariana trench, we are discovering nano plastics. And shockingly, there are more plastic particles in the ocean than the stars in the Milky Way. It is shameful. Yet the greatest threat to small island developing states is the fact that entire islands are drowning into the sea due to the enormous volume of emissions generated by the first world countries.

Island nations contribute the least to this disaster but are made to suffer the weight of these consequences. Our governments and corporate entities have known for decades the immediate changes needed. Yet change still has not come. And when the frontline is gone, we are doomed. There is no one doing.

If you continue to watch unsympathetic to the issues of Island nations, this realization will soon come that you stood by and witnessed the world cross the critical tipping point of sharing the death of our planet.

69 of the hundred richest entities in the world are corporations. They're not governments. Obviously, it is not naive to believe that one does not influence the other. But we are watching, and the people will hold our governments and corporate powers accountable for the destruction you are allowing to our environment.

Three years ago, in Paris, the world stood United and vowed to keep the earth below 1.5 degrees of warming. We pledged to hold ourselves to a higher standard and to do what is right. I'm standing here today because I am ashamed that not all of our leaders have honored this agreement. Delegates, I ask you now, do we still stand in unity for this cause? Do you intend to honor the commitments for the betterment of mankind, or will you continue to chase short-term profits above our children's basic human rights to live on this earth?

Change cannot come in 2050 or 2030, or even 2025. The change must come today. We can no longer afford the luxury of half-assing it as we willingly force ourselves beyond the threshold of no return. As a human species, we need the earth to survive. But make no mistake, the Earth doesn't need us.

We are demanding global unity for a global crisis, to once again bring harmony between mankind and the natural balance of our world. We must write the wrongs we have done against our children and grandchildren because we are gifting them with a world that suffers from our irresponsible stewardship. I leave you with an Island proverb that states, He Wa'a He Moku, He Moku He Wa'a.

These words teach us that all lands, no matter how big or small float on the ocean like a canoe in the middle of the sea. And that our planet is nothing more than an Island floating amongst an ocean of stars. Life on a floating vessel has limited resources. It requires strict conservation practices and carefully planned navigation to ensure survival. We must work together as a global community to best steer our canoe in the right direction, the direction of the healthy and abundant future on earth that we call home. Mahalo's new law. Please join, the Samoa pathway and unified commitment to protect and heal the planet. This is for all of us. Aloha!

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