

31 May
SB Joint Plenary for statements
16:30-18:00
ENGO-DCJ
NGO statement

My name is Nathalie Rengifo and I am speaking on behalf of Corporate Accountability, as a member of Demand Climate Justice.

Even for the parallel reality of the UNFCCC this is a strange meeting. It has been a strange 18 months since we last convened. But it has not been a surprise.

For the global climate justice movement, the devastation of the pandemic is familiar. For decades, we have denounced the violent impacts of an inequitable global economic system and have demanded an end to a status quo that was and continues to be a death sentence for the world's poorest.

The pandemic is a reminder of what the global majority has known all along: that the dominant economic system prioritises profits over people and planet.

Many governments responded to the pandemic in a manner which bodes poorly for the worsening climate crisis. The powerful took advantage of the crisis to hand themselves expanded police and military powers, rush through extractive projects and unjust economic reforms, and profit from our suffering.

Now we are being promised a return to the ways things were. But we will not return to a normal in which the suffering of the many paid for the luxuries of the few. We know that unless we take this political moment, climate action will be on the backburner, and economies in the rich North will be turbocharged and revived with dirty investments that deepen the climate crisis.

The pandemic has shown us that when a crisis is taken seriously, governments are capable of taking bold action and mobilising enormous resources to confront it.

For years, we have demanded 'system change not climate change'. System change now seems more necessary than ever, and more possible. The limits of what is possible can be radically shaken and rewritten overnight. Remember this over the coming weeks.