

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

## **Mary Robinson joins The Elders in Paris for Engagement with Young People @ Science Po 22 April 2014**

**I am truly sorry not be joining my fellow Elders , President Carter and Hina Jilani, and my good friend Laurence Tubiana, for this important dialogue with young people in France on climate leadership.**

**My overall message is that we need you if we are going to get to the transformational leadership that will be required to ensure that our world stays below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial standards.**

**In essence, that means we must reach zero carbon emissions by 2050. And the world is not on course for that at present. We also need to achieve this goal equitably and fairly, which is the climate justice approach.**

**French youth will have to give particular leadership, as France is hosting COP 21 here in Paris in December 2015. I want to pay homage to a wonderful hero of France Stéphane Hessel, who sadly died last year. He inspired me over the years, and I was delighted with his love of Ireland and particularly of the poetry of William Butler Yeats which he could recite accurately and at length!**

**Stéphane took part in earlier Elders events here in Paris in December 2008, to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Shortly afterwards he published “Time for Outrage” “Indignez-Vous!” which**

**sold over 3.5 million copies, and after that he wrote “Get involved!” “Engagez-Vous! in which he appealed to his readers to save the environment.**

**In that same spirit I would like to share four short messages with you:**

- 1. It is important to begin with the injustice of climate change, which is already affecting poor countries and communities more severely, although they have been least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions.**
- 2. We need to understand and respond to the gender dimensions of climate shocks which undermine already poor livelihoods. It is women who largely bear the brunt, and have to learn to adapt and become more resilient. Women’s leadership is vital at all levels in tackling climate change.**
- 3. You should call for the scale of transformative leadership that is needed. We need to transform our economies and societies in a way that is fair for people living now and preserves the world for future generations. You will inherit this world. You must demand intergenerational justice. Inform yourself now to shape its future. Use your power and influence, either through your consumer choices or, your vote. Use your voice to demand climate action.**
- 4. Finally, you, yourselves, need to link with young people in different regions of the world, and create a constituency of demand for practical**

actions that move us away from fossil fuel energy. Many young people are involved in universities and colleges which are divesting from fossil fuels, and it is important, if possible, that there is reinvestment in renewables, and a sharing of technologies with developing countries. Think of the difference we could make to the lives of the 1.3billion people who have no electricity if we could bring them power through a renewable source that would light their homes, charge their phones, transform livelihoods.

**So, in conclusion, think big!**

**Indignez- vous!**

**Engagez-vous!**

**Le monde a besoin de vous.**

**Merci!**

***ENDS***