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PRESS RELEASE

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**Nepali diaspora and frontline communities rally outside UN Climate Summit
for climate reparations, fossil fuel phaseout**

NEW YORK — As world leaders and diplomats arrived at the United Nations Headquarters for the Secretary-General's [High-Level Event on Climate Action and the Just Transition](#), frontline activists, climate campaigners, and members of New York's Nepali diaspora gathered outside to demand immediate international action on climate reparations and a full, fast, and fair transition away from fossil fuels.

Representing regions hit hardest by fossil fuel pollution and extreme weather—including the U.S. Gulf Coast, the Permian Basin, the Philippines, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Colombia and flood-ravaged villages across Nepal—protesters highlighted the mounting human toll of continued fossil fuel expansion and inaction of fossil fuel phase-out. They were joined by New York State Assemblywoman Sarahana Shrestha, the first NY State legislator of Nepali origin.

Central to the group's message was an urgent call for high-emitting wealthy nations to meet their legal and moral obligations to the Global South. Demonstrators emphasized that the U.S. and other Global North countries must pay their historical climate debts to enable developing nations to build climate resilience, recover from loss and damage arising from climate disasters, and pursue a rapid, equitable and just transition to renewable energy. These are in addition to the Global North's obligation to move swiftly towards domestic zero GHG emissions.

Speakers at the rally included Anisha Buda Magar, National Indigenous Women Forum (Nepal) Alicia Gallegos, Laguna & Acoma Pueblos, Climate Justice Organizer, Pueblo Action Alliance, Dr. Roishetta Ozane, Vessel Project of Louisiana, Sharif Jamil, Waterkeepers Bangladesh and Bangladesh Climate Justice Movement and the Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD) and Jose Reyeros, youth climate activist from Mexico

Lidy Nacpil, Coordinator, Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD):

"Behind every new pipeline and drilling permit is direct evidence of human suffering and a violation of international law. The ICJ Advisory Opinion makes it clear: states are legally bound to protect the climate, and failing to do so triggers a duty to cease harm and make full reparations. Global North governments whose countries bear foremost responsibility for climate change should heed this message. For Global South countries like Nepal, this establishes a clear legal right to demand accountability and reparations—one that the UN General Assembly must urgently address."

Dr. Roishetta Sibley Ozane, Founder, The Vessel Project of Louisiana:

"A true just transition cannot be built on the continued sacrifice of frontline communities. The fossil fuel industry must pay for the harm it has caused, and world leaders must commit to a fast, fair, and fully funded fossil fuel phaseout that centers the people who have carried this crisis for far too long."

Anisha Buda, Program Officer, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF), Nepal, and member of the Asia Pacific Network of Environmental Defenders:

“The floods swept away our homes and lands but not our identity as Tamang Indigenous Peoples! Indigenous Peoples around the world have been protecting our lands, waters, and ways of life for generations. As the climate crisis deepens, the world must listen to those who have long understood that we are not separate from nature, we are part of it. Protect Mother Earth!”

Jose Reyeros, Mexican LNG campaigner, “Make Rich Polluters Pay” global civil society campaign:

“A billionaire emits 1 million times what anyone in the bottom 90% in a year, we need to demand accountability to the people making profits from the suffering and the loss of our biodiversity and our cultural heritage”

Mohiba Ahmed, Organizer, DRUM–Desis Rising Up and Moving, New York City:

“For South Asian and Indo-Caribbean communities in New York City, the climate crisis is not a distant threat – it is a lived reality, one that our people carry across oceans. We continue to be on the frontlines, in our homelands and here in the US. Our working-class members are hard-hit when their basement homes are flooded, or when they are left scrambling for relief during power cuts in heat waves. Our members are left devastated when their families are displaced and their villages are erased by glacial floods back home. Our people suffer, while the fossil fuel industry continues to expand and world leaders continue to stall. We are in solidarity with impacted communities from the Global South and the Gulf South alike, because this crisis was built on the same extraction, the same disposability of working-class and immigrant lives, wherever we come from. We are not asking for sympathy. We are demanding reparations, a full and fast fossil fuel phase-out, and recognition that every new oil, gas, and coal approval is a violation of our right to survive. Our communities have paid enough. It is time for those responsible to pay up their climate debt to the world and stop stealing our future.”

Note to editors:

- Speakers and other spokespeople are available for interviews
- High resolution images and b-roll [available here](#). Please credit the organization / individual’s name on the folder.