**CRC Presentation, Matheson**

**September 23, 2016, Geneva, Switzerland**

**Intro / Set Stage**

Dear Colleagues, next we will hear from Rekha Dhillon-Richardson.

I have been lucky to support Rekha – and others of her generation – that are leading landmark work to secure real solutions to the most pressing ecological and human rights issue of our time – climate change.

Along the way, I met one of Rekha’s peers – Eshe Sherley, who at 17 years old was one of the lead petitioners in a legal action seeking climate protection against the State of Massachusetts. Eshe taught me a lesson that I seek to follow everyday. She shared, “A true listener listens with the willingness to help.”

My sole request is that each and every one of us here today listens to Rekha and her generation – and that we do so with the willingness to extend bold, decisive and aggressive help to tackle the climate emergency we face today.

--> Here’s Rekha.

**Wrap**

SLIDE 10 - Kelly Name

**Introduction:** Thank you so much Rekha.

Today I stand before you as a human rights lawyer and the Board President of Our Children’s Trust which is an organization that seeks to secure the legal right to a stable climate for all generations.

SLIDE 11 - UN Charter /UNFCCC Quotes

**State Obligation?:**  Joni reminds us that we established the UN because we *knew* there would be challenges too immense for one nation alone. And, in fact, the primary purpose of the UN is to solve these challenges.

We also established UNFCCC recognizing that we need the widest possible cooperation from *all* countries to keep the atmosphere healthy for present and future generations.

**We’re failing:** Yet decades on, we have failed to take the actions needed to stabilize our climate system and, in fact, we have actually supported the fossil fuel industry’s efforts to exploit the very resources we should be limiting – oil, gas & coal. In turn, we are driving the concentration of CO2 far beyond a sustainable level and racking up violations of children’s rights at an accelerating pace, as illuminated through Brianna and Rekha stories.

SLIDE 12 - CNN splash page Screenshot

**Equipping children:** Since those of us who have more yesterdays than tomorrows are, failing, really just failing, to protect our atmosphere, Rekha’s generation is stepping up. And one of the ways they are doing this is by taking their case to court.

With the support of Our Children’s Trust, children in countries spanning the globe a are asking judges to order States to honor constitutional guarantees, treaties and laws that promise children the right to life, liberty and a chance at happiness. The case in the United States has made headlines being called the “most important lawsuit in the U.S.”

SLIDE 13 - Exhibit with Hansen Quote

**Next steps / Prescription**: Their request in court is the same crucial request they are making to this Committee today – require States to base policies on climate science.

And what does the science require? As Rehka highlighted, for climate recovery the world’s top climate scientists tells us that together, States must do two things:

* First, decrease atmospheric CO2 levels to below 350 parts per million by the end of this century.
* And, second, we must stabilize the long-term average global temperature increase to no higher than 1 degree Celsius.

Young people have shared this concrete prescription to fix the planet with both our courts and with this Committee. This submission should be required reading for all of us working to protect children’s rights.

SLIDE 14 – Courthouse + Kelsey “To Change Everything” Photo

**This is Possible / Act:** But in addition to having the blueprints for the solution, there’s even better news – we have the technical capacity to implement this prescription – all we need is the political will. This is why we are here today. If we are serious about protecting the fundamental rights of children we cannot settle on carbon math that is politically convenient. Instead must insist that States take actions – with all deliberate speed, – in line with what science requires. To do otherwise, will sacrifice our children’s future.

Author Terry Tempest Williams, wisely shares, "The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time."  Thank you for your willingness to see, and willingness to help.