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English Language

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Text A

Text A is an edited article written by Hillary Clinton on the day before the opening of the International Conference on Climate Change in Paris on 30th November 2015. The article was published in 'Time' magazine. Clinton hoped to be the Democratic candidate for the presidency of the United States.

**The climate change deniers, defeatists and obstructionists
should know that their cynical efforts will fail**

Climate change threatens every corner of our country, every sector of our economy and the health and future of every child. We are already seeing its impacts and we know the poorest and most vulnerable people in the United States and around the world will suffer most of all.

Despite the seriousness of the threat, the world has not always rallied to respond. For years, international negotiations were stymied by deep divisions between developed and developing nations, and by resistance on the part of the Chinese and others to taking responsibility for curbing carbon pollution. While President Obama has made strong progress cutting pollution and deploying more clean energy in the United States, he faces a Republican Party that alternates between denial of the reality of climate change, defeatism about our ability to do anything about it, and outright obstruction of the tools and programs we need to solve the problem.

But President Obama remains committed to making the United States the global leader in the fight against climate change—and so do I. In Paris this week, world leaders have the best chance in years to forge a new, durable, ambitious international climate agreement. I believe they must be guided by three principles. First, all countries must take responsibility for combating this global crisis, and put forward commitments to curb their own greenhouse gas emissions. Second, the agreement should galvanize financial assistance for, and spur private investment in, developing countries to help them adapt and achieve sustainable economic growth.

And finally, it must be an agreement that can be strengthened over time. Countries should agree to come together regularly to raise their collective ambition. In the years ahead, technology will improve and become even cheaper; more companies will invest; and city and state leaders will take actions that outstrip the ambitions of their capitals. Solving the climate challenge for the long term will take more than the solutions we have in 2015—it will require the new tools we build together.

In Copenhagen in 2009, President Obama and I had to burst into a secret meeting of leaders from China, India, Brazil, and South Africa to break a deadlock and deliver the first international climate agreement in which all major economies, not just the developed world, pledged to take action.

We've come so far since then. Over the past year, 164 countries accounting for 90 percent of global emissions have announced national targets and measures to reduce pollution that they are ready to codify in Paris, recognizing that cutting emissions and investing in clean energy isn't just good for the planet—it's good economic sense. The United States and China led the way with ambitious goals to cut carbon pollution and deploy more clean energy, and have already begun taking action to achieve them.

Still, getting the job done in Paris will require skillful diplomacy and robust American leadership—I know that from personal experience. As Secretary of State, I put combating climate change on the agenda for my first trip to Beijing and kept it there over the next

four years. I appointed the first high-level special envoy for climate change and led an international effort to launch the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to reduce so-called “super pollutants” that make up just a fraction of emissions, but drive a disproportionate share of warming.

As President, I will protect and build on the progress President Obama has made at home. I will set ambitious goals—to see 500 million solar panels installed within four years and enough renewable electricity to power every home in America within 10 years. I’ll also pursue a new North American Climate Compact, because the United States, Canada and Mexico should work together to build a clean energy future for our continent.

And the Republican deniers, defeatists and obstructionists should know—their cynical efforts will fail. Not only are they on the wrong side of science and of history, they are increasingly on the wrong side of their own voters, as a majority of Republicans accept the science of climate change, and support solutions like clean energy.

We must reject the false choice between combating climate change and fostering strong economic growth. If any country can prove that, it’s the United States. Under President Obama, we’re leading the world in the fight against climate change. I won’t let anyone take us backwards, deny our economy the benefits of harnessing a clean energy future, or force our children to endure the catastrophe that would result from unchecked climate change.

Once again, the world looks to Paris—this time in hope. Global challenges demand global solutions. The fight against climate change will be long. It will take the efforts of every country, every industry, and every community. It will take the leadership of every President. But at last—in Paris—the framework of a lasting solution is within reach. We must seize this moment.

Text B

Text B is the edited witness statement of Jyotsna Giri who documents her experience of climate change in India's Sundarbans Delta. The statement is one of a collection of accounts posted on the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) website. Giri lived on Lohachara Island which was permanently flooded in the 1980s. The disappearance of the island was reported by Indian researchers in December 2006.

I am 55 years old and married. My five daughters are married and my three sons live with me in the same house. Presently I have six family members.

I studied until fifth grade and then got married at the age of twelve. My husband had a house at Lohachara Island and that's where we settled after marriage. In fact my husband's ancestral house was in the mainland but he shifted to this island as there was plenty of productive agricultural land.

Lohachara had three more adjoining islands: Sagar, Ghoramara and Suparibhanga. Lohachara and Suparibhanga islands don't exist anymore, while Ghoramara is almost on the verge of extinction due to accelerated coastal erosion. Ghoramara and Suparibhanga had a significant number of households in the past before these islands got wiped out fully or partly.

During the 1960s Lohachara Island was divided into 5 administrative zones and the total population was almost five or six thousand. Agriculture and fishing were our primary source of livelihood during those days. We also owned three hectares of agricultural land on this island. We use to cultivate paddy [rice] as well as variety of vegetables on these lands. Land was extremely fertile and we had a bountiful harvest every season without using fertiliser. Soil was very soft, fertile and sandy. Even the embankments near the river were used for growing vegetables. Coastal waters were stashed with fishes and crabs and that provided us with a good catch.

I still remember that fateful day, when I lost everything.

I was on the neighbouring island to fetch some drinking water. My husband was not present that day and so I locked the house and took my son with me. While coming back, I found that the only ferry service available was cancelled for the day due to some kind of engine snag. So, I decided to stay back at my parent's house for that night. The ferry service started the very next day and I boarded the morning ferryboat. When we approached Lohachara Island, I suddenly noticed that my sheep were all drifting in the river.

I started to panic and rushed to rescue them. I was about to jump in the river when some fellow passengers stopped me from doing so. I felt helpless and started crying. After landing at Lohachara Island I found that half of my house was washed away by the river. Slowly the entire island got submerged.

We were rescued and went to Gangasagar Island refugee colony which is on the south of that island. We stayed there for a few days and then shifted to northern parts of the island where we constructed a new house. We have been living here for the last 15 years. We don't have any agricultural land and have to work as labourers. My son has grown up and now he works on a ship.

Unpredictable weather patterns and fast deteriorating environmental conditions are making our life miserable.

I am not even able to grow enough vegetables in my kitchen garden as there are no rains for the last couple of months. Soil fertility as well as productivity is gradually declining. Earlier we used to follow the broadcast method for paddy [rice] cultivation. Now farmers have to invest a lot in terms of hiring labour, purchasing fertiliser and continuous monitoring. Similarly, fishing has been badly affected as we don't even get much fishes in the river to catch.

I feel that the natural regeneration rate has declined. We have already lost much of our natural resources in this region and which may be attributed to erratic weather patterns and changing temperature. It seems that monsoons are delayed while summers are extended these days.

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Sources taken/adapted from:

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