

the question of whether "to engage or not" has been a contentious issue for activists since the beginning, and that it will continue to be debated at the People's Summit. "My own personal opinion," said Davies, "is that we should say no."

Davies ended by telling youth that the APEC meetings are "an incredible time for activists to learn from each other and build a sense of strength." Talking to Raymond Chan, said Davies, was worthwhile because the minister saw young people who are organizing, communicating in a wider network, politically concerned and knowledgeable, and who "in fact, know more than he does on some of these issues." Davies said the youth delegates should continue to build on the success of activists throughout history, mentioning the anti-nuclear weapons movement and changes in South Africa, where "people made the difference."

"When we unite in our struggles," said Davies, "there is tremendous strength."

CLOSING ADDRESS - REBEKA TABOBONDUNG, 21, WASAUKSING FIRST NATION (ONTARIO)

We talked about a lot of complex issues, issues like globalization and what this means, or what it could mean, problems with the environment, a problem that no matter where we live in the world affects every single one of us. We talked about what it is like to be youth living in our countries, and I think we came to realize that we are not all that different from each other. We all feel pain and happiness, and we all care about our futures and the future of Mother Earth.

And we talked about APEC, and we tried really hard to understand what it means and how it affects our lives. And we learned a lot that we never knew before. Like child labour and human rights, and what it means to live in a democratic or non-democratic country. We voiced issues that are of concern to us and we shared our stories.

I think it is really important, what we've been doing for the past five days. Talking, questioning, trying to understand APEC and other trade agreements that seem so out of our control. And rightfully so... because they are. The leaders of our countries get together all the time. They get to discuss their plans and talk about ways to implement them. How often do the youth of our countries get the chance to come together to talk?

This is why this week is so important. We have a lot of important things to say to our leaders. We have a lot of recommendations that we feel must be included in APEC. We are here to tell our leaders this. And if they are responsible leaders, they should listen to us, because very soon we will be the leaders of the world.

By the looks of things, I think we as youth need to take responsibility and start educating our educators. Our voices need to be heard. And our work doesn't have to end when this conference is over and we all go home. We can keep in touch with each other. We can go back to our schools and ask our teachers about APEC, and if they don't know, we can do presentations, we can pressure our political leaders and demand that they listen to us. We can go to protests and marches and bring our friends and families, we can write letters and poems, join theatre groups, get involved in our communities.

It may seem like these actions won't have much of an impact compared to the actions and decisions made in the APEC summit. But I believe every action we take, no matter how big or small, does have an impact.

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