

## Fernanda Barros, 15

### *Brazil*

Hello, my name is Fernanda Barros. I live in Pará's capital, in the north of Brazil. I am fifteen years old, and I am worried about the environment in which I live.

I entered Fridays For Future in January 2020, after some calls from my brother trying to convince me to start the movement here in Belém. I knew this was the right thing to do and about the importance of the cause. I was anxious, so I took some time to start doing something.

In the beginning, everything was okay, just me and some friends going to protest about climate issues. However, people around me started to ask me 'but is it only you?' It isn't a problem to me, but most people just want to join when more people are already doing it. But it is important to remember: you always start small, and the climate cannot wait, neither can Indigenous rights.

I went to the front of the palace of the governor of Pará, with my friend. We brought some signs and we stayed there showing them to the people around. I felt useful, doing something I trusted was right, doing what I could about climate change.

The current federal government incentivizes the climate emergency, and the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. Even with the wood market almost illegal here, the government still supports the exportation of natura wood (native wood from the Amazon), which is illegal, actually. The same issue happens with mining exploration on Indigenous land. The government supports projects that increase the deforestation and cause even more Indigenous murders in the Amazon. It is absurd!

Everybody would win in a more sustainable world. We would have a beautiful Amazon, complete, rather than the equivalent of two football fields being cut down every minute. We would have Indigenous communities happy, the Amazon rivers without pollution, turtles without plastic straws, Venice's water transparent and clean.

The current situation in which the world finds itself is so alarming and depressing, and everyone is watching this, everyone is watching what only thinking about profit does. The world is hotter, people are already feeling prolonged droughts. So we need to change now, because climate change doesn't wait.

I'm very thankful to Vanessa Nakate and Greta Thunberg, for telling the truth about what is really happening in the world and opening the eyes of many young people, I'm thankful to my brother Abel Rodrigues, who called me and informed me about the group which, in Europe, is speaking about the Amazon and its peoples. Thanks for your daily struggle.

So if you want to, young activist, do something! Don't be shy, give your best, because we are needed, it doesn't matter if you are a beginner and people don't listen to you, and think that you are crazy, if you are doing this with only one or two friends, because you have international support and the world thanks you. We know that the measures that have been taken are not enough, we see this on TV. We know what's causing everything, we have eyes and voices, and we can act.