

In a different time, the young activists that died fighting for a better world, were never killed. Instead, they sit around a table on a panel with other youth activists of various causes, allowing their words to intertwine.

And these are the voices we listen to when choosing a leader of the free world.

From one end of the table, Isabel Cabanillas speaks about various ways to eliminate femicides in Mexico and guarantee women and girls violence-free lives.

From another end, Greta Thunberg passionately discusses the science behind climate change and demands answers as to why the leaders of the world continue to ignore the facts.

From yet another direction, Delmonte Johnson raises his voice in protest about gun violence throughout the United States, demanding stricter gun safety laws in the country.

Lastly, from the other end of the table, Lehlogonolo Muthebhuli insists more attention be paid to mental health in North Africa and a change be made to the healthcare system as a whole.

“Mexico and Juarez need to be provided with more investigators for cases of femicide,” Cabanillas says.

“Some of the other women in our vocal feminist group were told by a prosecutor's office that they had about 7,000 cases of sexual violence and only about 10 investigators for those cases and that investigators constantly rotate.

*This is simply unacceptable.”*

*“This is simply unacceptable,”*

Thunberg says.

"For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear.

Yet you continue to look away and come here saying that you're doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.

You say you hear us and that you understand, but I don't believe that our words come close to your consideration.

*Please listen.”*

*“Please listen,”*

Johnson speaks now with urgency in his voice.

“Every time you turn around, families are crying for their children, whose lives were taken away just like that.

I work with others to reduce gun violence through youth employment and by improving access to mental health treatment, but still, it feels that the world is not listening. We, as youth, are disregarded for being children; in cases of enacting change, *young people are often left behind.*”

*“Young people are often left behind,”*

says Lehlogonolo Muthebhuhi,

“when it comes to accessing healthcare.

If you can’t afford medical aid, you have to rely on derisory public healthcare facilities, where young people do not get the care they need.

Young women are judged when they ask for contraceptives, while mental health is not a priority.

Getting access to proper care is a long, arduous process.

This needs to change.”

To imagine a world such as this - where these are the voices towards which we turn our ears, and these are the demands we strive to fulfill - is to dream of a brighter future.

In a different time,  
this can be our reality.

## References

- “Meet 10 Young Activists Shaping the World They Want.” *Amnesty International*, [www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2019/08/ten-young-activists-shaping-the-world-they-want/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2019/08/ten-young-activists-shaping-the-world-they-want/).
- Chavez, Nicole. “A Teen Who Spent His Free Time Speaking out against Gun Violence Was Shot and Killed in Chicago.” CNN. Cable News Network, September 8, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/08/us/chicago-activist-delmonte-johnson-killed/index.html>.
- Uribe, Mónica Ortiz. “Activists Decry Femicides After Another Woman Is Killed In Juárez, Mexico.” NPR. NPR, January 26, 2020. <https://www.npr.org/2020/01/26/799695694/activists-decry-femicides-after-another-woman-is-killed-in-juarez-mexico>.
- Gamboa, Suzanne, Julian Shen-Berro, Kimberly Flores Guzmán, and Rima Abdelkader. “Shooting Death of Young Woman Activist Returns Spotlight to 'Femicides' in Juarez and Mexico.” NBCNews.com. NBCUniversal News Group, January 24, 2020. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/shooting-death-young-woman-activist-returns-spotlight-femicides-juarez-mexico-n1120811>.
- Staff, NPR. “Transcript: Greta Thunberg's Speech At The U.N. Climate Action Summit.” NPR. NPR, September 23, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/23/763452863/transcript-greta-thunbergs-speech-at-the-u-n-climate-action-summit>.
- Phillips, Tom. “‘This Is Our Feminist Spring’: Millions of Mexican Women Prepare to Strike over Femicides.” *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, March 7, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/07/mexico-femicides-protest-women-strike>.
- “Murder of Mexican Artist Isabel Cabanillas Highlights Endemic Issue of Femicide in Ciudad Juárez.” Democracy Now! Accessed April 17, 2020. [https://www.democracynow.org/2020/1/28/juarez\\_mexico\\_isabel\\_cabanillas\\_assassination\\_femicide](https://www.democracynow.org/2020/1/28/juarez_mexico_isabel_cabanillas_assassination_femicide)