Goodall Offers Hope in Kenyan Lecture

Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) ambassador Dr. Jane Goodall said that the “indomitable human spirit” gave her reason for hope, but warned that mankind’s greed still threatens that natural world in a rare Kenyan lecture appearance at the National Museums of Kenya on January 26.

A sell-out crowd filled the museum’s Main Gallery to hear Goodall, who has studied chimpanzees in Tanzania for more than 50 years, but increasingly speaks on issues of global significance.

Goodall’s “Reason for Hope” lecture – taken from her 1998 book of the same name – referenced both the compassionate and caring side of chimpanzees, but also their dark and violent side. “In the end, we must admit they are very much like us,” she said.

The lecture was organized by GRASP, in partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) – Kenya, the National Museums of Kenya, the Kenya Museum Society, and JGI’s Roots and Shoots.

Goodall recounted her own struggle to find acceptance and gain credibility among scientists when first studying chimpanzees, but urged those in attendance to “find your passion and follow your dreams.” Because she didn’t even possess a university degree when archaeologist Louis Leakey asked her to travel to Africa and study great apes, he fast-tracked her studies and had her work instead on a PhD.

Goodall spoke out against the rampant poaching and illegal trade that is devastating the world's elephant and rhinoceros populations, and said that mankind's "insatiable desire" for palm oil was literally destroying the great apes' forest homes. She called for greater reliance on sustainable energy sources, such as solar power.
Goodall is considered among the world's foremost experts on primate behavior, culture, communication and conservation. She has written or co-authored 24 books, including the best-selling In the Shadow of Man (1971), and is profiled in the feature documentary film, "Jane's Journey."

Goodall is a United Nations Messenger of Peace has received numerous honors for her work. , She was named Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2004, and has been given the French Legion of Honor, Japan's Kyoto Prize, the Gandhi-King Award for Nonviolence, and Spain's Prince of Asturias Award, among others.

GRASP is a unique alliance of nations, research institutions, U.N. agencies, conservation organizations and private supporters committed to the protection of great apes and their habitat in Africa and Asia.

For more information, please visit contact grasp@unep.org

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