

MY REASONS FOR HOPE: WHAT I LEARNED FROM GOMBE 50 YEARS

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It is easy to be overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness as we look around the world. We are losing species at a terrible rate, the balance of nature is disturbed, and we are destroying our beautiful planet. But in spite of all this I do have hope. And my hope is based on four factors. Firstly, we have at last begun to understand and face up to the problems that threaten us and the survival of life on Earth as we know it. Surely we can use our problem-solving abilities, our brains, to find ways to live in harmony with nature. My second reason for hope lies in the indomitable nature of the human spirit. My third reason for hope is the incredible resilience of nature. I have visited Nagasaki, site of the second atomic bomb that ended World War II. Scientists had predicted that nothing could grow there for at least 30 years. But, amazingly, greenery grew very quickly. My final reason for hope lies in the tremendous energy, enthusiasm and commitment of young people around the world. As they find out about the environmental and social problems that are now part of their heritage, they want to right the wrongs. My greatest reason for hope is the spirit and determination of young people, once they know what the problems are and have the tools to take action. So let's move forward with hope, and let's do the work that needs to be done, with love and compassion.

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