

Document 1

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Ricken Patel: the global leader of online protest



Andrew Anthony
The Observer, Sunday 17 March 2013
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Article history

Last week, a 36-year-old man named Ricken Patel gave the Commonwealth Lecture¹ at the Guildhall in London. It was entitled *The opportunity of our time* and promised a ‘new politics, a new activism, a new democracy’.

5 He is not a politician, however, or some multimillionaire megalomaniac, but the founder and president of Avaaz, an online activist group that aims to ‘close the gap between the world we have and the world most people everywhere want’.

If that mission statement sounds a little fluffy and problematically vague, it's proved remarkably successful around the world. There are now 20 million members of Avaaz, which means ‘voice’ in several languages, making it the world's largest activist network.

10 Since its creation in 2007, Avaaz has been involved in a series of campaigns as diverse as climate change, the Syrian uprising and challenging Rupert Murdoch². The organisation specialises in sending out email petitions to its members as a means of galvanising public opinion.

15 Avaaz's model is online mobilisation, which has been dismissed in some quarters as ‘clicktivism’, whereby hundreds of thousands or even millions of people need do no more than tap a mouse to register their protest. The suggestion is that the technological ease creates a remote, disengaged form of activism in which consequences and outcomes appear less real.

20 Patel has a stock response to this criticism. ‘To reduce our actions down to clicking is silly,’ he has said. ‘It's what happens after the clicks – how we use that support – that's what brings about incredible change.’

Now the organisation works in 15 languages, has its headquarters in Manhattan, is most popular in Brazil, France, Germany and India, and is entirely financed through its members. Corporations are not allowed to contribute and no individual can donate more than €5,000. ‘I think we have the highest integrity funding in the world,’ says Patel.

Adapted from <http://www.theguardian.com/profile/andrewanthony>, Sunday 17 March 2013

1. a lecture: a speech.
2. Rupert Murdoch: powerful media owner.

Document 2

Shake your booty in Big Ben's shadow – teenagers dance to save the planet

Politicians could learn a lot from the UK Youth Climate Coalition

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Posted by
Bibi van der Zee
Monday 12 October 2009
17.09 BST
theguardian.com
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Article history

Environment

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Protest

The opening piano chords of *I Believe* suddenly blare out in Parliament Square. A young girl steps forward on the green and stretches gracefully to the sky before being joined in her dance by another and then another, until 150 dancers are enthusiastically shaking their booty in the shadow of Big Ben.

5 The Greenpeace protesters, still up on the roof of the houses of Parliament, are nudging each other and pointing, with the same baffled-but-intrigued expression as everyone else. Tourists, police officers, bus drivers are all craning their necks and the phone cameras are up in the air everywhere you look. This dance-off was the finale of the UK Youth Climate Coalition's Powershift weekend.

10 Four hundred members of the UKYCC (an umbrella organisation for youth climate groups) had spent the last two days bonding and learning how to deliver their message from Marshall Ganz, the man who shaped Barack Obama's successful campaign for US president. They had planned small demonstrations and actions all round the country and sent messages to the other branches of the YCC around the world in Australia, Thailand, Cambodia. And now they were ready to unleash themselves on the rest of us.

And, happily, that's just how it worked out. Their original, planned, performance underneath the London Eye went perfectly. After that nothing seemed more natural than hopping across the Thames to show the Greenpeace protesters a bit of solidarity. A bit of rearrangement and off they go for a spontaneous reprise, to be received with cheers and waves from the guys up on the roof, and everyone else around. Even the doughtiest environmental campaigners, used to D-locks¹ rather than breakdancing, admitted that it is all very cheering.

25 The lovely thing about teenagers and 20-year-olds is that they don't really see why it can't just all be sorted out. All the grey areas, the targets, the special interests, the political concerns and long-termism in which politicians get so mired, are irrelevant to them.

And for a lovely, sunny moment in Parliament Square, with several hundred young people smiling and dancing and cheering, and a yellow banner fluttering from the roof of Parliament, it seems entirely possible that it might really be that simple.

Adapted from <http://www.theguardian.com/environment>, 12 October 2009



¹. D-locks: motorcycle locks used by protesters to chain themselves to gates or others (see picture).

NOTE AUX CANDIDATS

Les candidats traiteront le sujet sur la copie qui leur sera remise et veilleront à :

- respecter l'ordre des questions et reporter les repères sur la copie (lettre ou lettre et numéro).
Exemples : **A1** ou **E**
- faire toujours précéder les citations du numéro de la ligne ;
- dans les phrases à compléter, les réécrire intégralement sur la copie en **soulignant** l'élément introduit.

I. COMPRÉHENSION DE L'ÉCRIT

Document 1

A. Choose the appropriate answer.

Avaaz is

- 1- a virtual community which defends ideas.
- 2- a political party which launches campaigns.
- 3- a group of scientists who study climate change.
- 4- an online travel agency.

B. True or false? Justify by quoting the text.

- 1) Ricken Patel is the leader of a political party.
- 2) Avaaz exists in only one country.
- 3) Avaaz has many followers.
- 4) 'Clicktivism' means signing protest letters online.
- 5) The word 'clicktivism' has a negative connotation.
- 6) Avaaz is financially independent.

Document 2

C. Choose the appropriate answer. Justify by quoting the text.

- 1) UKYCC wants to
 - a- protect the environment.
 - b- organise violent actions.
 - c- support Obama's campaign.
- 2) UKYCC
 - a- opposes Greenpeace.
 - b- supports Greenpeace.
 - c- ignores Greenpeace.

D. Fill in the gaps with the following words. Use each word ONLY ONCE.

joined / danced / stood / learnt / surprised

- 1) UKYCC protesters at the London Eye.
- 2) Greenpeace activists on the roof of the Houses of Parliament.
- 3) UKYCC protesters Greenpeace activists in Parliament Square
- 4) The young protesters everybody by the originality of their action.
- 5) UKYCC members their methods from Marshall Ganz.

Documents 1 AND 2

E. Both documents show that technology plays a role in the way people protest. Justify with one quote for each document.

F. Choose the right words from the following list to fill in the gaps. Some words will not be used.

joyful / virtual / collective / individual / cruel / depressing

In **document 1** Avaaz's first action is and whereas in **document 2** UKYCC's methods are and

G. Write down the title that corresponds to both documents 1 and 2.

- 1- Splitting people apart
- 2- Raising funds for the planet
- 3- Defending a cause
- 4- Demonstrating in the street

II. EXPRESSION ÉCRITE

Choose ONE of the following subjects (150 words minimum).

A. You are an activist for **ONE** of the following causes:

- End Poverty
- Women's Rights
- Save the Children

For the homepage of the website of your association, describe your goals and actions and present the next event you plan to organise. You want to convince the readers to join the association.

OR

B. You are R. Smith a student at Jefferson High school and your principal, Mr Miles, has decided to stop giving money to a club to which you belong. Write a letter to explain how useful your club is and persuade school officials to change their decision.