Thank you Lindsey.

Over the last 4 years, I have put my body on the line to not only bring awareness to our global water crisis, but to drive action to solve it.

I have run thousands of kilometres across some of the harshest places in the world. From the deserts of Antarctica and the Atacama, to the rivers of the Amazon and the Nile. I’ve met the people on the front lines of our water crisis, and witnessed first-hand the consequences of our water blindness. Through my work I’ve mobilised citizens around the world to step up for change. Here’s why.

First. People are suffering. 4.2 of the 8 billion people on our planet lack access to safe sanitation. And at a time when we’re all being told to wash our hands, 3 billion people lack basic handwashing facilities. Just let that sink in for a minute…3 billion people. In a pandemic.

Second. Healthy freshwater ecosystems are dying. 88% of aquatic megafauna populations are collapsing and while we read about deforestation in the front page news, our wetlands are disappearing 3x faster than our forests.

Third. Our planet is running dry. 25% of our global population already live in countries experiencing high water stress. As our demand for more water intensive food, products and lifestyles increases, and the impact of climate change intensifies, the situation is going to get much worse. With dire consequences. Sitting in the desert in Jordan while I was taking a break from running, one of the Bedouins told me “Mina the next world war will not be fought over terrorism or oil, but over water. I fear my children will become the first water refugees”.

**Water is everything, but we treat it as if it’s nothing.**

We focus on forests, climate, plastics and oceans, assuming that managing them better will also take care of water.

It hasn’t and it won’t.

People are hungry and thirsty. Supply chains are under threat. Ecosystems are collapsing and across the world our economic and social stability is in danger as millions of people are forced to migrate in search of food and water.

Our inaction today is laying the foundation for the wars of tomorrow.

We are fast approaching day zero.

We need to raise our level of ambition and action on water. Because water is life. For you, and me and every living being on this planet.

When I set out last year to run 100 marathons in 100 days for water it was the biggest, boldest way I thought I could show what 100% commitment on this issue looked like. But I fell short. I broke after 62 marathons. I thought I had failed.

But then my community rallied around me. People around the world stepped up to run in my place, to share their own water stories and make their own commitments. And I realised: individually we can make an impact, but together we change the world.

The world is ready for big visions, we are ready to step up for water.

The time is now.

Will you lead us?