

**For Those Who Came
UN Women Conference: June 11, 2011
Sheila Smith McKoy**

We agreed to come here
In that space before-time
We agreed to meet here in this now
At this gathering, Sisters and allies,
We have come to reclaim this Earth
Blessing her and her inhabitants
In the Mami-Waters* of peace.

We who have overcome the fallacies of Eden
Refuse to be offered again as virginal gifts
We who have been hunted and witched
Join our individual and collective power
We who were renamed and outcast
Reclaim ours and our sister's names
We who have been raped and taken
No longer gather to mourn
For we have recognized ourselves in each other
And we have remembered our stories.

We agreed to come here
In that space before-time
We agreed to meet here in this now
Sisters and allies, in your sweet company
We take the first breaths of a new day.

*One of the oldest recorded deities, Mami Water, also known as Mami-Wata, is the source: the source of all life, of new beginnings, and of the transformative power of the divine feminine.