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QUEERLY POLITICS ‑ A DIALOGUE WITH ELECTED LBGTIQ REPS

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OSGEY Office of the Secretary‑General's Envoy on Youth office

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Welcome, everyone, wherever you're joining us today. Welcome to, from across the world. My name is Martin Karadzhov and my pronouns are he/him and I'm the chair and convene the global queer network. It's my great pleasure today to be the host of this conversation today. Which is hosted by the Office of the Secretary‑General's Envoy on Youth by the independent expert on sexual orientation and gender identity and (?) and the new global queer network which I mentioned just right now. For the next one hour and a half we'll be inviting different speakers to discuss different initiatives that they're working on to pave the way for representation of LGBTIQ youth political participation on global regionally and locally as well and I ask speakers to share their own speakers as Young LGBTIQ people engaged in the political sphere, their journey to getting involved in this issue space and reflecting on the various barriers to accessing LGBTIQ youth globally.

We will also, during ‑‑ before we get started, it's a bit of a housekeeping, as usual, we're all used to it by now but we have simultaneous translation to French and Spanish. You can choose your preferred language by following instructions on the chat that you see by my colleagues and we also ‑‑ if you have any technical issues during the event you can use the Q&A option which is open, they should be able to help you there if you have any problems. For safeguarding reasons, all participants except for the speakers will have their cameras and audio options off. The questions raised during this event were submitted by young people. And so who registered to this event to attend. And so we'll be using these questions to address the speakers, ask them. So we would like to thank you all for your contribution so far but feel free to as well raise any questions that you may have in the chat and the Q&A option as well.

So before we kick off, I would like to show you a video which explains, really, what this episode is part of. It's pardon of a larger series of events that I mentioned that we're doing with the UN youth envoy and the independent (?) gender identity and yoga world so I would like to show you that video now. Oscar, over to you.

(Video has captions).

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great. Hopefully you got a better understanding of the queer youth dialogues that have been happening. We'll be having so many more (screen freeze) in the upcoming months so it would be great if you haven't registered yet, by discussing what are some of the different initiatives that pave the way for meaningful LGBTIQ participation on global, local and regional level as well. And for our first part of our discussion today, we'll focus particularly those initiatives that are are meaningful and focusing on the LGBTIQ political participation. So I'm really pleased for our next first part of the discussion to have two great speakers from two amazing organizations that do incredible work on diversity, inclusion and particularly on LGBTIQ political and meaningful participant on local, regional, and global level. So I will first ask them to introduce themselves so ask Andrew if you want to introduce yourself briefly.

>> ANDREW SLINN: Hi, yeah, my name is Andrew my pronouns are he/him and I work for the Global Quality Caucus international network of elected reps and parliamentarians, LGBT equality. Researcher on LGBT rights and development, and also worked with the partly network in the U.K. network and work on LGBT rights.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thanks, Andrew. And Charles?

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: First mistake of Zoom, I forgot to unmute myself. Sorry. I'm Charles Chauvel. He/him/his. I work for the United Nations development program, UNDP. We have about 65 partner countries around the world in which we work to strengthen inclusive representative institutions like parliaments and I'm a former member of parliament from New Zealand. One of the important strands of this work has been to try to help and enpower and strengthen parliaments that are not inclusive, particularly of women, young people, LGBTI people and other key populations and get them to understand why it's important to have a parliament that looks like the people that you represent. So I hope to be able to tell you a bit more about that during this session and to answer some of your questions.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thanks. Looking forward to our discussion as well. Both of your organizations, global equality cause of action and UNDP have been working to support more equal and inclusive representation in equal spaces. We know specifically for minorities such as LGBTIQ people and young people particularly can often be limited about participation in different spaces. I would like to start with this question that we received as well from some of the participants today, is that what are some of the barriers in preventing minorities, including LGBTIQ people, to engage in politics and run for office whether it's on a local level or more regional, are there some challenges that really pertain especially to youth. I'll repeat my question again. What are the barriers in general preventing minorities, including LGBTIQ people to engage in politics and run for office, et cetera? And then what are the particular ones that for young people that may be additional as well if we can start maybe with you, Andrew.

>> ANDREW SLINN: Yeah. First I'd say representation matters. So if young LBGT people are looking at their national representatives and they're not seeing LBGT people not represented there then they may not see that as a career for them. A lack of representation could be due to any number of reasons. So it could be in countries where the environment isn't favorable for LGBT people to live freely but it could be down to personal reasons as well I mean, the public nature of elected office means that some people may struggle to come out. Especially on social media as well. They may feel like they are exposed to any number of judgments or prejudices which they may not have been exposed to previously. I should also say that it is getting better, Global Quality Caucus has members on every single continent. Even countries where the situation may not be particularly favorable, we have allies as well who are representing their issues. But we're also seeing that it's young people driving the diversity in elected office. So the United Kingdom, for example, in the last election, a record number of LGBT representatives elected and a lot of them were under 35. We've also seen same, again, state elections and local elections in the United States, a lot of LGBT representation has been driven by young people. New Zealand as well. Poland. And we ‑‑ um, we ‑‑ we ‑‑ we need to concentrate now more on making sure that intersectional issues are being addressed and represented so a lot of the representation we're seeing has been driven by gay men, especially in the past. So we now need to think about what the ‑‑ the barriers that stop trans people from being elected, what are the barriers from LGBT of color from seeking office, LGBT women as well, what are the factors stopping women from elective office. Some may be prejudice in some communities that stop people from accessing political campaigns at the grassroots level. There may be additional health challenges that's stopping Democrats from seeking office. Homelessness which is one that affects young people and LGBT in particular and, of course, the financial cost of running for office as well. So it can cost thousands and thousands of pounds to seek elected office and that may be money that young people just don't have. So, I'm sorry, I'll let Charles speak now.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: Well, look, first of all, it's a great question. Second of all, Andrew, it's great to, you know, have had the Global Equality Caucus appear on the scene. I know how much that's gone into putting that coalition together. Having an organized group of international parliamentians and other elected officials means that it's just so much easier for agencies like mine and others who want to advance inclusion to actually work with partners such as your organization.

So for anybody who doesn't know the walk of the caucus, find out about it. It's been incredibly important so far for LGBTIQ legislators around the world and hopefuls to know that they're not alone and that they have places where they can exchange knowledge and get support.

So I think that's probably my starting point. It can be a very lonely journey. And if you don't have that sort of support and that ability to refresh your resilience when you need it it can be a very, very lonely road. Andrew mentioned the New Zealand parliament and that's one of the most LGBTIQ‑friendly in the world but that wasn't always the case. MSM acts were criminalized in my country until 1986. So, you know, that's probably evidence of both how rapidly things can change when you've got a group of people who want to change things. LGBT I people and our allies. But also how, as Andrew said, that's not always the case. You know, you still have many places around the world where the legal environment is simply prohibitive as far as getting into office is concerned.

And I suppose the ‑‑ I thought everything that Andrew said was absolutely on point and right. I'd probably just add two additional points. The first is political parties are often the gatekeepers to managing to get into a representative institution like a parliament. So if you haven't done the work with the parties themselves, if there's not real pressure on political parties from civil society and elsewhere to ensure that they are friendly and understand the need to be inclusive of all people in society, then, you know, there is going to be a problem and a barrier to entry. And I guess the other point which is probably quite self‑evident is, as Helen Clack a former prime minister of New Zealand and UNDI once said in the context of women, nobody ever invited us in to try to do something about the glass ceiling, we had to kick it in ourselves. So organizing and dealing with the phenomenon of majoritarianism the way it tends to reflect, preserve and continue existing power structures and majority is a real issue for us. We have to be very smart, have a really good understanding of the way systems work and the ability of how to change them and how to keep working with our allies to do so.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you both as well for your reflections. And speaking as well, you already kind of touched onto the next question I was going to ask you about particularly looking at some of the key players and, you know, how ‑‑ you mentioned Charles how like political parties can be gatekeepers but also can be barriers facilitating driving change around the representation. So we heard as well about the diverse challenges, LGBTIQ face and it was really important to mention to you Andrew that within the community the challenge is so diverse and often we're put together as one group and looking to have, oh, these are the barriers that the LGBTIQ community faces where in reality if you unpack the representation within our movement as well is problematic and it lacks both communities and certain voices as well.

My question ‑‑ I'll come back to you Andrew, now ‑‑ what are some of the examples of strategies being implemented to promote greater representation of LGBTIQ people in formal politics and maybe some particular ones that you can bring from your work that you already kind of touched upon as well briefly?

>> ANDREW SLINN: Sure. I'll pick on something that Charles said about political parties. So in many countries it is the case that political parties have their own LGBT wings or LGBT networks. So in terms of formal institutions, joining one of those is a great way to get involved. In circumstances where LGBT wings don't exist a lot of political parties often have youth wings so even though they may not be dealing with LGBT issues specifically a young wing would be a great way to join advocacy campaigns and support people who are looking to sort of cross that barrier into formal politics.

We also work with NGOs, so an NGO that we work with is the Victor Institute and they do a lot of great work across the Americas in providing support to young people that are seeking elected office. So they offer financial support, advice in the pipeline and right through until those LGBT people find elected office.

In terms of specific campaigns that we have been working on, we have recently been connecting people digitally on a web series called (?) for LGBT policies where we've been bringing in activists and civil society workers on LGBT issues and connecting them with LGBT politicians to discuss some of the issues facing people in different regions of the world. And we hope to be continuing those discussions outside of the other end of the pandemic and connecting important persons, hopefully.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: Yeah. And look, I think what I would say on this, UNDP and Parliamentarians for Global Action put together a handbook for parliamentarians on LGBT rights and inclusion about five years ago. We're just working on a reissue now. And we identified six or seven arguments or entry points to use with parliamentarians who really weren't familiar with the issues and needed to do some thinking about it to work on their own country's legal and social frameworks on inclusiveness. And I think the same ‑‑ the entry points in the groups that I represented them are many of the same ones that we need to kind of work to build coalitions with. First of all, there's a basic human rights issue involved in proper representation of all people, irrespective of any kind of legal or social barriers. So a parliament should look like its population. And human rights groups and development groups should champion that principle where they actually sit. If we are going to achieve human development goals, especially after the term setback from COVID that we've experienced in that regard, we need everybody in society to be not only represented but feel that they have a stake in society and that they want to be involved and cannot. The best way to prevent that from happening is to arbitrarily exclude certain groups. So, again, you know, there's a there's an important argument that can be made here to any group that's in society that's pro coalition. Business is Abe important ally. In many of the partner countries where we work where there's a difficult legal environment you'll often find, particularly in foreign‑run businesses where the top management has no stake in trying to exclude people, it just wants the best and most talented staff it can get, you know, this is an argument that a ‑‑ a few kind of run it properly who want proactive businesses they'll understand. I think I've mentioned political parties but, you know, those that get inclusion right can have an advantage that's worth talking to them about if they don't get that. Finally, I would add given the profusion of homophobic hate speech and violence we're seeing, tech platforms and new media are really important potential ally here, we have to work with them to make sure we're weeding out this sort of content so it doesn't keep happening and make sure that positive images, accurate images of people in our communities are presented by them on those platforms.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Speaking of the alliances, you both mentioned briefly, Charles, about the pandemic and how COVID has exacerbated, the things LGBTIQ face and queer young people in particular have been further marginalized and excluded from the decision‑making not only from the global level but locally as well. We know that young people as well face multiple barriers to access service provision and including LGBTIQ service provision in their own countries during the pandemic and the services that they're fully relying on became non‑existent. So my question here is we know that COVID has presented additional challenges for overall LGBTIQ communities and representation. But what do you think what do you think can be done during the pandemic that can be used to bring these bridges with different implementations. Charles, the key organizations we should be focusing on such as the media, political parties, but what are the other priorities we need to focus on in terms of partners, in terms of others that we need to be agent include that representation of LGBTIQ people at this time especially when their voices are missing around the table.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: Do you want me to ‑‑

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Yes, because I mentioned you.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: We hear a lot about tipping points and turning points and key decision points. I think recovery from COVID, if it's done properly and inclusively, could represent actually our last best hope for a whole range of things from the climate crisis through to promoting better inclusion and equality and prosperity across the board. And I think the most horrible thing I can imagine for this planet and for everybody who lives on it would be if, after having gone through what we've gone through with COVID, not only ‑‑ and not to minimize ‑‑ the deaths and the hospitalizations, the economic and social setbacks, the exclusion of the most marginalized that you just referred to, if we go through all of that and then, you know, once we recover ‑‑ whatever that looks like ‑‑ we just go back to the old ways of working, you know. Polluter does what it does to get away with. Very, very wealthy people get away with extraordinarily lavish lifestyles while people who don't have anything are struggling to get by. LGBT I people are suffering all the sort of violence and exclusion and difficulties that we all know about and have lived in our own lives, if we simply allow all these bad, old ways to persist then we'll have gone through this crisis for nothing. And those who have suffered so much will have gone through it for nothing, and I suspect that, frankly, we'll have a pretty doomed planet.

So, you know, I think, again, we at UNDP have been working with parliaments and parliamentarians on a project that we call Building Forward Better. And the theme of it is you as parliamentarians need to take power and insist on your role as representatives of the people to require your governments to partner with you to state what their vision is to Building Forward Better so it isn't a waste of time and it has to be inclusion, sustainable vision and a vision that honors people's rights and dignity and ability to participate to the fullest in society as we go forward.

So, you know, I think ‑‑ I hope this becomes more than an argument or a debate or a dialogue on the echo chambers of the United Nations. It would be great if we got much more debate and dialogue in the media and civil society and parliaments themselves everywhere possible. You know, demanding that we live differently from now on and learn from the mistakes that have been laid so bare by COVID and the way we were living before.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Charles. And same question to you, Andrew, again, about the framework of recovery and we hear a lot about building better (audio disruption) but often these are missing the LGBTIQ voices and we're not seeing ‑‑ risking seeing another generation of queer young people, for example, completely excluded from the decision‑making. I know the organization is global and you have regional perspectives as well from it, from the different ‑‑ with the lawyers and also the political leaders that you work with. From your side as well, what are the priorities and what are the key alliances that we should be building in the times of this, as Charles mentioned what are the key lessons ‑‑ key mistakes we shouldn't be repeating?

>> ANDREW SLINN: I'm glad you mentioned it's a global challenge because it is going to be different based on the region and we need to focus what ‑‑ the impact COVID has had on different regions and in countries.

Sadly, with most things, COVID has been one of those things that has impacted people very, very differently. It's been a very divisive issue as well in terms of the response as we come out the other side of it. So we need to consider who it has impacted the most. We've seen especially in terms of on the global level certain countries with health infrastructures have not been able to respond very well quickly to it. We have an event in Africa coming up later this month where we're connecting civil society representatives with politicians to not specifically talk about LGBT equality in isolation but how the impact of COVID has affected LGBT people, how the impact of COVID has overlapped with other health challenges. So we know that of LGBT people who continue a disproportionately affected by HIV in certain countries. And essentially how we can build those partnerships going forward. So whether that's partnerships between health organizations, civil society, businesses, organized businesses ‑‑ what role businesses are playing in terms of their response, employment law, and as a caucus, our priority is to make sure that those partnerships are built on a cross‑party mentioned, COVID has been so polarizing, we need to make sure that politicians are all on the same page and going forwarded and listening to the issues that are affecting LGBT people.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you. We often hear as well from the work we do at the queer network as well and from different organizations as well the diverse challenges different regions are facing are really important to be mentioned and to be recognized. And we've also seen as well, like as you've mentioned, that on one hand we see a lot of LGBT support politically but often a lot of young people are saying that this is tokenistic and is not meaningful and, on the other hand, we see the backlash, we see the human rights abuses of LGBTIQ people that are happening, including in Europe, including all across the world as well. So that's invisible ‑‑ that's fabric indicated battleground where LGBTIQ rights are being used for political gains or particularly for profit, including from corporates and organizations is becoming more prominent in the times of a pandemic and something young people are really focusing on.

I see a question from the chat that I would like to ask you. And builds upon something you both mentioned, particularly importance of diversity and representation within our movement. The question is how can we push an even more diverse LGBTIQ agenda, a valid criticism of our course is often it's very privileged individuals who take the place of those who suffer the most. How can the mainstream not only diversity but also inclusion within our day‑to‑day actions that we do? So, you can see the question as well in the chat but basically the question asks about as well how can we ensure that not only those of us who are privileged enough to speak without, you know, risking their own lives and their autonomy and risking harm that they may face, the only voices but we have diverse voices of people who are facing this on a day‑to‑day basis. That's a big question.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: It is a big question. I'm going to ‑‑ this might be a bit of a controversial answer. Politics is about power and about what's possible and, you know, it's been compared sometimes to making sausages, you know, you might like some of the outcomes, but you probably don't want to see a lot of the processes that stand behind them. That is an ugly truth. But I think, you know, what we can do in our coalitions is try to stand for ethical inclusive behavior and to try to kind of live and model that behavior as best we can. And I saw this, you know, in politics myself. In the late ‑‑ in the early 1990s, before I was a member of parliament but a civil society activist, in New Zealand we had a very inadequate and exclusionary human rights statute. Didn't include sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability status, including, you know, if somebody had a disease or a medical condition. And there was a campaign to include disability and sexual orientation in the law. And on the definition of sexual orientation, something was put forward that was not only inadequate but insulting and potentially quite dangerous. And the disabled activists and members of the community, they were always going to get ‑‑ they were always going to win on getting disability put in. It was popular. Much more popular than sexual orientation. And those activists and their leaders stood up and said, look, no, everything goes in and it needs to be appropriate on the sexual orientation front or we don't want our amendment on disability. And, to me, that was the most humbling and kind of salutory moments that I've experienced in public life and it's an example of how we should behave when we go forward on the issues that matter to us.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: And Andrew, do you have anything to add as well?

>> ANDREW SLINN: Yeah. Sort of broadly the same point, I guess. We ‑‑ generally need to be pragmatic about these things. More often than not it's the case that change doesn't happen overnight and in many countries around the world it's the case that politics is for the occupationally privileged so you need to accept that in many circumstances, yes, there are people that are privileged that are taking up space of people that we ought to be seeing included. So in those instances we need to be thinking about how we're going to get voices around the table that need to be heard and how do we recognize that some of these people are not being reached and these cases need to be made to the positions of power, i.e., elective office and those people need to be doing more to get the overlooked voices to the round table so we need to be thinking about who is at the round table, how can we reach them and a need of those in positions of power to be link to those voices. Hopefully one day we hope to be seeing the people that are being neglected will be the people that are around the table and holding elective office and ultimately it's the job of elective individuals to be representing all of their constituents so aside from simply negative neglected LGBT voices as I said previously there's often a lot of overlap in terms of the issues these people are facing. So he how would alliances with other elective groups so, for example, women, disabled groups and that's the kind of thing we seem to be doing in caucus to make sure those voices are around the table and they are being connected to elected officials.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you so much, both. I think, I have like, have such a long list of other questions I want to ask you but unfortunately we don't have enough time to go over them as well. I think we definitely ‑‑ I've covered a lot of the important areas from your work and thanks for sharing your experience as well. As Charles mentioned in the beginning, you said it's a lonely journey, but it seems like whilst we have you on the call, we're never going to be lonely in this movement. So I'm seeing alliances you've been building as well with different movements from the youth perspective and the global youth network, it's so important that we work intersectionally and we see a future that it is intersectionality representative of the queer communities and all their diversity from wherever they come from regardless of their identities. I can see the groundwork and the work that you are doing is paving the way for those queer young voices that we'll be hearing in a bit, that will be shaping as well the decision‑making in the future from the design of policy today implementation. Thank you so much, again, for joining us. And I hope you will be able to stay for the rest of the discussion and I hope we stay connected.

So we will be moving now ‑‑ thanks again to Charles and Andrew. There's no clap because it's a Zoom so we can't do that but thank you both. And now we're moving to the next section of this panel, as equally exciting part of this conversation we'll be having today. But before that, we'll show you another video that is a great example, again, of partnership between different agencies and what we would like to see as well happening more on a global level. This video is a new campaign video that is in partnership between the Office of the Secretary‑General's Envoy on Youth and the youth campaign to celebrate the way LGBTIQ people are changing the world for the better.

[MUSIC]

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great. I hope you enjoyed the video. It's part of a series of campaigns and it's the second video, the second one Office of the Secretary‑General's Envoy on Youth has produced. It's a great example of how we need to work across agencies and with together to be able to amplify queer voices. It's the first time we've seen as well from the queer youth movement such high profile of implementation of queer voices and just a start as well. Moving to the next exciting as well part of the panel. In the first one we did here about a lot of the LGBTIQ challenges people face in terms of wider representation and political movement. I know some of the good initiatives the UNDP and the global caucus have been doing as well. On this part we'll focus on particularly young people and how meaningfully young LGBTIQ people can be both in the political spaces. I briefly mention (?) as well as we've seen great support, political, from political parties but also governments and corporate leaders but too often that support is tokenistic or is, as we call it as well pink washing and not meaningful in a way that engages young people in a space where they have their voices but also their needs are being met. And, on the other hand, we have the handful practices and abuses we see, particularly targeting LGBTIQ rights. Youth, of youth, more in particular. So we've seen this battleground of LGBTIQ youth rights being used as a political scapegoat and also political gain and profit. And hence why we have this exciting next panel which will be tackling how we can do that meaningfully on local, regional and international level. So one of the goals for the dialogue is to inspire young LGBTIQ people to lead the policy conversations that impact their lives. With this in mind we will now make the conversation about exploring that meaningful participation in political spaces, and particularly the barriers to access and the solutions, how we can do that. So I have an amazing group of speakers with me. And to kick us off it's my great pleasure to invite the mayor of Bangor from Wales, welcome, they will introduce themselves to share what inspired you to get involved in politics.

>> OWEN HURCUM: Thanks for having me here. I want to say how interesting the previous segment was as well that was a pleasure to listen to. I'm Owen Hurcum. They/them. 22 years old. Already people keep asking, you know, they say, oh, you've got your career going in politics, wheals that about, what got you into that? The answer really is my family. I come from a background in which politics wasn't the family business but was important on my dad's side working class, Wales, my mom's side working class at various places in England and I was inspired to get into local politics because it feels like the avenue to make the changes and I like to think I'm doing that. But I'm sure when the questions come in I can elaborate further on that.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, thank you, and great to be here, and congratulations again, I think it's a great achievement as well for that position as well in particular. And I would like to introduce the next speaker, and that would be Larissa. Over you to introduce yours.

>> LARISSA MORAES: Hello, good morning, I suppose it's good afternoon for most of you (chuckle). Before introducing myself, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be here sharing a little bit of my experience as a black bisexual and from the Amazon region. And also a little bit of the scenario of LGBT youth and in Brazil and what we are facing these days (chuckle) which is not a like topic. So with ‑‑ with that being said my name is Larissa Moraes, I am 25 years old. I am ‑‑ I have a bachelor's degree in psychology. I have a master's in social psychology and currently I'm living ‑‑ sorry ‑‑ English is not my native language so I'm a little bit nervous and so currently I am working at (saying name) that is a youth‑led organization which our core purpose is to provide two accessible ways so that visiting youth understands that by learning and implementing ways to improving themselves and their surroundings it's possible to make a change in the world so it's a very exciting job and it's a very exciting day for me to be here speaking to you guys.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great to have you as well and super excited to hear from you as well and to share with your experience in particular. So the next speaker, I would like to present themselves would be Tashi and, actually, we know each other from the youth steering committee at ILGA World. Over to you.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: Thank you for having me. Sorry, I was driving and I just set this down right now. Hi, everyone my name is Tashi Tsheten. You can call me Tashi, my pronouns are he/they. We are a very small nation. Clear voices, what we mainly do is we focus more on advocacy, creating kept for LGBT I, LGBT I individual policy advocacy work in the country. I'm also part of youth voices count which is a youth network for young LGBT I people in Asia‑Pacific and the youth (?). Good to be here in this space. I look forward to the conversation that we are going to have.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great. I'm really excited as well having the three of you here. And we have great conversation. I think it's going to be quite informal. We'll have some guiding questions. Anyone who is joining us today feel free to ask the questions in the Q&A option as well. But to start with as well, again, we know that LGBTIQ youth are often sidelined in politics and in decision‑making on a global level because often our rights or our identities or who we are are being described as too sensitive, too political to be addressed, to be discussed, and often we're just not there, we're not being mentioned, not only within the wider political spectrum but also from within our movements and within even the LGBTIQ movements, sometimes the youth rights are the too sensitive part to be addressed and discussed which is a big problem for many of us and many other queer young people across the world where their voices cannot be presented in these spaces. So what are some of the challenges faced by LGBTIQ people and from your work and your experience or yourself, do you engage in political civil society spaces, are there any specific challenging pertaining young people in this regard specifically so what are the specific ones that are about LGBTIQ young people in particular? To engage in political and civil society? So our goal ‑‑ I will go first to Owen. Is that OK?

>> OWEN HURCUM: Yeah, no. I think in terms of the problems particularly facing young LGBT I people in getting into politics, in representative politics is, as you said, we're often seen as a political object in and of ourselves regardless of that we're trying to do, you know, and that comes with a lot of pressure. It's not political that I'm non‑binary, it just happens I'm non‑binary yet everyone suddenly sees it as part of my agenda, whatever I'm doing, I'll be talking about the bins, that's what we do on the local councils and somebody will talk about how does that relate to your queer agenda and people are uneducated and that has a huge impact. Especially if you're young as well because we're seen as young revolutionaries and OK, some of us are but we also are trying to get on and do what we can to support the community. We're not out there being crazy or being all over the place, but people just think, you know, we're young, we're naïve, it will pass, it will be this, that, and it stops meaningful conversations from happening because why I'm in politics, particularly in Bangor, is keeping a local food chest we've got going on, I put a lot of pride into that, but yet you're young and you're just doing it because you're getting your name out there because you want to be one of these queer representatives and there's a ‑‑ a lot of doubt placed on you because people mistake what we have is inherently political which isn't, shouldn't be and they therefore assume that every decision we take is always about that queer politics. And I think that can stop a lot of us being advocates in other areas of political interest as well.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thanks. Thank you so much. And Larissa, do you want to as well share particularly from your experience as well with the organization?

>> LARISSA MORAES: Sure. I think from what Owen brought, I would say that we have a serious problem with invisiblizing, I don't know if I'm pronouncing the ‑‑ pronouncing the word correctly. In Brazil in particular we have a serious issue of prejudice against LGBT people. And I think we, as young people with a different perspective and a different background, we have a lot to contribute to the conversation, but most of the times, other people turn to us and say sh‑sh‑sh, you don't know what you're talking about. And this is ‑‑ I think it's a big problem because we also have a perspective to what we are seeing. We have a trajectory to this. So the fact that people don't listen to us, what we're saying is a really big problem and this is part of the job at our organization, to try to enlarge or to accessiblize places so youth people can talk about their issues and can talk about how they plan to face their issues because it's also kind of a prejudice or deal that youth people don't know what they're talking about and they don't have solutions to their problems, that they just know how to ‑‑ sorry, I was almost saying a curse word ‑‑ but they just know how to complain about things. So I think this is one related to youth. I think this is one of the worst things that we face here in Brazil.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Yeah, I can't agree more. You often hear, you know, you often hear as well I think in terms of, like, international organizations as well, in terms of everyone is, like, I'm adding the youth there as tokenism, you know, and not recognizing, you know, like, oh, yeah, youth is just one identity of all the identities I have, right? I'm actually also, like, expert in this. I'm, like, you know, like, you mention a psychologist, I'm like a politician, I'm this. These other kind of elements suddenly disappear and you're seen of this one entity of being young and that's it and young is prejudice associated too often by being inexperienced, incapable, too naïve, you know, and in times like this, you know, being told that you're too naïve to bring radical change to solve the issues is really degrading statement. And it can be very demotivating for all of us to do that. Speaking of that, moving to Tashi, actually, who can bring as well some particular challenges, I know some of the great you've done and you'll talk a bit about it later as well particularly in beauten ‑‑ Bhutan, what other challenges do you think queer young people face in political motivation?

>> TASHI TSHETEN: Thank you, Martin. I agree with your brief point. I think one of the issues that we have in our country is being young itself is an issue, right? Because being young is level as being inexperienced. So we have ‑‑ so Bhutan recently became a democratic country which means it's just been 13 years in Bhutan so we only changed three governments so far, the third one is in the (audio disruption) right now so it has been a very new step for us, not just for queer people but for everybody in general, I guess. So ‑‑ but one of the positions that we have in Bhutan is that the representatives, the elected representatives, the candidate sees, for people ‑‑ it's (?) after the government, then they can come into politics. That's how it has been seen. Over a few years it also has a popularity vote, how famous are you on social media or how loud are you. You don't have to be really socially progressive as long as you're loud and people know you, you can become in a party and get into politics. That's the perception that we have right now.

In terms of queer visibility, it's a very touchy subject in Bhutan. We just had decriminalization ten years ago so freshly decriminalized country. The whole LGBT issue in general is a very touchy subject as well as the topic of human rights in the country itself. You can imagine how queer spaces would be like. There's a perception of having this new (?) our vote, they don't get your background, how much education you are, what you studied or who you represented they look at who is your husband or wife is, how many childrens you have, or who are your parents, in the district (?) so that's the background that we ‑‑ that voter look at. I think there are other common issues that we have right now. We have a far long way to go in terms of changing attitudes toward democracy itself and I think having representation in this whole political space is going to be challenging but not impossible. So it's ‑‑ just have to take one step at a time and not lose focus in general.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Tashi. Speaking of that as well, like we talked about, talked about some of the challenges in general that usually exist for young people but we know also that COVID has made them worse, right? And we've seen, like, backsliding of this progress that was made in some areas. We've seen as well Larissa talk about the importance of safe spaces and spaces for queer young people to be able to mobilize and advocate. But unfortunately what we've seen with COVID is closure of more spaces. We've seen that youth led queer society and organizations, before the pandemic were, like, underfunded, relying on volunteers, were hit even harder and many of them had to close or disappear. So like, the support available has been really reduced. We've seen more homelessness, we've seen more mental health problems amongst LGBTIQ people from across the world where data's still being conducted where we've started to seeing that. We've seen trans and non‑binary people are particularly impacted in terms of accessing vital healthcare services all across the world including the U.S. and how the rights are being used for political purposes. So we've seen these attacks and we've seen the lack of services and support. There is a big question here. How we can get more young people to get involved into the politics, recognizing that, you know, the current climate is really toxic and politics can be abusive and unsafe space. So there is this impossible dilemma that sometimes sits young young people, how can we advocate for my own rights, advocate for my own rights, right, and risk harm or, like, you know, or stay back and silent and then see this all happening before me. So that's the impossible David Letterman. But are there any ways you know we can do that in the toxic and really dangerous climate we're working in that we can engage more young people in politics. So I will start this with Larissa.

>> LARISSA MORAES: As you said, it is a difficult question. And I think we have several layers to this question and also for an answer and I probably won't be able to tackle all of them, but I think the first thing that comes to my mind is that the world has always been a hostile place to LGBTQ people (chuckle). It's not something new to us. I think what we're facing now is that we are being able to a lot more about the situation. We are creating new ways to talk about this and to think about ways to face it. And for people from the outside, I think it seems like it's a new issue or it's a bigger issue, but I think we are not facing something new. We are facing something that maybe changed a bit. But it's not something new to us.

Regarding the other layers about this, I think we have to think about how we can construct safe spaces and how we can mobilize enough people so we have a seat at the table for discussion. I think Oscar and ‑‑ no Oscar, sorry. I forgot the name, Charles, yes, thank you. Charles and Andrew said, the previous panel, a lot of the things that contribute to the situation we are living in and, for instance, one of the reasons why this organization was created so that we could guarantee the participation of youth from the global south, especially from Brazil and international decision‑making spaces. Because we understood that we had something to contribute to the conversation. And the decisions that were being made about our future were being made without our presence. So I think this is one point that we can think about how we can access these kind of places and how we can make so that we can ‑‑ that we be heard about people that are making the decisions because that is the core point, I believe. And also how we can engage more people to the conversation, so how we can accessiblize the conversation, how we can make the language and politics more ‑‑ I wouldn't say fun but more relatable from our day‑to‑day, how we can intersectallize our conversation. So we have a big community, LGBT is not a simple community, it's not a unique community. So how we can also intersectionallize the LGBT agenda with other agendas like the black movement and so on. Sorry, I said a lot (chuckle).

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: No, you haven't at all. Your points were all great and really well said. And, you know, I ‑‑ yeah, about ‑‑ definitely about merging with other movements. Black Lives Matter, with reproductive movements and others and it's something we've seen, with climate justice movements, you know, that queer movements are already there at the heart of some of these but we just need to, like, find ways where we can work together.

One thing you mentioned I can't agree more as well, is that this is not new. We're often, like, we present this as a new area, yes, a lot of things have been made worse. But, you know, like queer young people before this, they lived in isolation, we've lived through isolations, social isolations, condemnations from our communities and we've been pushed into the sidelines before, into our social lockdowns from services and from communities. So it's important, I think, what you said. It's really ‑‑ and I think leads to ‑‑ I'm going to go to Owen now as well if you want to add particularly something about this as well.

>> OWEN HURCUM: Yeah. I mean, I completely agree with all the points Larissa mentioned. I think another set of barriers and things we need to talk about to make it accessible is just understanding it isn't going to be easy and knowing that it's going to be hard and that's why I think a support network is so important, why COVID has hit doubly hard. I mean, yes, it's great to have an aligned community of LGBT plus people, closet, the online community out to albeit anonymously was really important, communities are good but we need that physical community and support there because if we want to get involved in politics suddenly we put a target on our back. Ostensibly I live in a country that sports LGBT plus people, that's what the government line is and yet the government won't recognize non‑binary people but even beyond that hate crimes in this country are massively on the rise, openly gay people are being murdered on the street and the police's response to it is maybe don't wear your headphones and don't look too gay and just this morning I woke up to the news that a gay organization had its rainbow arch burned overnight in an attack. There's a lot of stuff going on even in a country ostensibly supportive as mine. As the mayor, I have and still do receive hundreds upon thousands of messages, abusive messages and my support network is so important to me in getting us through that and I think getting LGBT plus people into politics, once they overcome the barriers of being (?) themselves is knowing that unfortunately they are putting themselves out there into a world that doesn't want to be or isn't ready for them and a support network is key for that. Coming out of COVID having those physical support networks is going to be mindful and I think the more we can have the more young people get in politics and then ultimately if we get enough young LGBT plus people in politics we won't need the support networks anymore because we will have changed the politics and of the world.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Yes, I agree. We can all hope it's going to be soon rather than later. Tashi, do you want to add something as well to what Larissa and Owen have said so far? I'm afraid we can't hear you.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: I think most of the things, what Larissa and Owen said makes sense to everyone. (audio disruption) don't really have (?) so that's where we essentially are right now. So having that space makes a lot of sense. Maybe not to all of them but to some of us. And safe spaces are not just your physical spaces maybe it can be online. It can also be global spaces where we stand up for each other in terms ‑‑ in these times right now.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great, thank you. So I ‑‑ so a little bit ‑‑ reformulate my last questions, and if you have questions, please feel free to use the Q&A. But we've seen, like, you know, a lot of, a lot of us are rejecting formal politics, you know, in the way that politics as a system is constructed, the wider, you know, socioeconomic system that is currently failing us as next generations and is failing the generation after us as well, we've seen that, you know, with the planet crisis, we're seeing it with COVID, we're seeing with human rights abuses and now we're seeing it with Afghanistan as well how the political leadership is failing and has been failing for a while. I've seen a lot of young people rejecting that and standing up to it as well. Looking for alternative forms of organizing and pushing for social change. So what do you think is the future of decision‑making, what it looks like and what it should look like? That's a big question but ‑‑ into this ‑‑ you know, looking into what's currently happening, looking at maybe knowing that we don't have much time left to create new forms of engagement and social change what do you think it should look like and how maybe we can try to get there? Big question but ‑‑ this time we'll start around Tashi.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: Sorry, is that me?

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Sorry. I hope you ‑‑ did you hear the question? I can repeat it as well.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: (audio disruption) I was just contemplating because like you said, it's a very big question.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Yeah.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: I think until an ideal world, in an ideal situation I would love seeing, having everyone's rights represented. In a situation where we don't really have to have this conversation that we are having right now. We're having this conversation because there is an issue here and there is a problem and there are a lot of things to do around this kind of issue. But it is (chuckle) I think it's a very hard question and confusing.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Don't worry. I think your connection was a little bit interrupted so I didn't hear. Maybe it was my connection as well but take some time, you don't have to ‑‑ so anyone else that wants to bring maybe some insight on this? I know it's a big question. I know, Owen, belonging to a political landscape, right, and you see how dated the U.K. political system is even on a local level and how bureaucratic it is, what do you wish, you know, was a bit different and what do you want to wish you see it changing so you can respond really adequately to the issues we're facing?

>> OWEN HURCUM: It needs a complete overhaul, I enjoyed the (?) future generations, it's not failing in future generations, it's been failing every generation since the political decision‑makers decided human life is less than the economic. Doesn't matter what system. We're learning that human life has finite value then we're never going to get anywhere. I know all about archaic political institutions. I have to be paraded into meetings when the whole council meetings in my full regalia behind people handing ceremonial Mace and people have to stand up to speak to me. Weird and rather strange. That's an anachronistic thing in council but it happens all the way up and I think in an ideal world we wouldn't be making topdown decisions because we invented money to give the well off (?) whilst standing upon everyone's work and labor, ideal world the decisions made from the bottomup would be huge decentralization and delegation down to local levels and empower elected organizations free and open elections, you know, to make those decisions and they would have to be respected and I think that's the only way it can work and we've got to get to a stage where we can work with each other. Obviously, we can't work with people who fundamentally disagree with our existence. I like to think I can work with anyone but somebody else everyone goes I don't get the LGBTs, the Ts and all that alphabet soup we can't work together. But when we can start bringing together a big group of people to work on the issues, ease into the intersection with all the struggles we're facing right now and the only way to ensure this planet for future generations of not just queer youth but all people is to work together and build from the bottom up and fundamentally to respect that human life is worth more than any amount of money and I think that has to be the bedrock.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you. And Larissa, you want to add more to this one as well?

>> LARISSA MORAES: I think I want to share something. I don't know if it's an answer, per se.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: It doesn't have to be an answer. I'm not expecting you to solve the biggest question of our lifetime. So, no, it's just a reflection and some thoughts, yeah.

>> LARISSA MORAES: But in Brazil we are seeing an interesting movement of civil society and young people to bring marginalized bodies into the political arena. And this movement started especially after the nation of Maria Franco a councilwoman (?) in 2018. In process of political education, mobilization, platforms that are connected, voters to candidates, we have ‑‑ I think we have a platform that is really incredible that is [speaking in a language other than English] there is a platform made by young people to connect the agendas of LGBT young people to representative places. And so I believe that we are in a tipping point, I think with possibilities to innovation. Even in the face of such a destructive scenario as the one we are experienced with the Bolsonaro government. It's a very, very difficult moment we're living in Brazil right now but tips of hope, I like to see in that way in the last elections we had 90 LGBT candidates elected among 30 transgender people we have indigenous people being elected mayors. It's a major, major step for us. We have young people being elected. We have collectives that are being elected representatives. There's innovation for policy‑making and representation. So I don't think we are with all the answers right now but I think we have, and I'm optimistic like that, we have a little bit of hope because we have people that still believe that it's possible to make a change in the world. And I think with that thought, we can really make some change. Not all the things we want, but I think we can start something different.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you. That was better than an answer. That was examples and, yeah, and it's, like, yeah. Thank you. I want to go to Tashi if you want to say something if your Internet is good but don't worry. I think we might have ‑‑ oh, I just want to check if you want to add something, Tashi, or if you have an Internet connection.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: It's evening so everyone's on the Internet so ‑‑ I think that's a lot of it so I think I'm OK for right now.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Yeah. Thank you. And so for ‑‑ I have ‑‑ you know, there's loads of questions I would like to ask you, but unfortunately we have very limited time again. And we would like now to ask you to ‑‑ as your final thoughts that you would like to share. And we've talked briefly about the changes that the LGBTIQ youth face and talked about opportunities in some of your work as an example of small changes can make a difference, we talked about that this is nothing new, we talked that this has been for a while and the challenges we're facing have just exacerbated. We've talked about the importance of safe spaces and the importance of intersectionality and representation within the movement and without the work of all the movements that are not necessarily all linked with the work we're doing but to find the common ground to do that. And I would like to, you know, what would be the best advice that you would give to LGBTIQ youth who are aspiring, maybe who are watching now or who are thinking of becoming the next leaders of the world and getting involved in politics but their country and the environment they're facing is quite hostile and they're facing multiple barriers for them to be accepted and celebrated as who they are? So what is your advice to those young people who might be like watching now or who might hear you later when this is shared that despite the challenges they are facing right now and other things that they still aspire to be the leaders of tomorrow? Or today. So I will start first with Larissa.

>> LARISSA MORAES: So I think I would say find your people. They will make the journey less lonely and more loud, reaching more people. And remember, transformation doesn't always have to be a major thing. Borges, Brazilian researcher that I like wrote in a paper in 2015 I think that a black woman is a revolutionary act. In a way we can adapt this sentence and place alongside a black woman every discarded and marginalized buy including LGBT people because just by being alive and hopefully happy in the way that we can be happy nowadays and aspiring to make a change in this crazy, crazy world, I think we are already making a difference. So find your people and be safe, be happy, as much as you can. I think that would be my message.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Larissa. And Andrew, maybe if you are still with us, if you want to share as well.

>> ANDREW SLINN: Yeah. Advice the same as Larissa, I guess. First and foremost, stay safe, never put yourself in danger and put yourself in a way to achieve what you're looking to achieve. Next I would say organize. So connect with local LGBT groups or local core groups and engage with air activism and their networks. Look for role models so anyone in your country who is a political leader or has anybody come out and been a leader in this regard in similar countries or taking similar paths. Fundamental, so if you're seeking political office, it's hard work and it's a taxing job so it would be good to be speaking with someone who has already walked that path. So make sure that you have someone you can look up to and who can give you advice and support. And finally build coalitions with other movements seeking change. So connect with women's rights groups, connect with disabled rights groups, connect with trade unions because ultimately you are never alone and the support is there so you just need to find it.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Andrew. And Tashi, if you want to share. Maybe we'll go first to you, Charles.

>> CHARLES CHAUVEL: Sure. Look, I probably am the odd person out here as somebody who is definitely not a young activist anymore, not by many years, but maybe that would help to give a little bit of perspective which I'd like to share first as one of my sort of key messages here.

These are ‑‑ many of the questions that we've been discussing are really, really important, especially the ones around how we work inside our own communities to ensure that we are fully inclusive and representative. But can I just say, you know, it's an amazing discussion to be having and it's so different to the sort of discussions around basic inclusion that we used to have 20‑30 years ago when we were fighting for, you know, things as self‑evident to many of us now like decriminalization, although Tashi reminds us that in many places this is still a recent development and many other places it still hasn't happened. I guess the point is rapid change and quite deep change is possible. And, you know, over my political career, as I said before, we went in New Zealand from criminalization, decriminalization in 1986 through to marriage equality and now, you know, repeal of the laws around so‑called conversion therapy. That's a short space of time, that's a generation. And we've seen a country go from extremely homophobic to extremely inclusive. So change it is possible. But it's only possible, as many of you have been saying, if we're smart if we're smart in the way we work. For example, the women's movement, we're never going to be in the majority so we're always going to need our allies and we're always going to need to be really clever about building coalitions and persuading people of the value around our arguments and the inclusion of our rights. And despite all the setbacks that we see around the world, you know, the pop you'll list pop technicians who would use us and denigrate us to advance their own agendas that it's in our favor. I thought Larissa, what you said about the contrast in Brazil between the senator having a setback and having gone reactionary while at the local level and at the state level people are just coming forward in huge numbers. And that demonstrates that again, the trend is in the right way and if we feel sometimes a little bit non‑plussed about the outlying regressions or lack of progress. And finally, you know, just to echo something Andrew just said, we are not alone. There are so many more allies and so many more places to look for for support and assistance and solidarity than there were even ten years ago let alone 20‑30 years ago so let's make sure we keep supporting each other, be smart, be inclusive and be the change that we want and need to see.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Great words, Charles, and thank you so much. Just want to check with Tashi, if you're here, if you have a connection, you want to share your final thoughts.

>> TASHI TSHETEN: Yeah. So I'm having digital issues. In my experience, if you are a local activist and you want to work nationally and if you really don't have a community to stand back on, right, like we did have so what we did is we stood on our allies. So like what Melissa just said, Larissa, right, find your people. So if you can find your people in your community, find your people in your allies, in your politicians or the spaces you work with that usually works but it should never come ‑‑ but your safety should be your utmost priority. I think that's the key essential that we forget. And if you are just starting up and if you are just new to this space and new to the spaces, I would say just be afraid, just take your first step. For us we did not have, we didn't have an activist leading this LGBT movement for us, we had to start on our own with the resources that we have. Find your spaces, find your people and find your resources. I think if you have good intentions everything works out. It may not be very immediate but if you have patience and you work consistently then it does pay off in the long run.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Tashi. And finally, Owen.

>> OWEN HURCUM: Yeah, so echoing what everyone has said your personal safety is of the utmost importance both in terms of being at risk one of the people but looking after your own mental health as well that's a huge thing. Find your people yes, so you can still set up this organization, set up the community activism but find your people. So if you've had a taxings day you can kick back with them, have some chocolate with them, whatever you need to do to relax because it's easy to be consumed in what you've been doing, a victory is not worth the pain that it can cause you if you don't look after yourself while achieving it because the victories will come and we will get there with our communities and allies and support but you have to be able to get there looking after yourself as well and, you know, outwardly acceptance you're hoping in the country is fantastic. If you can stand up and do that, do that. Just know you need somebody to be there around you especially if you fall because that could happen and you need that group of people looking after you. It's all about that solidarity.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Owen, as well. Thank you so much. I can't express how much, really. I'm very gradually that I could moderate this with so many inspiring speakers today. I'm really, really pleased that you could come and share some of your experiences but also some of your opinions about the future of decision‑making as well. We've seen during this call, really, it's more important than ever really to center young people in general in the decision‑making process and particularly those young people that were excluded for too long in the decision‑making and their voices were missing on local, regional, international level to see how queer young people can be meaningfully involved in decision‑making is really important and some of you shared the great examples of the importance of creating spaces for where they can, you know, advocate with the right resources, advocate for their own issues that they face and work with political leaders so they are represented in the decision‑making and the future, and the future challenges that they're facing. We've seen the importance of funding youth‑led initiatives and how they need to be supported so they can grow and progress and become new models in alternative forms of mobilizing and calling for social change. We've seen also that young people really need to be respected not only as ‑‑ as young people but also as experts in their own areas, as people that can bring so much more from diverse fields and be acknowledged from their contribution as well. And we've mentioned as well the importance of allyship and work in cross sectors, working with other movements from diverse places, that we can break down the barriers and the important task of the current leaders that they need to make sure to create the space and break the barriers that have been existed for too long for those that are missing around the table. We are not political background ‑‑ battleground as queer young people. Our rights are not controversial or political. Our bodies will be and always will be our own, and our lives are not for profit as you mentioned or less worthy. By centering queer young people on the future of decision‑making I'm sure to get a, we'll be able to build fair, sustainable work. Each young person's body, rights, and lives are protected and respected. I'm sure with great people around the table like you together we will do that so thank you so much again for joining this call and for being part of the queer young dialogues. Remember, this is a year‑long campaign so we hope you continue to join us for the next sessions and together we can continue to build a stronger global youth movement for LGBTIQ human rights with more resources, support and power. Please forward our social media channels and for more information, if you're a young person sign up for the queer youth network mailing list via the website. We're sharing the link about it just right now in the chat. And, again, thank you so much for joining us today. I hope to see you in the future with the queer youth dialogue.

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