BUILDING A NEW YOUTH MOVEMENT FOR LGBTIQ HUMAN RIGHTS

JULY 23, 2021

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>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone, wherever you are joining us from today. A warm welcome to all of the members of the session.

My name is Jayathma Wickramanayake. I go by the pronouns she/her and I'm the Envoy on Youth for the Secretary‑General. It is a great pleasure to be a cohost of this conversation today which is hosted by my office, the Office of The Independent Expert of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the World and Queer Youth Network.

This is the first of a campaign, Building a new youth movement for LGBTIQ Human Rights, the partners are launching today, if you would like to know more on what the queer youth dialogues are, stay tuned, you will learn more about it in the upcoming sessions through our amazing speakers.

For the next one hour and a half we'll be inviting different speakers to discuss COVID‑19 as a turning point for LGBTIQ youth and what measures need to be taken on the path for meaningful participation of LGBTIQ youth in decisions, in conversations that affect their present and their future.

Before we get started, we have translations to Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish, you can choose your preferred language by following the instructions on the chat. If you face any technical issues during the event, the Q&A option is open and we should be able to help you there. For safeguarding reason, all participants except for speakers will have cameras and audio options off.

Now let me pass the floor to my colleague, friend, cohost of the day Victor Madrigal‑Borloz.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you so much.

It is a wonderful privilege to be here today with all of you. I bid you good day! I'm very much hoping that we'll have an exciting conversation!

The topic that convenes us, of course, it is of an extreme importance. We know that we all reunite many identities in one body and the identities that we reunite create experiences that may be of privilege or discrimination and violence. In reality the identities can express themselves in a moment in time, but they can also change through time, and throughout my work as independent expert I have learned the importance of understanding how time impacts the realities that people live in.

Obviously, in this context, the voice of youth is of enormous importance. It is of enormous importance for youth as you are living today, but also for your point of view in building a better future for youth tomorrow. That will be your legacy already now.

We are extraordinarily excited to convene this conversation today.

To introduce the dialogues that we are going to be launching today, It is my great pleasure to present Martin Karadzhov of the Queer Youth Network and the ILGA world youth Steering Committee.

Martin.

>> MARTIN KARADZHOV: Thank you, Victor. Thank you, everyone. Welcome to the queer youth dialogues.

Before we start, I want to let you know why the queer youth dialogues came about, we know that LGBTIQ youth face wide range of harmful practices and significant threats to their freedoms because of who they love, who they are, and the work that they do.

We know that COVID‑19 has only exacerbated the challenges and deepened inequalities to queer young people across the world. Despite this, we know that queer young people, they are organizing and mobilizing and advocating for change across the world. We know that in order for us to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the U.N. Youth Strategy we need meaningfully involve queer young people across all levels of decision making and meaningfully.

The dialogues that will be a 12‑month campaign to build a stronger global youth movement for LGBTIQ rights focused with more resources, support and power. The partners of the queer youth dialogues will be the global queer network that was recently, the Youth Envoy and the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and ILGA World.

What's really the big change we want to bring about, it is that we want to see a youth LGBTIQ Civil Society that is stronger, more powerful and better able to realize a meaningful change to advance their rights and freedoms. We want to achieve this through the Queer Youth Dialogues and bring specific elements into realization which is better coordination of youth‑led LGBTIQ Civil Society, we want to see young people leading policy conversations on national level, we want to see a global Queer Youth Network that's established and sustainable.

We want to see funding from ‑‑ support from funders from across the world, particularly targeting youth led queer youth movements and we want to see a better, more meaningful participation of queer young people within the U.N. system as well.

What is really ‑‑ what is really the queer youth dialogue going to look like? It is a series of virtual global events with two key audience, stream one, focused on advocacy to U.N. agency, Member States, international development community and stream 2 is focused on young people and youth LGBTIQ activists and Civil Society, particularly a space to celebrate together, network, build capacity around our queer youth led movements. During those places, we'll share stories, experiences, learn from each other on capacity building including campaign organizing and different elements of that. We'll plan and strategize together to build a stronger queer youth movement and raise more funds and support from our Allies. We'll be able to celebrate our identities and we'll introduce cultural performances across the world and last but not least, we are also having a safe, digitally secured environment which will create a space for queer youth activists to meaningful participate as well.

We have two upcoming events here, I see some of the upcoming event, one with queer politicians across the world which is part of stream one, as this event today as well, and stream two, you can see that there is a celebration event around international youth day, which is coming up soon as well.

Thank you for joining today the Queer Youth Dialogues and thank you for joining us to building a strong queer youth led movement together. I'm looking forward to the discussion today.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much, Martin.

The partners in this initiative ‑‑ I hope that you can hear me well.

The partners in this initiative identified a number of topics that were of great importance to the conversation that we hope to create a space for.

Clearly, the idea of political participation, as Martin was say, is of enormous importance. We also wanted to highlight the realities that we're living in the context of a global pandemic that has impacted everyone in ways that we didn't suspect months ago. The declaration of COVID‑19 as a pandemic in March of last year caught us unawares of the realities and the way that they were going to be impacted. Many of us have been working to understand the manner in which the pandemic effects and impacts different communities, populations and peoples.

I'm deeply grateful to the youth‑led, youth‑servicing LGBTIQ organizations that have interacted, providing information to the mandate in this context, some of which was reflected in the report that I was able to prepare for the General Assembly of the U.N.

We know now, thanks to that information, that in the context of the pandemic stay at home directive, isolation, increased stress and exposure to disrespectful family members exacerbate the risk of violence with a particular impact on youth.

Being at home, possibly sharing computer equipment, small spaces has increased the risks of being outed. We have now information and data attesting to the increases in stress levels within the communities and populations of young people, and we also know the incredible information that is coming as to the needs within the communities and populations in relation to space, mental health and also physical health, but access to other sectors of social life, including housing, employment, economic security, education and spaces for political participation.

We're also very happy to have received information on good practices developed all around the world, very much all good practice has in common the fact that it was designed with meaningful participation of concerned communities and populations. Therein lies one of the first lessons of the pandemic, the principle of nothing about us without us needs to gain relevance in an everyday manner if we're to design public policy that is actually relevant and has a chance of being effective and efficacious. We have today three great speakers to share with us experiences, knowledge and reflections in relation to these issues.

It is now my great pleasure to give the floor to Asa Regner, who will introduce herself and share with us her thoughts.

Asa, please.

>> ASA REGNER: Good morning. It is great to be here.

Can you hear and see me well? I hope so.

I'm the deputy head of the U.N. Women, actually I have a really long title I won't bore you with. I'm the deputy of the U.N. Women and based in New York.

These issues we're discussing today are extremely important for U.N. Women and for the time we have ahead of us. I just come back more or less from the Paris generation of political forum with a lot of Indianapolis operation, not least from young LGBTIQ activists from all over the world who participated in that event, as well as looking forward both with generational equality and also with the U.N. Women's new Strategic Plan which sounds technical and boring but it is an important document that will give us the framework of what we're doing in the coming up five years, although we also need to be flexible and respond to emerging issues obviously.

I look forward to the panel, and I keep my comments to them when it comes to substance, but very humbled, happy to be here. Thank you so much for having me.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much, Asa.

Now may I please invite Anbid Zaman for an introduction presentation.

>> ANBID ZAMAN: Thank you very much, very, very pleased to be here.

Very excited to have a very vulnerable, honest, impactful conversation, action‑based conversation.

My name is Anbid Zaman, I'm an LGBTIQ activist originally from Bing dash, now exiled in Germany, we're working globally and serving a second mandate, representing LGBTIQ youth from European and central Asian region to the world.

This is an important topic. I'm glad to be here and thank you very much.

Victor.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you so much, Anbid.

U. thank you, now may I invite Basiru Alumbugu for an introduction.

>> BASIRU ALUMBUGU: Hey, everyone.

I'm really excited about this conversation. I'm super pumped. I'm Basiru Alumbugu, I'm a Human Rights lawyer from Nigeria. I also work as a programme manager for the African Queer Youth Initiative. The initiative is the organization focused on amplifying the voices of queer youth in Africa.

Thank you so much. I'm looking forward to the conversation.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much.

The conversation will revolve around what we have learned in relation to the particular challenges that youth faces in the context of an event of the magnitude of the COVID‑19 pandemic. It will also revolve around lessons learned and the lessons that we want to make sure that reside in the collective memory so that we bring them into our collective action in the future, and perhaps if I may turn to you first, Basiru, to ask you to share with us your first thoughts when it comes to the conversation about the particular challenges that have been faced by young people during the pandemic. We all know there are many lessons that we're drawing, but we are now in a stage in time where we can begin perhaps to systemize them in to threads of awareness, so to speak.

What would you be able to share with us in that connection?

>> BASIRU ALUMBUGU: Okay. Thank you so much, Victor.

First of all, I think it is really important to understand that these challenges that are exacerbated by the pandemic, they're not new challenges, they're challenges that have always existed.

You know, the pandemic has just ‑‑ you know, heightened the situation for LGBTIQ youth, in Africa in this context I'm talking about.

During the pandemic, in the peak of the pandemic we have seen how LGBTIQ youth has been affected socially, mentally, also financially with regards to their work and access to income. There is a resurge on the impact of the COVID‑19 on African queer youth, it revealed 70% of the respondents of the research have been affected, their work has been affected either they lost their job, their access to income has been reduced drastically because of the pandemic.

I have seen a situation where, you know, some organizations are trying to provide safe spaces to queer youth to provide some sort of safe home. This is in ‑‑ they're going to your safe spaces and the government, they're arresting everybody there, they lock them up because they are violating the COVID‑19 protocol, meanwhile, we know the reason they're invading the spaces because they don't want people there, they're violating their rights to privacy.

We have seen a situation where the pandemic has led people to stay in spaces where it is very homophobic, like people that are forced to leave schools, forced to come back home to stay with a family that may be homophobic, stay with partners or relative or anybody they're staying with, they're forced to be locked in those people in a homophobic context and they have nowhere to run for. This exposes them to further mental challenges. This is a situation where people are set out of their houses because they're ‑‑ you know, somehow the family gets to know about their situation. They are sent out of their houses and they don't have anywhere to go to.

Going out of the home, they're further harassed by the police, further harassed by other, they're exposed to more attacks and harm when they're sent out. I feel the pandemic is really, really ‑‑ it has really, really affected the queer community.

One issue that needs to be understood, it is that the pandemic is not gone, and these challenges, they're still not gone. They're still there, they're evolving and, you know, every intervention a should be put in place should consider the evolving nature of the challenges effecting the queer youth in Africa.

Thank you so much.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much.

May I just explore one aspect in your answer a little bit further, Basiru.

You talked about this situation where the authorities are targeting LGBTIQ communities with the excuse of the pandemic, in particularly sanitary measures implemented in the pandemic.

A thing I'm asking myself, it is what do youth think about security forces, about the relationship with the police, about the relationship with the justice sector, is there a particular notion that there can be an effective role in justice sector institutions when controlling this sort of abuse of public power.

>> BASIRU ALUMBUGU: Yes. Yes. There is definitely a way to go around that.

I feel that the organization, it is very clear, that the organizations are working on that, organizations are working on engaging with the state institutions to avoid the abuse of power. You know, most of the abuse of power, it is treated by the search for incentives by the personal working in the institutions.

You know, they know that once we arrest this set of people, when we lock them up, organizations are going to cop come and the organizations, they're going to pay for a bill, something like that, that's what they're looking forward to. I feel organizations and activists, they need to, you know, find a way, look for strategies that, you know, would be effective, really empowering the people by paying bail, you know, they look to the organizations and the activists to pay the bill, so I feel interventions should be really, really be focused on the head of the institutions, because when you provide policy, make rules, it falls down to those others and then they have to, you know, follow suit with the policies.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: A thing ‑‑ the keyword here, it is trust.

Is the trust on institutions being able to discharge their mandate, but one particular obstacle that I fear may exist in many countries around the world, it is the reality that the institutions, they're not very used or amendable to listen to young people.

In a way, it compounds the barriers of access. In that context, I wonder if I can turn to you, Anbid, and ask a little bit what can be wait forward for trust building and creating these bridges with institutionalities from your standpoint.

>> ANBID ZAMAN: Thank you for the question. It is very important to be first of all showing interest, showing interest for vulnerable conversations between stakeholders, institutions, members of LGBTIQ community and I think from there we can all learn from what are the possible ways that we can achieve what we want to achieve for the whole community, conversations and participation of LGBTIQ youth.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: I'm interested, you mentioned this concept of vulnerable conversations. I wonder if you can share a little bit of how to unpack that.

>> ANBID ZAMAN: From my understanding, I think often we tend to challenge and complain, it is not often easy to take the complaints in and to work ‑‑ you know, to work on them to the betterment. I think what we have to have, U.N. agencies as well, U.N. agencies, the U.N. Member States, their institutions, infrastructure to be open for inputs, complaints, and work on them.

I have ‑‑ sometimes I'm really disappointed with hearing in parliaments and some government organizations and political parties using LGBTIQ as a weapon and kind of ‑‑ you know, it is ‑‑ yeah. There is a lot of disappointments.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Yes.

I wonder, Asa, is now a good time to actually ask within U.N. spaces, since precisely there was a reference by Anbid, about the ability to create more permeable institutionalities, what can the U.N., we do to create that environment, particularly in context that ‑‑ like we know the U.N. are not necessarily geared towards the acceptance of the particular inputs that can be provided by youth. We all know that U.N. Reveres experience and careers as part of making kind of your way to create the ability to create an input. How can that be more permeable environment be created?

>> ANBID ZAMAN: A very, very well asked question.

I think Basiru pointed out the challenges that were there. Now we're facing new challenges and I'm so proud of the LGBTIQ community to come up with wonderful strategies to support the LGBTIQ youth globally. Some parts of the world have limited resources and were able to gain resources from the privileged you ones, the privileged areas of the globe.

What we need to do is to offer support to these institutions, these organizations, to, first, produce the resources, toolkits, and then introduce spaces which can be used by LGBTIQ youth, online spaces as well, and to be able to disseminate the information to government organizations, institutions, organizations which are for the benefit of LGBTIQ youth and the youth at large.

I think to fund that work, it is really necessary, having conversations, ongoing conversations, not just in the end of a project to have a conversation for an hour or two, but really from the beginning until the end having conversations and participation, it is really necessary.

Thank you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much.

I wonder if I may now turn to you, Asa, given that we're learning from the different perspective, the way that the interaction can be created within U.N. spaces, I'm interested in your take on this information and how do you view this from your standpoint?

>> ASA REGNER: Thank you so much for the interventions.

I think we're cutting to the chase right away. Also I completely ‑‑ I'm very intrigued by the vulnerable conversation concept in a way because I do think that with a lot of listening, really trying to understand where others come from and also kind of recognizing clashes of ideas and interests that may be on the table also between those who want to speak more in the implementation of rights I think with that mindset, we can do a lot, we can also analyze resistance.

I think we both have resistance, as you know, the U.N., it is really the Member States, it is owned by its Member States, that's the beauty of the U.N., we're at the U.N. to be unified, to find common ground, to try to push rights further.

When we see the political landscape so to speak within the Member States we see that many of them, far more than ten years ago, they're very safer, they want to promote LGBTIQ plus rights, gender equality, Women and Girls rights and that's tangible, it is important to mention because if that goes away, we must say that things are happening and that we have good developments because we own them, it is also because of the work of activists, young and older.

At the same time, we also have within the Member States family those who really resist these rights and done want to go further. They are not even happy with the norms and standards we have actually today.

I think that ‑‑ I think we have a complex landscape. To me, it has been important to not get stuck in those difficulties but to try to find ways going forward.

I do believe, for us, now speaking for U.N. Women ‑‑ I'm already mixing things up ‑‑ I think that the generation equality, it was a good ‑‑ it is a good intent and start for the discussion and it is not the perfect plate or platform. We're really just starting now after Paris, the way I see it and we'll go further with the way we set up generational equality and that's a serious intent from our side to have not only being in listening mode to what young activists think about gender equality and LGBTIQ plus rights and women rights, but also really to be led and guided by that, that's a serious will from our side.

That's one, I think, positive tool that we have.

Also when listening to the Secretary‑General, I think that the concept of what he calls a networking, inclusive multilateralism, it is something that we should help with and I really appreciate the mood of kind of ‑‑ it is helpful when young advocates would like to propose, come up with package, come up with ideas around that. I'm not saying they have to, or that they are kind of ‑‑ that that's ‑‑ that we'll wait and do nothing until they do that, but I think it is very helpful to provide ideas on what networking multilateralism with look like for young activists.

We have been thinking around that as well, but I think we should all remind ourselves that we have that space for new kinds of conversations. I'm not naive, I'm also old.

I'm old and optimistic, but I'm not naive! I know even that concept will be challenged in itself. Nevertheless, I think we have lots of opportunities we can use and work together, I and U.N. Women, we want to definitely lead and be led by good ideas and interventions in relation to that. When it comes to issues themselves, I want to reiterate what was said about old discrimination ideas, harassment, hate crimes so to speak being exacerbated during COVID. We have been able to observe unfortunately that gender identity‑based violence against women and LGBTIQ people and young people has increased during COVID and as we know, especially young activists, young people, LGBTIQ people already had high suicidal rates, for example, suicide rates, they were much more often ‑‑ they were victims of violence, hate crime even before confinements and COVID and the abuse sometimes by regimes to use COVID regulations against groups they disliked anyways so to speak.

So we have been trying to monitor that, and I do believe that with the knowledge that we have, the data, the statistics, we can do more going forward and we certainly want to.

Thank you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much.

I think one of the elements that clearly resonates from what you say, I think there is a line that can be drawn from what Basiru Alumbugu was mentioned, what Anbid Zaman had mentioned, what you just now had summarized, it is the pandemic in a way, from an analytical perspective almost functioned like a magnifying glass into a situation of unfairness that existed before, but that has been exacerbated in a way that while always undeniable has now provided very specific data and evidence as to how discrimination manifests itself in social exclusion in the everyday life of people.

Let me just come back to you, with one question that I think is a common question to all of us who work in this spaces, what can we devise as ways to bring that experience in to our work.

You have mentioned participation and I will connect with a complexity mentioned by Anbid, the pandemic is not over, large parts of the world are still grappling with it, as we're talking today, there are countries going into lockdown that had gone out of lockdown twice. Youth, like everybody else is going to be continues continuously subjected to the dynamics. How do we move forward and bring those experiences to add value to the way that we work as of today in building back better as of today?

>> ASA REGNER: Thank you.

That's an extremely important point. As we know, the inequalities that already existed in the world have been exacerbated and not least also through the vaccine which is still lagging behind enormously and also young people were not subject to vaccines or didn't have the right to have the vaccines yet in many, many countries anyway.

I think what we need to do, it is to be very aware and advocate cleverly based on the information that we have around the experiences we had from lockdown before.

I also know, a report that made a great impact on me, in my previous life, it was already early in the 2000s when the E.U. Bureau for Human Rights came with a report about LGBTIQ people rights in the E.U. and this report describes very, very well especially how young LGBTIQ people are never safe anywhere many times, not at home, not in school, not at their workplace, not at the subway station and sometimes not even with friends. I think that's also different to women living with abusive husbands, partners, for example, because if they can come out, which many women can't also when it is not COVID lockdowns, but when they can't come out, they can seek ‑‑ when they can come out, they can seek support among colleagues, students, so on to a larger extent. I think we have to both use the knowledge we have from so to speak, the common knowledge from before with the new data married to that. Also to engage in dialogue and we, as the U.N. leaders, we have that responsibility already. I also do believe that any support on proposals, on legislation, on advocacy, talking points, anything that the community themselves want us to put forward, it is always very, very valuable. I do see that we have some spaces for this now as I pointed out earlier, and I see ‑‑ just the last point, that we're now already preparing the next Commission on the Status of Women which will go through working methods as one part, that again sounds very boring but it is very political and very, very tense when you try to change things.

I do think although we know how difficult it is, we should never be the ones who give up to those difficulties before we're even there. We should try to always push the envelope and we're certainly ready to do that.

Thank you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you very much.

I think in this line of thought that you have inserted into the conversation, I would like now to jump to Anbid to ask, there was a mention to me that's incredibly relevant, also to the way that I face my work, it relates to the realities that are going to be created for a movement that is a global movement, but it is going to need to coexist with the world that's functioning at the different speeds so to speak because of access to vaccine which in a way, as was clearly highlighted by Asa, is going to further exacerbate a situation that existed not only in relation to persons, but also in relation to entire societies.

I often wonder, what is this going to create in relation to a movement that requires global cohesion to actually go forward.

As a young leader, I have two questions for you to hear what your reactions would be.

The first one, it is we place a lot of our hopes in technology. Given that we're talking with young people, we place all of our hope, most of our hopes in the reality that young people will be able to show us ways to explore technology so that we will be able to navigate that world.

I wonder if that is something that the movement is currently reflecting upon, and what are the possibilities and limitations that you see in that angle. The other one, it is an ample question, it is in the context of this reality of a world that is going to be moving at different speeds where unfairness actually again will have been remarked, exacerbated, where we need to work from all of these different perspectives, what do you think is the role of youth‑led, youth serving organizations in that particular dynamic.

>> ANBID ZAMAN: You always have great questions.

Coming back to the first question, I think technology is a great tool, we wouldn't be able to join from different parts of the worlds together to have this dialogue. Of course, it is a great tool.

We have to ask this question, is it accessible to everyone? Who are participating in our youth dialogues? Are we able to reach to who? Do they have ‑‑ do they have gadgets and devices? Is Internet available to everyone? Is it affordable to people? If it is safe, we talk about how LGBTIQ youth are now also in isolation and staying in spaces with their parents if they're not, you know, if they're not a third ‑‑ a third of LGBTIQ youth, in a survey showed that their parents were supportive and two‑thirds were not. How do we tackle this challenge? How do we create spaces where they can access to online, to technology to join in spaces like Trevor space, it was created for LGBTIQ youth to have, you know, self‑care, wellness activities, to support LGBTIQ youth to not fall into depression or have high anxiety and the suicidal rates do not go higher and higher. I think we need to think about this question.

In what extent technology is safe? Also how to protect LGBTIQ youth from technology.

I recently read an Article and I wondered if I should move because I was worried about my information, I should maybe move to black berry. Some Human Rights activists, the information is leaked and we have to protect those activists, and we have to find strategies and also disseminate the ‑‑ we have to train and provide support, resources so that we can take care of our data and our security. That's one question to the community.

Second, it is even though a lot of things are possible, like for instance, world pride is facing some challenges organizing world pride due to the pandemic and a lot of LGBTIQ activists and youth especially are not able to come from the Global South to participate in Copenhagen. That's joy there are hybrid events also parallelly having online access, is it really fully accessible? Is it really ‑‑ you know, are there ‑‑ are they able to participate in the conversation, social events where most of the networking is happening? Networking is very important, to be able to meet U.N. agency, government officials, to have the in‑person conversations. And if we're in the able to do that now, are there possibilities that we will be invited in your office to talk to you about it.

These are questions we have to ask. Coming to your second question, I think there is a lot of opportunities to grow from this. A thing I was thinking about, with the pandemic, how LGBTIQ youth are now going into more isolation, I talked to my CEO from the Global Centre and Cody Friedman and he was suggesting an idea that there is a ‑‑ that there is one side of the leaf, like LGBTIQ people and full isolation facing violence at home and not having a space to vent, community centres were closed due to restrictions, limited participation and everything, but there is also another side of the leaf which is much greener and there is this COVID‑19 cocoon where a person is in isolation, reflecting and thinking about their existence and themselves and finding out that they could be gender and sexually a diverse person, what happens when everything opens up and this person faces the society, their friends, school, colleges, family and comes out to be a gay bisexual, trans person? We need to prepare, we need to have a whole organizational approach as Asa talked about, LGBTIQ are not safe anywhere, we have to have an organizational approach, we have to address how to support parents that they are going to treat their children well? How are we going to support school teachers, universities, education institutions that they're providing an inclusive space where people with learn freely, where they can grow, how they're able to ‑‑ also to have an inclusive space. We have to create the resources in partnership together with your expertise, your resources and an already built up resources, to research, we need data, we need to understand better to do the work and I'm sure there are so many incredible organizations that would be happy to have conversation was you.

Thank you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you so much, Anbid. We look forward ‑‑ I'm sure all of us ‑‑ to those conversations and particularly, of course, my partner is convening this initiative, organizations which you are also a part and also Asa from what I heard, will be thrilled to have input in this conversation.

Basiru, I want to make sure to circle back to you, to hear whether you had any final thoughts in relation to the way that we must understand the pandemic both in terms of how can we act today to make sure that people's lives are becoming better as we act upon and also what we can learn from the future.

>> BASIRU ALUMBUGU: Yeah. Thank you so much.

It is important for we as activists and as organizations, to really consider the intersections of the LGBTIQ community with other communities.

You know, while we try to intervene on initiatives that focus on LGBTIQ communities, we need to also focus on how that affects communities that intersects like LGBTIQ asylum seeker, LGBTIQ old people, LGBTIQ travelers and, you know, LGBTIQ prisoners. We need to understand and provide solutions that intersect. If we focus on the LGBTIQ community on a spectrum, we're definitely in no way ensuring no one is left behind. To ensure that no one is left behind we have to focus on the LGBTIQ community and how it intersects with other community amidst the pandemic and everything.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you so much.

Very well said.

I often wonder, and I share this, of course, with my institutional spaces in the U.N., I have to wonder if it is about not leaving anyone behind but also not leaving anyone out and of course part of the question that I always ask myself, when I think about initiative, carry out research, who is not in the room? Who is not here? Either because they didn't have access or because we didn't actually bring them in? To me, that's incredibly important as a consideration.

I see Asa has her hand up.

>> ASA REGNER: Thank you. Just a quick point, when it comes to accessibility, I think that resonates with me, with many of us I think. Technology is terrific, and as we can have this meeting right now for many different ‑‑ from many different parts of the world, but I was in a meeting the other day about the so‑called LDC, the Least Developed Countries as they are called, and in those countries, I think there are 50, women are connected to 14%, 14% of women, they have access to Internet in the countries. Men have 25 ‑‑ 25% of men have access, also not great, but a fourth of women, that is saying something I think about the magnitude of that gap and the work we have do when going ahead to see and nowadays, it impacts everything, access to education, labour market, competition, whatever the possibility is to sell goods to markets, whatever it is.

That's a huge thing as was pointed out earlier.

Thank you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Absolutely. Absolutely agree.

With that, I will actually just reflect precisely, I think it is our duty to constantly ask ourselves who is not here, who is not here and who is here is actually here in a way that they're sharing equipment and other people can listen and is sharing space with people who may not be respectful of their sexual orientation, gender identity, so on, so forth, I think it is an incredible duty and I'm very thankful to you for having remarked on that.

Very grateful for you to have, for you to having shared with us your thoughts and I'm now going to hand it over to my dear colleague who is a person impression an incredible amount of energy in this space and with whom it is my true privilege to share spaces in this initiative.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you so much, Victor, for those watching, I did not expect Victor to say that.

What an energizing conversation and really you cut to the chase and addressed the issues, it set a great foundation, not just for our conversation today but for the Queer Youth Dialogues that we'll have throughout this year until the conference in 2022.

Now, let me go to a very exciting video. We'll move on to the second panel conversation, this is a video produced by my very talented team and the U.N. free and equal campaign to celebrate youth leadership on the base that young LGBTIQ people are changing the world for better.

Let's watch that video and come back to the second panel.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you. I hope that was an uplifting reminder and celebration of the work that the LGBTIQ community is doing and has done in the past and will do for the years to come.

Now, as we heard from Martin earlier, an objective of the Queer Youth Dialogues is to strengthen the structures for meaningful participation of LGBTIQ youth. With this in mind, we'll dive in a conversation on the challenges, the opportunities, the importance of young LGBTIQ peoples' participation and to discuss how to create inclusive, diverse situations in order to make the changes we want done by 2030.

As said in the remarks earlier, we cannot achieve this Sustainable Development Goals if we don't involve edge person and Victor will say we're not only leaving people behind but leaving people out if we're not conscience of participation but most importantly, meaningful participation of everyone, those of whom decisions are going to affect.

To do this, to discuss this in detail, I have an amazing line‑up of speakers for the second panel.

To kick us off, let me introduce the speakers one by one, and maybe just to give an interesting icebreaker for the panel, I would like the speakers to introduce themselves and also tell us what meaningful participation means to them.

First let me invite Vibeke Jenson from UNESCO.

>> VIBEKE JENSEN: Good afternoon, good evening.

I'm director of the Division for Education for Sustainable Development here at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. We're in the afternoon, but good morning to everyone else in New York and over there.

So the Division for Education for Sustainable  Development, it is a division that deals with promoting quality of education, making sure that all learners of all ages have the knowledge, the skills, the behaviors and the values which everyone needs in order to collaborate on making this a world in line with the sustainable urbanization of 2030.

We deal with health, violence, wellness in education systems, we deal with Sustainable Development, the environment, with creating global citizenship, preventing violent extremism, Human Rights education, et cetera. Of course, using education as the means to get there.

What do I mean by meaningful participation? You know, from the perspective I'm sitting, it very much means that you not only allow all people, and I really underline all people to access education institutions, health sector institutions, other institutions. You also really create an environment where everyone can contribute and everyone feels respected, valued and feels safe to be more herself and to ‑‑ to encourage to participate.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you very much.

Now let me introduce the coSecretary‑General Ymania Brown, tell us about the meaning meaningful participation means to you, from ILGA.

>> YMANIA BROWN: Good morning, everyone, good morning it is from here from Australia.

I am the coSecretary‑General of ILGA World. I want to acknowledge the indigenous people here in Australia, the country which I live and work as a migrant worker from the Pacific, to any indigenous persons on the call, I extend respect to all of your leaders, past, present, emerging, I see you, I hear you, and I'm here to support all of you in your endeavors.

Meaningful participation, for me, it is when all the voices of the communities that are affected by decisions, all of the stakeholders, not only have input in planning that problems are resolved, but that these voices, these stakeholders, they actually lead, they lead the development, they self‑determine, you know, the self‑determination, it is very important, and that there is no ‑‑ no access issues, no access issues to resources, to finances, to authority, to, you know, to mandates, there are no issues with access, they need to be ‑‑ they need to have full, unfettered access to the resources for them to be able to deliver whatever it is they need to do in order to progress or advance whatever the social justice issue is.

For me, that's a meaningful participation, it is that.

Otherwise, all other participation, it is part meaningful, it is there, not there yet, it is ‑‑ yeah, we say youth, but we don't have any young people on the committees, that kind of ‑‑ it becomes meaningless participation, it is empty, it is ‑‑ nothing will ever get achieved, you have a bunch of old people determining what the future is for young people. Meaningful participation for me, specifically on youth, it is giving up a seat at the table for youth, we need the youth voice and I will expand and extend on that.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: I will come back on that but I think we have opened the conversation with the conducive, safe environments for participation spoken by Vibeke Jensen and you speaking about the issues of access, access to all people to the conversations and most importantly, not just participating consultations, but really having the power to lead and the power to make decisions on behalf of the communities.

Thank you so much for bringing that in.

Let me now introduce Pip Gardner, please introduce yourself and also what meaningful participation means to you.

>> PIP GARDNER: Thank you.

I'm Pip Gardner, my pronouns are they/them. I'm a queer and trans youth activist from the U.K. I'm a member of the Generation Equality Youth Taskforce and I have been working at Generation Equality Space for the last couple of years to try to make sure that there is meaningful participation of youth and particularly queer youth in that space.

I think I have seen a lot ‑‑ there is a lot resonating with the previous panel with me on what was shared and in our organization, working at the grassroots, we have seen twice as many young people now engaging with our services as they did at that time before the pandemic, there is definitely a lot of that cocoon that was being talked about, people exploring the identity, now seeking out support, because of the challenges on the other side of the leaf they're facing and what resonated is the idea on intersections, the people that access our service, they have a disability, a neurodiversity of some sort that. links to meaningful participation about accessibility, about thinking about other needs that the intersections of identity with LGBTIQ youth have.

I think the meaningful participation, they have to have multiple layer, levels of engagement, from being able to tip your toe in, be in that space to share a voice right through to coleadership and looking reflectively at how power works in different spaces to make sure that we are passing that power to really centre the voices of those who are most impacted by the decision making.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: I will have the follow‑up questions with you, starting them with you, with that statement, I want to bring in what was said by Ymania Brown as well, oftentimes youth participation specifically and by extension the LGBTIQ youth participation is often tokenistic in conversations, for example, from my own experience at the U.N. I sometimes get invited to meetings just to sit there, but, you know, not to contribute. Even if I sit there, contribute, sometimes my opinions will not be taken into account because of stereotypes that people often have about a young person making a contribution as an expert.

I'm welcome to make contribution as a young person, but, you know, not so much as an expert.

These are some of the practical ways that for example in my experience that I have experienced this type of sort of sidelining or stereotyping young people's participation, especially also as a young brown women and these are compiled by the challenges of access, gender identities, often on LGBTIQ youth. I would love to learn from you, Pip, what are some of the very practical challenges that young people face when it comes to accessing decision making spaces? Ymania Brown spoke about making space at the table, but what about the bracket Cal barriers that young people face when accessing even when those spaces are created for them?

>> PIP GARDNER: I think there is some really great points raised there that. queer youth are also youth, all of those things about devaluing expertise of young people also happens to queer youth, when young people in all of their different lived experience, they're the experts of their own realities and they have the valid expertise that are not necessarily positioned I think ‑‑ I think it is about different experiences we value, young people have expertise on their own experience they're bringing and queer youth have their own experiences and also the effect of being queer, of being trans, so I think it is ‑‑ some concrete examples. We recently planned a queer youth voice event for the generation equality forum and one of our young people didn't want to share their photo publicly. I think many activists will understand why we don't necessarily want our photographs out there in the public domain.

The nature of the structures and the programme meant that that panelist wasn't featured in the programme, wasn't mentioned as a panelist because they were not able ‑‑ didn't feel comfortable to share the photo, the name, it wasn't even mentioned in the event that they'll be a speaker.

It is those things in the system that ‑‑ that make that participation a bit less meaningful and a bit less present of saying, are we going to ‑‑ we can devalue that participation, they're not going to participate on the terms of the structure that we have set up.

I think there have been particularly I would say as a nonbinary trans person, there is real benefits to online participation in that, when we're in a physical presence, a lot of facilities are gendered, to travel internationally, the majority of us need to use gender ID that does not match our lived experience and the spaces of airports and ports of travel, they can be really ‑‑ they can be spaces of violence and of policing of gender identity. Also spaces within the U.N. as well, so the last event I attended in person before the pandemic there was a lot of hostility to queer and trans people and a lot of that was faced by queer and trans youth. There was a lot of ‑‑ there were narratives out there that denied the existence of trans people, and that happens within Civil Society spaces and at that event it happened in mailing list, queer and trans youth had to defend their existence to be included in the process and faced a lot of emotional violence aimed at us through written form, but also a lot of policing of how we access the spaces. Many fellow activists were challenged using (title) facilities within a U.N. building and were told that was not a space for them.

I think we were very fortunate, there was a group of queer youth who had been financially supported to access that space, but there was a lacking piece needing to be done around safeguarding and how we ensure the safety of activists we put into that space, particularly for youth who may be participating for the first time and that's a lot to try to navigate how those spaces work when there are other actors in the space that are actively hostile to you. I know several of those young people are not engaging in those spaces of advocacy any more. It was too much. The emotional burden of that, particularly when youth and queer youth especially are economically disadvantaged, they're much more likely to be not in a salaried role in a Civil Society organization, they are participating as volunteer, and that adds to the burnout, that adds to the psychological impact of going into spaces that are hostile to your existence.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you.

I think from what we have heard today, from the work we have done before, this is exactly as you are saying, that there are multiple layers and multiple levels and different scopes and types of barriers that exists from economic, financial barriers to legal barriers that actually by law prevents them from sometimes using their power to quiet public dialogues.

Barriers in terms of social and cultural barriers also exist. These are all compounded on the identity of the LGBTIQ young people and we often think, okay, these challenges, they come one at a time and it doesn't happen that they're all compounded on the identity of the young people and that creates a huge challenge when it comes to accessing spaces even when the spaces are created by institutions.

Now with that, let me go to Ymania Brown. I want to go become to what you said earlier. You made an interesting comment on how even in our institutions we talk about youth‑led strategies, youth policies, youth task, but in our boats, our management, our practices, we really don't give that leadership power to young people. How do the barriers that the three of you mentioned in the opening remarks manifest in Civil Society spaces or multilateral, international spaces?

>> YMANIA BROWN: Before I unpack that question, it is a very loaded question, there was a few things that I wanted to add to what Pip has said about the key challenges for meaningful participation for LGBTIQ youth. Of course, Pip expanded on U.N. states, you know, the ongoing issue of the criminalization of same‑sex love. Right. The failure of states to provide full legal gender recognition and in documentation, in spaces, in everything under their laws. That is ‑‑ that is a huge challenge for us that we're trying to overturn.

Added to that challenge, there are two other challenges, one, it is the faith and anti LGBTIQ insurgences, in many U.N. states, faith and organized religion is responsible for LGBTIQ in violent exclusions and often in barbaric, inhuman conversion therapy, it is one of the most ridiculous ‑‑ I can't even ‑‑ it triggers me so much when I think about what faith and anti LGBTIQ social systems have done in many of the U.N. states.

The third thing, it is the external thing, it is the ‑‑ it is what I call the cultural dissidence in the global South. You look at the Global South‑centric culture, elders decide and youth sit, they listen, they execute. It is very rare in our Global South cultures for youth to have a say in the village or home or national affairs. That is a challenge for youth to have meaningful participation.

If we can somehow figure a way to do that, yes, and of course, we have the internal ‑‑ the internal challenges to meaningful participation, it is, you know, lack of meaningful connection, lack of transparency in dealing with young people, you know, lack of youth leadership and youth representation and LGBTIQ spaces which were spoken about with Pip and with Vibeke Jensen. In the question to how do the barriers manifest in Civil Society and multilateral paces, an NGO, a not‑for‑profit board composition is adult, very rarely do you see the young people in the board, the speakers in webinars, seminar, events, it is mostly adults talking about youth issues and the importance of youth, where are the young people? Where are the young people? Where are our young LGBTIQ people that should be here speaking about that? Conference events, huge events, they're mostly umbrella issues that relate to the general LGBTIQ population, which is important, of course, it is important! It often sidelines youth issues or at worst, it is appended as an optional side event, you know. If we're going to be serious about young people and youth people, make it the central focus.

Of course, you know, the most benign thing that I get very upset about, it is when I see positions advertised on boards and the issue of experience requirements. Oftentimes young people don't have the required experiences, they're shutout for ‑‑ of consideration on the boards, in the governance roles, we need to think about that, we need to say, listen, we want the voice of youth, create a position for youth. It is important!.

That's how these things ‑‑  we're enablers of it.

We're enablers and we need to be mindful of it, we need to take a step become and say, how am I going to fix this, how am I going to address this within my own organization? That for me, it is the important question.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you very much.

When you were talking about the experience issue, I was thinking some of the words used today, the activists that have brought about change, they're young people, if we worked by those standards, they would not be considered as leaders, a 16‑year‑old won the Nobel Prize, so many others, so many young leaders, they have transformed the way that youth movement, the activism, and I agree with you, there has to be a conscience effort to remove the structured barriers if we're to meaningfully pull young people in the conversations.

Let me go back with that opening. I want to go now to some concrete recommendations and also good practices that you can share.

We have discussed challenges and the previous panel discussed for example how COVID‑19 was really a magnifying glass that exacerbated or that showed us the inequalities that existed even before the pandemic and certainly looking at the gaps and inequalities as well.

What can we do? What can institution DOS? What can the youth‑led focused Civil Society organizations do to resolve the issue, to overcome the barriers that we were talking about? In my work, I hear a lot of times when we talk about barriers for meaningful participation, adults usually say that oh, we need to build a capacity of young people to participate.

Honestly, in my work, the young people I have met and I work with, they have a lot of capacity and sometimes it is the institutions that they ‑‑ that they have the capacity to be more flexible, to be more open, to be more innovative in the way that they create spaces.

How does UNESCO try to tackle this? How have you changed the way that you're working to make sure that we don't leave any young person out, particularly any LGBTIQ young person out?

>> VIBEKE JENSEN: Thank you. Of course I completely agree with you, it is a question or an issue both of addressing, you know, some of the legal frameworks and policies which are really not conducive to a truly inclusive society and education system as well.

Of course, on the other hand, also, it is a question of really empowering young people and especially LGBTIQ plus students and learners and adolescents to really claim their space and also to take that role and participation.

I think from the UNESCO side we have for a while, inclusive education, it is not just going beyond the number, it is not just enrolling young people and children in educational institutions but really making sure that they all have the opportunity to participate and to actively learn.

We have a convention going back to 1960, the right to education convention, which is really sort of the basis for everything that we are doing. We also more and more, we're looking at specifically ‑‑ you know, I talked earlier on the necessity of creating safe spaces for everyone to participate and to express themselves, et cetera.

I think we all know that there is quite a lot of violence going on in schools, a lot of bullying going on, it is often targeted to the LGBTIQ, not only, but to the LGBTIQ community. And UNESCO has done a lot of work in really providing the evidence, getting the overviews globally on what is happening in this area and how we can really contribute to create a safer space.

We talk about something which we call a whole education approach.

It really means in line with how the conversation has been going for the past hour, it is that we need to have the policies, the legal frameworks in place but then we also need to empower and work with so many other layers in the system, and it goes from ‑‑ from education planners, to teachers, to school personnel working with the community, making sure that the curriculum are totally, fully inclusive, learning materials, et cetera, but also making sure that there is space for all students, including regardless of their sexual orientation to feel valued and to participate in learning processes and identify also we need to keep monitoring and evaluating experiences to continue to build evidence‑based advocacy. So much advocacy needs to be needed especially to start changing the legal frameworks and policies which are needed.

So from UNESCO side, we have been working on everything from evidence creation and analytical works of all kinds over the past ten year, we have published a number of reports, for instance, quite a while back, we did something on responses to homophobic bullying and we have a global report in 2016 on out in the open on education sector responses to violence, especially based on sexual orientation and gender identity in education systems and we are working very much on the whole concept of bullying and what is happening and what are the means to really counteract that.

I would also say, you know, we conduct the dialogues with the Member States and Ministers of education and, of course, also support very much events like this one, dialogues involved in Civil Society, different interest groups, really taking forward this conversation and in May '21, a few months back, we worked with organizations, it was a virtual conference on The Rights and inclusions of the LGBTIQ youth. Things are happening, but we need to definitely scale up and as has been said, this COVID‑19, this epidemic, it presents an opportunity to not only build back better, but also to build back equal and that's what we're working towards.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you very much.

Let me invite Pip back to the conversation.

We have spoken about the education reform, creating dialogues, spaces, and advocating with Member States for the reforms of the legal systems, the structures, some recommendations and good practices.

What do you bring up at this point as key recommendations? It would be good if you could maybe focus the recommendations on what can governments do, what can the U.N. agencies do, what can youth‑led Civil Society do in order to tackle some of the challenges we discussed before head on?

>> PIP GARDNER: Definitely.

I think to start with, I would like to share, it is a manifesto and I would like to share a link in the chat and that's shared as well, within the process, the youth constituencies, that's beyond queer youth, that's all you have the youth constituencies, we're finding barriers to the meaningful participation and this was a manifesto of recommendations that we created about particularly the generation equality process but it relates more widely and can be applicable to any kind of policymaking process of how to meaningfully engage young people in those discussions. I think that's a recommendation for both U.N. entities and events and processes, but also for the national level with governments too.

Building upon that, it is making sure that in Civil Society and youth‑led Civil Society spaces we are taking an asset approach, we'll share about capacity building, it resonates a lot across with youth activists, it is that we're constantly told that we need a capacity building programme to be able to engage with things and actually ‑‑ we have a lot of capacity, and I think we need that to be recognized and how do we create the spaces instead of intergenerational and cross‑sector capacity building, it is about coming together and sharing and not seeing this as something that older activist, older Civil Society member, governments need to provide for youth activists, but actually how to create spaces that youth activists are really collaborating and what may be the strengths and skills of one organization or a network in one part of the world, it is being shared and drawn upon in other parts to make sure that we have that equitable access to capacity building too.

At the core, my recommendation to queer youth, it is to keep pushing, keep trying to ask for the seat at the table and for others to listen to the voice, and to talk about how that seat is created, how that space is created so that is done in a power sharing, a collaborative way going forwards.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you very much, Pip, for the concrete recommendations.

The final words are yours, what do you have to offer as complete recommendations for Member States, for the U.N., for youth‑led Civil Society groups and also adult Civil Society actors when it comes to the meaningful inclusion of young LGBTIQ people in their work?

>> YMANIA BROWN: The U.N. people may think, you know, that here I am, going off on a tangent again. What I will really like to see, more legally enforceable obligations for U.N. states that flagrantly defy the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the domestic policies, in its laws, that effect LGBTIQ youth and LGBTIQ people in general which often, oftentimes, those ‑‑ that effect, those effects, they're often violent and fatal. That's what I would like to see from the U.N. space.

For our own LGBTIQ space, more youth leadership programmes needs to happen, you know.

Most of the international Human Rights organization, we need to develop more youth leadership programmes and to develop youth leadership. We need more diverse voices as we have heard from the previous panel, you know, not often heard, certainly that is something, you know, the youth Steering Committee, we're working on, this is something that is I think key to our success.

We need more intersectional work with other social justice movements.

You know, you will find fewer barriers when young people rally together as one and they organize because they see all of themselves together with their LGBTIQ brothers and sisters as one united group fighting for their place and right in the ladder of social justice.

We need to encourage more intersectional work.

For more inclusive and diverse spaces, listen, an elder world, our last world conference in New Zealand, we expanded our Secretariat into Steering Committees and we now have bisexual, intersex transwomen and for the first time ever a youth Steering Committee and, you know, we now have the Chair, the Chair of the youth Steering Committee on the Board of ILGA World, a youth voice. In the next conference on May 22nd in L.A., it is all about youth, the theme for that conference, world conference in May, 2022, it is LGBTIQ youth, future, present, change. You know, we all talk about youth as the future, yeah, let's go and talk about that in L.A. and let's look at the current situation that we're in now and talk about the changes that need to be put in place. It is simple things, right, it is simple things like audience relevance, invite young people to speak at youth rallies, you know, why am I here? I'm the furthest person from being classified as a youth, I shouldn't be here! My young activist should be here! The previous panel talked about seats at the table, it is not hard, it is easy. We fight to include LGBTIQ in All State social inclusion programmes, specifically I urge you, suicide prevention, the homeless, you know, job creation, harassment, discrimination assistance, they should be the cornerstone of every social ‑‑ every country social justice programmes addressing youth issue, what we spoke about earlier, remove the requirements for experiences in parts of the government board, youth don't have the experience, maybe we don't need their experience, we need their fire and we need their furry and we need them to drive that for us because often we have been very like sitting back, driving by automatic and we need these kids to kind of lay the path down for us.

We allow them to drive social justice campaigns, look at the success records, the schools strikes for climate action, March for our live, gun control, amazing success driven by young people and that's what I wanted to add to what Pip had eloquently said and also Vibeke Jensen has also said.

>> JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE: Thank you so much! Such a great wrap up to our panel discussion. You really captured all of the points the previous speakers mentioned.

I think it is so important that people like you are here. We don't want young people to speak among everyone, we need allies like you, and we need the conversations to be intergenerational and we need leaders to see how leader like yourself create and support places for young people.

Thank you for joining us today.

We don't want laws to be on autopilot, manual cars driven by young people and young LGBTIQ activists. Thank you for being here, thank you for the contributions.

Sadly, it is time for us to wrap up. Thank you to all for joining us for the first queer youth dialogue. As I said, as Martin presented in the beginning, this is a year‑long campaign. We hope that you will continue to join us for the next sections and together we'll build a strong, global youth movement for LGBTIQ Human Rights with more resources, more support, and more power.

Please follow the social media channels for more information and if you're a young person, sign up to the Queer Youth Network mailing list and the website, we'll share the links in the chat now and once again, thank you so much for the coorganizers and the team who put together this dialogue and the future dialogues.

Let me now give the floor back to my colleague Victor who will wrap up today's event.

Thank you very much.

Over to you.

>> VICTOR MADRIGAL-BORLOZ: Thank you so much.

I basically have three words to say. I believe that the key is to understand that being led by those who are able to have great ideas is the key.

I'm happy to know that the conversations are all about either declaring our willingness to be led or informing of our absolute willingness to be led by those that have great ideas.

We think of the youth of the future, Anbid Zaman had said, let me add I think that the youth is the present, let's think of the youth as our present, of our present and let's just ensure that we're led by them.

Thank you so much! I look forward to this year‑long learning!

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