

**Alessandrabree Chacha**  
**TransSmart Trust**  
**LGBTI Stakeholder Group**

Greetings Madam President and all protocols observed.

My name is Alessandrabree Chacha, a transgender woman from Zimbabwe hereby representing the LGBTI Stakeholder Group and other MGoS.

Since their inception, MGoS have been a key player in the realization of development goals, to address and eradicate poverty, promote shared prosperity, in protection of the planet, and to achieve gender equality. However, shrinking space for civil society, marginalized communities, and Indigenous Peoples, and an attack on democracy across the world, has impacted our safety and security and the ability to serve communities to which we belong and represent on the ground.

The Covid-19 crisis has further deepened already existing inequalities, impacting the poorest and most marginalized hardest, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and gender-non conforming people. Covid relief programs and policies have remained inaccessible to the communities who require them most and all around the world. And governments have used the crisis to subvert democracy and violate human rights.

We are seeing governments undermine democratic foundations to pass regressive or punitive laws, attack sexual reproductive health and rights, increase militarization, make opportunistic political or private gains, target human rights defenders or particular groups or people, and perpetuate discrimination, prejudice, homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia.

Further, response policies have increased restrictions on citizens' rights to assembly, heightened surveillance, and encroached on civil society's ability to carry out urgent action, organize, and push for accountability and inclusion in multilateral fora and mechanisms, including at the United Nations.

Community-based organizations must be involved in the design and implementation of policies and programs responding to this public health emergency and in all stages of recovery, to ensure that the needs of different populations are sufficiently considered. Furthermore, as governments invest in food security, economic stimulus and relief packages against the impacts of COVID-19, it is vital to ensure that these efforts will first reach marginalized populations who face intersecting vulnerabilities.

A post pandemic world is not one where people and organizations can revert to conducting business as usual. We see and feel the impacts of this crisis on our communities, on our ability to survive, and on our future sustainability.

The HLPF provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen partnerships and find important pathways to move forward in the Covid response and to ensure that 'no one is left behind' in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, without meaningful inclusion, engagement, and institutionalized participation of civil society and marginalized communities at this forum and beyond, the legitimacy of the HLPF will be questioned. The Agenda 2030 is

“an Agenda of the people, by the people, and for the people,” we urge that this principle continue to be key in accelerating progress in the decade to come.

Thank you.