



**LEAVE
NO ONE
BEHIND**

LGBTI Stakeholder Group Statement

2021 HLPF MGoS Thematic Session, July 9th 15:00-17:00 EDT

Your Excellencies, Chair, and colleagues from all around the world,

My name is Mariah Silva, a transgender woman from Brazil, representing the LGBTI Stakeholder Group today.

This is one of the most crucial moments in our history. The Covid-19 pandemic has been devastating to all. It has also widened inequalities and marginalization, specifically for persons who face multiple and intersecting vulnerabilities. The pandemic has proven that neglecting to address structural discrimination based on gender, race, class, and experiences of poverty, is lethal.

The impacts of this are clear: vaccines are not available to everyone. Poor, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, non-binary, black, indigenous, younger and older persons, and migrants, refugees, and sex workers, among others face increased insecurity and continue to be excluded from recovery efforts. Criminalization, stigma, xenophobia, racism, sexism, and homo and trans-phobia, exacerbate the situation and prevent access to needed services.

We are seeing authoritarian and anti-rights governments gain power and roll back progress on gender equality. Corrupt and opportunistic actors have taken advantage of the pandemic, threatening civic rights, democratic foundations, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion around the world. Additionally, while civil society engagement at the UN is crucial, and the Major Groups and other Stakeholders have been a key player in the realization of development goals, our participation is being challenged.

We have an opportunity to build a future that does not look like the past; we have an opportunity to build forward better.

We can achieve true gender equality by executing an agenda of inclusion and consciously bringing diverse and marginalized persons to the table to develop policies and programs which address our specific needs and by protecting civil society participation at all levels. Importantly, there is more to a participatory process than an invitation to the table, equal power and access to influence are vital.

More funding and specific national budget lines are needed to address these issues. We need protective laws, policies, and affirmative action plans that allow trans, and other vulnerable persons, to access education, health, and employment without barriers.

We can only guarantee leaving no one behind, if we truly address and dismantle racism, patriarchy, colonialism, and the systems that are oppressing not only LGBTI people, but all humankind.

All of us must sit at that table, equally. Together we can build a sustainable future and accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda!