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[One person off stage] Is this to ask if we would be willing to learn more about what People of Colour..?

[Akim] No it means that if you would like to be treated like People of Colour are treated in society?

[Same person from off stage] OK.

So, everyone in this room knows that there is a problem with race. That the People of Colour have less chance to be in positions of power, we have less chance to be heard, to get opportunities to survive including in the trans community, and you are not doing anything about it.

Because less chances for us, means more chances for you.

Less chances for us, means more chances for you.

So, concretely, what does it mean? It means that in this conference we have 300 registered participants, and from the people who could afford to pay their conference fees, 98% of them are White, non-disabled, and from Western countries.

So it is clear that the resources are concentrated within a group and this divides the community. It is not our place to make an effort to change, it is yours.

In an ideal world we would step away and do our thing, but you have the access to resources. And we will fight with you until this is shared.

So this is the introduction to the panel.

[Applause and whooping noises.]

I had to make it short because we are running out of time. But I would have lots more to say.

So the format of this panel is actually that we are going to give the voice to people who...

[one person off stage] Sorry you spoke when people were clapping, when you spoke, so we couldn't hear you, and obviously I am assuming that the typing people couldn't hear it. It wasn't on screen. Sorry.

[Akim] Sorry. So I was saying that this was the introduction to the panel and that the panel, the format of the panel, now is to give the voice to people who are usually silenced and who like me have things to say and will like to be on stage.

So the first person I am going to call is, is Mina around? Yeah, ok, so. Mina is going to address also the continuing of what I said on how TGEU has been built on and benefits from dominant narratives. So Mina, from TGEU.

[Applause]

Hi everyone. I am Mina, I am TGEU's communications officer, and I am talking here on behalf of our team, TGEU's team about the story behind our anti-activity report.

I am holding it up.

By now, I guess that a lot of you might have already read our anti-activity report. Or at least heard about it.

This report is just a small window that can help you look into our world at TGEU right now.

A world where we have, over the past year, finally started to address that TGEU as an organisation is built... Oh I cannot see you I am sorry, I am on my tip-toes.

[Person off stage] slow down for interpretation.

[Mina] No problem, I will slow down, I will also look at you. OK. Is it possible to have a.. or to move it here?

There's a step! Yes!

[laughter and applause]

That's awesome. OK.

[laughter]

By now, I guess that a lot of you might have already read our anti-activity report. Or at least heard about it.

This report is just a small window that can help you look into our world at TGEU right now.

A world where we have, over the past year, finally started to address that the organisation is built on dominant narratives.

That TGEU as an organisation benefits from these narratives. In turn this means that we leave many people behind.

We fail many communities.

But I don't need to tell you that. You know that already.

This is a story of conflict. After all, real change can only happen because of conflict.

This means that it was necessary for those of us within the organisation who are Black and People of Colour, from the Global South, and/or disabled to address things over and over and over again in order to get to this current state.

We have had to do a lot of extra work on top of all our other work. Emotional labour. This means that some of us have burnt out a few times. That some of us have left the organisation.

We have had countless meetings. We have written many letters and proposals. We have written and discussed the actual values of the organisation over and over again. We have discussed these again and again.

We have had to address the power structures in the organisation. The decision making processes. The hiring processes. Our commitment to wellbeing and self-care.

But I don't need to tell you that. You know already what it means to fight against power structures.

As a team, this process is both scary and hopeful.

Sometimes it is scary because we don't know what will happen. Because we are afraid of change. The people who had most fear and were most resistant to this change are white. Are non-disabled. Have and hold the most power.

At times it seemed that the council came at a wrong time. Falling in the middle of this. But actually. It came at the right time. To be able to reconnect with the communities that we serve.

To be reminded that this work, and pulling through these conflicts matters. That as a team we are all behind this process.

I know that a better TGEU will emerge throughout this process.

There's nothing much more to add right now. But we promise to continue to be transparent in this process.

To let you know what happens.

To let you know when we redistribute power and change the structure of our organisation.

And finally, to let you know when this conflict is over and when we are ready for the next one.

We hope you will be able to join us on that journey too.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Thank you Mina, so now we are going to call and applaud Dinah Bons.

[Applause]

She is a fierce trans woman of colour, sex worker, migrant, living in the Netherlands, she is running as co-chair on the steering committee (of TGEU) and she will talk about 'Invisibilised, Underserved, and Over-Policed, by our own'.

[Applause]

Dear trans communities, friends and allies.

I work in Amsterdam with some great friends I need to call out here namely Samira Hakim and Ana Paula Lima [coughs].. sorry.. on behalf of a very shattered and invisible community.

The invisible trans community that is the home of trans people of color and black trans people, migrants, sexworkers, and trans disabled people, and all those who feel are left behind.

[Akim] Dinah, slow down.

OK.. Let's first agree this speech is not a white people bashing one, it's a speech that I hope tightens our trans community and makes us aware of our uniqueness and possibility to change a small part of the world,

namely our worldwide trans community.

Our bi-cultural trans community faces multi-layers of exclusion, discrimination and stigmas.

My advocacy and fights are on the agenda of trans people of color from the former colonization and African and Jewish diaspora territories. Including Africa, Dutch Antilles, Suriname, and Moluccas. Our fights are

against stigmatization, exclusion, discrimination on race and ethnicity.

Being brought up in Europe means first of all being excluded because of your ethnicity and skin color. When after those obvious visible features, ones identity is gender diverse or trans it brings another layer of diversity, plus another reason to discriminate on.

This starts right in kindergarten and ends with a bit of luck after high school, or university.

What our bi cultural trans people suffers from is then all derivant from the source of the exclusion having a skin color that makes you of less value within society.

Of course one can have opportunities by the fact of being of color such as being the tropical surprise or fetish, yet this makes us as well immediatly vulnerable for all kind of industries that are dominated by white people. I for example ended up in the high class modeling business and sex industry.

On itself not negative, yet with a bit of bad luck and people in power that have not the right intentions we can become victims of rape, human trafficking, contract HIV, become homeless, or jobless, end up with depression and be killed or kill ourselves with drugs or medication.

So what do many of us do in Europe? We start our own families because many of us are kicked out their care systems meaning the areas where we grew up (suburbs, areas where migrants are based, our families, and social networks that belong to our communities).

This means many of our trans youth needs to flee, run away and start a new life in an even more complex and hostile world. Not only the white society as well our bi cultural, black and of color communities can be dangerous for us trans people of color.

Whilst seeing many of our friends and lovers getting killed each year because of being trans of color, being a sexworker, being homeless or on the streets, we have the resilience to connect with eachother, underground, in community centers, at our homes, and at parties.

We learn eachother about life, empower and stimulate, give shelter and above all try to bring water in this desert.

We bring love, friendship, safety and dare to touch subjects the trans community does not address as much as needed.

Our day-to-day life lingers from being alone on the streets, being a drop out from school, kicked out families and this means a lot when you are being brought up in large family systems with uncles, aunties, nephews and nieces that take care of you and live all over Europe. When you are rejected by the system there is almost nowhere you can run to.

Care systems are not well equipped to deliver good care to trans people of color because they handle parts of the stigmas and domains. For example there is a well organized people living with HIV community, and

there is quite a good organized programs on harm reduction for people living with problematic drug use, there are good shelters for homeless people and sexworkers, even for human trafficked, yet it seems to become

harder for trans people and when you are a trans person of color it is often heard they don't have people who can handle the complexity of intersectional issues.

We as trans community of color and bi-cultural, bi culturality and dealing with our reality by trying to step out from orgnaized LGBTIQ programs and even

trans communities as we witness that we do not get enough safe space and hands on help with living with HIV, homelessness, psychiatric issues, care after trauma by rape or violence and so on.

The resilience of people who are rejected by society from many angles rises up like a phoenix. When we meet up with our trans communities we find allies and friends, we remember, we are remembered when we die, we are valued for people that dare to say: "we exist! And we are part of the trans community."

Even while we are invisibilized, underserved and overpoliced and overuled by our own trans communities in Europe.

Only when we know our history, we know that fierce trans women of color whom were sexworkers fought for LGBTIQ liberation, we shall need to name our heroes such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera and women as

Major Griffin. Through their fight we as a broad global movement are existing.

Yet the white western LGBTIQ movement makes us still today invisible, does not hire us for jobs, excludes us from policy making.

Trans community gathered here in Antwerp today... look around you and become aware who is left behind and is almost made invisible, think of who are mainly getting killed by transphobia and dare to look those people in the eyes.

Who as an organisation is connected with us? Who doesn't let us die? Who cares if we die?

You write publications on us, but you don't know us,  
you don't work with us.

[Applause and cheers]

I ask you to make safe space for us, that big organisations like TGEU share their resources with us, that you give us a chance to survive when society doesn't give us one. I ask you to step out of what is comfortable for you and to become a real community.

I don't have the power, from my place as a trans woman of colour, sexworker migrant, living with HIV to make changes in the trans movement.

But you do.

Thank you.

[Applause and cheers]

[Akim] Thanks Dinah. Welcome to the stage, Ellen Murray.

Oh yeah. Stop clapping.

[Laughter]

So, please welcome to the stage, Ellen Murray. She's an unapologetic trans disabled woman from Northern Ireland. The title of her piece is 'No one disabled comes here anyway - exclusion of disabled people in trans rights movements.'

Ellen: This is my favourite thing about being on stage, everyone else is behind a podium, I get to sit.

[Laughter]

So I was asked to talk today about disabled people involvement in trans activism and also about how people are excluded from the movement and within the community as a whole.

So how the trans movement is designed is to exclude disabled people. Designed to exclude D/deaf and disabled people.

I think the trans movement is designed in the same way as society at large is designed.

There is nothing specific necessarily in our movement, or in our community or in our efforts that is any different from the streets, the public transport, the offices, the hospitals, the homes that we live in, anyway.

And the trans community so often replicates the basic inaccessibility of our spaces including in our specific work.

I am trying not to hyperfocus on speaking quickly.

We see a priority given to inaccessible working constantly. When it is social spaces, and community venues, when we come together, for tea and coffee, or on a Friday night, when social connections are being made, that can help bring people onto the social ladder of activism and into non-governmental organisations and community work.

The inaccessible offices that sometimes organisations are forced to rent because that is perhaps the only thing that they were able to afford at the given time.

We see a repetition of every other power structures in society in the trans organisations, trans community and in the trans movement as a whole.

But I think generally we think of ourselves and trans movements as being relatively accessible and relatively good, because as a movement there are more disabled people in trans activism than in many other areas of social justice activism.

However accessibility is complicated. Every single time, that I or most other trans disabled people [unitelligible/microphone noise], in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole, every time that we contact other organisations that aren't accessible to trans disabled people, that don't have involvement from trans disabled people. Everything is boiled down to "well, we have ramps. We have big toilets" That is great for people who need ramps and big toilets, it is definitely great for me.

But for the majority of trans disabled individuals that is not what accessibility means. The D/deaf and disabled caucus that met yesterday and that has been meeting informally, in corridors and over the internet in the past days has outlined that. Disabled trans people know that accessibility is complicated. We know that accessibility is nuanced, and accessibility can conflict with accessibility. One's person's needs are another person's barriers.

And so putting in one-size fits all approaches and therefore not including disabled trans people in consultation, in activism, is doomed to fail every time.

I think sometimes accessibility can be seen as a luxury item.

To get to anywhere else in Europe I have to fly from Dublin or Belfast because there is no land option. And I often talk on Twitter about airport assistance and airport assistance is seen by people who don't use it as giving these free electric car buggies through the airport as a luxury. If that is your idea than I am definitely up to debate you on this.

But the accessibility assistance that is available usually requires a higher level of energy. [unclear]. We live in a world where disabled people often have to accept that things that are in place are not going to be perfect.

But within social activism, within LGBT activism, within trans communities we see and hear this constantly. That one day we will have better venues. One day we will have better resources. And one day we will start working on accessibility.

I was asked to consider what things are D/deaf and disabled trans people are sick and tired of hearing from trans movements. I think that number 1 is probably "oh, we will do it better next time" because what that often means is that next time you will do the same thing again.

And that is not necessarily trans specific. There needs to be more of a commitment to change, so that "we will do it better next time" does not mean the same thing will happen or that a big change will occur. There is nothing visible to people being told that.

So commitments need to be made. We need material changes. And we need adjustments to happen.

I think that sometimes disabled people's issues are seen to complicate the trans communities, trans movements, our aims as a whole. Talk about legal gender recognition and trans health care. Disabled people, just like trans people, often break systems that are designed within society, whether that is healthcare records or legal systems. Or being registered. Or the ability to legally consent to healthcare treatments. We complicate those arguments.

And it is an argument that often comes up regularly and well people with learning disabilities or people with intellectual disabilities or cognitive disabilities "we are not going to deal with them in this legislation because we need an argument that people will understand."

But the people most profoundly excluded from those practices are also profoundly excluded from social activism as a whole. Are the people who's issues will be dealt with next year or the year after or the year after that.

Unless we can challenge there will never be an impetus or pressure on an organisation or activist or on a funder to change what they are doing.

When we have seen accessible trans activism happen in Northern Ireland, in Ireland, in the UK, across Europe and in other parts of the world, it has been when D/deaf and disabled trans people have not just been involved in activism, but have been given structures to operate within and given leadership roles within those structures.

Trans communities and disabled communities have a lot of shared history. And a lot of trans inclusion work and trans rights are disabled rights. Disabled accessibility is trans inclusivity.

Our issues are often the same. It's bathrooms. It's recognition before the law. It is the ability to be known as who we are and use the language that best describes our experiences. Our shared history stretches back well before institutionalisation and criminalisation.

It is a relatively new thing to, certainly for example in Northern Ireland where I am from to start to see trans identities and LGBT identities as a whole as being separate from psycho-social disability or mental illness.

We are often treated by government and legislators in much the same way, and we are still feeling the effect of that today.

Gender identity services, trans healthcare, those are so much, those are relying so much on ableist assumptions about trans people and what trans people know about themselves.

That manifests as anti-trans prejudice, and it is anti-trans prejudice but it comes from ableism as well.

But as I already have said, disabled trans people know all this already and the resources exist. A number of disabled trans people came together with TGEU last year and wrote basically a manual on how to organise accessibility, how to run conferences accessibility. It is there to use, it is there copy, to learn from. [unclear and laughter]

So I hope that you are able to use this knowledge in the future to include us at the table, because until we are at the table we won't be able to ask to be at the table.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Akim: Thank You. So next on stage we have Ava McQueen. You can come on stage.

They are a non-binary trans person of colour from Armenia. They came last year to for a training with TGEU and then sought for asylum here in Antwerp.

[Applause]

Hello everybody.

I was an asylum seeker in Belgium for last year. I was living in a refugee camp (centre) for almost a year. I'm gonna be talking about racist and discriminative treatment to asylum seekers and refugees in Belgium.

I'll tell you some casual examples and stories of what was happening to me and to people around me.

I'll start with my stories.

I was living with almost 250 other people in the same centre. Of course, periodically I was facing sexual harassment.

Let's remember that I was born in Armenia and lived the most part of my life in Armenia, I've seen much worse and I fought a lot more. So I was doing here.

Once, everything went too far and someone's sexual wishes turned in to a bloody fight between us, ending with a bleeding nose and ear. He ran away from that place...

Then police, social workers.... of course, police couldn't find him and I had to spend all my day in another room than mine (for security) and I was not able to go out from that room, cause the criminal was free and around me.

Police promised to invite me to the police station during that week. After 2 weeks there was still no news from the police and I had to call them.

I got informed that my case is already closed.

I had to call some hotlines and speak to some people in order to make an appointment with the police.

I went to the police station and some angry man right after "hello", roughly ask me why am I here for that closed case?

When I asked him how did they investigate and closed the case where I was the victim and nobody even spoke to me. Here is what he said to me: "That was a fight between 2 adults and we find it not serious enough to investigate. This is our system, this is how we work, If you don't like it, go back to your country, why are you here?"

In the end, he felt free to add "And if you wanna have normal education and job in Belgium, you have to have a normal look and take away those strange things from your ears and your face" (he meant piercings).

By the way, the criminal was sent to another refugee camp by the directors of the camp, and not because of attacking me but because he did this kind of things a lot before, he had attacked a woman

before and made a lot of fights with people living there and with social workers. That was considered his punishment.

He was very happy in the end for going new city where all his friends were living. Yes, The system here punishes people by changing their place (and not to a worse one) and the police does nothing.

This is just one of thousand stories. I'll try to tell other short situations and stories.

After these all I had a depression for a while and was seeing a psychologist and later I was taking antidepressants.

I was not able to go out from my room for a few months but the director was forcing me to eat in the restaurant, with all that people there who were always overlooking me.

Of course, I was refusing him all the time and I had to fight with the director and social workers all the time...

My friend, queer woman, who's also an asylum seeker in Belgium, and was living in a refugee centre, asked to see a psychologist. She told him that she has a depression for a few years and has suicidal thoughts lately... She was asked random questions about everything but her psychological problems and at the end the doctor said to her: "why are you wasting your time here by asking asylum, anyway you're gonna have negative answer and you will be sent back to your country" ....and the consultation was done....

My partner who is also a person of colour, was an asylum seeker for last 3 years in Belgium. Normally, if someone has a negative answer from government about staying in Belgium, they give you reasons point by point why did they reject your staying procedure.

He got 2 negative answers from the government without reason... so there was no reason... they just have some inner, secret agreements between some countries governments, because of what they just reject people while they have right to stay...

The same guy, a few days ago, was stopped from police, for not using light while driving bicycle. But instead of giving a fine, the police man was making fun of him, screaming on him, rejecting to speak English, because we are in Belgium and people have to speak Dutch here, even if they don't know Dutch. Also, he allowed himself to throw away his earphones from his chest and followed him by his car for an half hour...

Lately, I was looking for an apartment in Antwerp... I've found more than 50 different apartments, called for all of them, and when the owners understood that the apartment is not for a Belgian person, I was rejected with random stupid reasons... Now, I've found an apartment, with a help of my friends of course and of course the owner of the apartment is not a Belgian.

That is it. Thank you.

[Applause].

Thank you Ava. So now we welcome on stage Sanjar Kurmarov who comes from Central Asia and will speak about the perspective of Central Asian and Eastern European activists in a Western-dominated activism.

[Applause]

My name is Sanjar, I'm a trans activist from Kyrgyzstan - Central Asian countries are Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

As activists in Eastern Europe and Central Asia we have little resources and space to breathe. Trans activism in the region cannot develop its own path. We are sandwiched. On the one hand Russian traditional values which have been imposed on us through colonialism push us hard. On the other hand, there are only Western-dominated ideas of gender and activism we can refer to.

Instead, what we would need is funding, respect, meaningful inclusion and support to develop our own path.

In the post-soviet Trans\*Coalition, activists from six countries work together, support each other. without hierarchies. but bound by a common (Soviet) past, language and by a vision for our communities.

When the gender recognition law in Ukraine needed changing we all came: from Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, , Russia - Kazakhstan to discuss with Ukrainian doctors, authorities. But more over to support Ukrainian activists on the spot and to learn for ourselves.

When our colleagues in Kazakhstan needed support in changing their law, again we all came: from Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Russia. We try to live cross-border solidarity even if the lack of funding and repressive regimes make it difficult.

And cross border solidarity should take place not just in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, but also beyond our region. For instance, if you are a fan of football, you should know what is happening at the moment in several cities of Russia. Before the World Championship began there were so-called "cleanings". In order for the city to be "clean", trans-migrant sex workers were handcuffed and forced to lie face down on the floor. They were forced to tell their names to the camera and the country they came to work in Russia from. In order to earn the love and acceptance of their parents, some are forced by their family to pay one thousand USD to them.

And these cis-heteronormative and abusive, misogynist family values are not what our ancestors had. They were imposed on us by Russian Empire.

What you can do as Western activists?

Educate yourself, ask us. The post-soviet space is not one bloc. Find out about our living realities and how government repression effects on our lives.

You might be surprised to learn how Western companies from your country support oppressive politics in our countries.

Find out who are leading activists and what their thoughts are. Read our publications. If language is a barrier, study it, get paid interpreters, and finally google-translate works both ways.

[Laughter and applause]

When organising a forum look also East-wards for speakers and participants: we have years of community-organizing experiences with trans summer camps in Moldova, grass-roots education of doctors in Russia, effective advocacy enduring 13 different governments in Kyrgyzstan, resource-sharing between sex worker and trans organizations in Central Asia. There are so many experiences you lose out on if you allow a language barrier to become a real barrier.

Come to our conferences and events: At the Trans\*Conference in Kiev this March activists from across the post-soviet space attended. Western activists were also invited and came. But they took up too much space with their bullshit narratives.

[Applause and laughter]

Please, when you come – listen to us, share your experience but leave the opportunity for local activists to set their agenda.

And finally, we activists from Central Asia demand from TGEU and the trans movement the following:

1. Decrease the membership fees to allow Initiative Groups with no budget to be a part of the network

[Applause]

2. Please support us better with our visa issues. Remember...

[Applause]

Remember our security issues – we cannot openly go to the embassy with an invitation letter mentioning trans or LGBT

[Applause]

because it is criminal penalty in some of our countries. Please hear us when we are asking.

3. Please improve the technical issues around interpretation next time. Consult us beforehand.
4. Have a person who communicate with us in Russian and develop materials in Russian.
5. Respect our needs what we expressed in your registration form, with our food choices, rooming preferences, rooms for praying,

[Applause]

cultural programs for us and wellbeing.

Thanks.

[Applause and loud cheers]

Akim: Thank you Sanjar

I am sorry we are running a bit late. I am sorry we are running a bit late. We have two speakers left. So, but if people are starving they can also go out and eat, it is okay.

So the next person is Nathan Gale. A non-binary, disabled person who talks about organisations 'performing' intersectionality.

[Applause]

Thank you. Thank you to Akim and Chloé for creating this space today, this opportunity for those of us who don't always get a chance to speak to each other and to everyone in the room.

Erm, I would usually start with a talk like this with a joke. I like to make people feel comfortable and make people feel at ease.

But I am not going to do that today.

Cause I am fed up of making people feel comfortable.

[Applause]

As a disabled person, and I imagine many of my siblings of colour can relate to this, we are taught to make people like us. To make ourselves likeable to others. And for disabled people we are thought to do that so that we can get our needs met. We need people to like us because we need people to do things for us.

But actually my experience shows that even that doesn't work. It doesn't matter if you like us. Things still don't get done properly.

I am feeling very.. hmmm.. bleh. Lots of things today. Tired, angry, sad, frustrated, emotional, guilty, and that is because two well-funded organisations TGEU and Cavaria with majority white, non-disabled employees, have not managed to create a space that is accessible to D/deaf and disabled people.

[Applause]

But two things that are leading the anger in me and making me feel most angry. The first is that it has meant that in an event the first of its kind in the history of TGEU to be organised by two People of Colour and to be facilitated by two People of Colour, and to have more People of Colour in the room, than any previous event, I have had to spend a lot of time moaning and complaining about this event, and it is not the people who have organised and facilitated this that have caused these issues, but it is largely the white, non-disabled structures in place and around us that have caused this to be the case.

And that is unacceptable to me.

And the second thing is that myself and many other D/deaf and disabled people have spent all of their time and all of their energy at this conference so far talking about, moaning about, crying about, the lack of access, and trying to fix it for ourselves and other people.

We have not been able to access the workshops that we wanted to go to, we've not been able to learn for ourselves, because we have had to put all of our energy into talking about access.

And those are the two things that I am most frustrated about.

Before today I planned to talk about, as Akim said, "performing" intersectionality, and so I wondered if people could put a hand up if they know who first used the term 'intersectionality'.

And could people keep their hands up if they know what that person was referring to when they were talking about 'intersectionality'.

OK, so for any of the white, non-disabled people in the room who don't know you can find out for yourselves.

[Laughter]

For anyone else that wants, that doesn't know the answer to those two questions, and wants to talk about that, I extend an open invitation to find me later and have that discussion.

But intersectionality is not something that is done, by an organisation that already has all the power structures in place, to tick a box, to say that they have done it.

Intersectionality isn't even something that you do to get more people in the room, that is not what it is about.

And I feel like this term is being co-opted like so many of our terms are, over and over again in history, by powerful organisations to decide how they are going to organise and regulate our spaces, and it is still not leading to us being in the room and spaces being accessible to us.

And so I feel like we either need to come up with a new term or talk about what we are really talking about.

I think that is the thing actually, about honesty, and there is part of me that also thinks, perhaps I want organisations to be honest and just say "this is an organisation for white, middle-class, cis-men, that are non-disabled"

[Applause]

You know? Just say that. And then we know, and that's OK and we will go and do our own thing. As long as you don't hog the resources.

So yeah, I don't have much capacity left for sentences, making sentences, so I am going to end this here. Thank you very much for staying late to give me the opportunity to speak. Thank you.

[Applause and cheers]

Akim: thank you Nathan. So the last person is Carter Honorée. We have added Carter to this panel because of so many problems we got this year with Visas. So we thought it was important to have someone who addresses this. So Carter is a Black trans person from Rwanda and first they got their Visa rejected, then they were one of the only few people we managed to get here.

So Carter Honorée.

[Applause]

Thank you so much, and I want to start by highlighting how the European policies that says they are inclusive of African trans movement and globally, how they are not.

European organisations think that our needs are the same or their needs are better. And always want to dictate us what to do. How to proceed, how to address our needs, in a way that reinforces the power-dynamics, as they are and to show them selves as the experts and we are always in the position of a continuous learning.

And therefore we are powerless.

Whereas, we are experts in our regions.

In our contexts and we know best how to address our needs, and what they really are. You cannot tell me you know my needs and you have not walked in my shoes, and you don't want to listen to me.

It does not mean that we do not want to be involved. But we fucking need a push.

And a sense of understanding and know that your privileges don't apply to me and other trans persons of colour.

For example, in the preparations for example of this Council, I think it should have been made in advance so that if the visas are rejected we have time to re-appeal.

Second. I think that for the application of the visas in my context sometimes are very very complex. And we want a push for an organisation that is inviting you to maybe help you to fill the forms or especially from the embassies.

And give enough information especially if they are Europeans. Because, I can't remember how many times I was called a woman who doesn't have enough resources and wants to come to Belgium and stay.

For God's sake I hate it here and I really want to go back home.

[Laughter]

As a part of the TvT team we have been highlighting these points and we are trying to share our analysis on how these dynamics effect and impacts the whole organisations policies towards international community. But we still need a fucking push again. To make it happen.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Akim: thank you to all the participant who spoke. thank you to the speakers, sorry, thank you to everyone who stayed 30 minutes more, we are really sorry about that. We are trying to adapt to speaking slower and had to add some people.

So I will just say a few words to close.

So having these... I don't remember the English word... these people speak about their stories shows that meritocracy doesn't work so we really encourage People of Colour who experience problems during the conference to come find Chloé and me and use our "little position of power" for this conference. And usually panels are made to inspire the most privileged ones, shake their feelings until they decide to get better, quite frankly, I will speak for myself, as a trans person of colour, I don't care what is in your hearts, and how you feel, because it is always at the expense of our daily lives, and we need actions.

So please make your organisations accessible, get us visas in time and hire us.

And there is a General Assembly this afternoon you can vote for us there are a lot of People of Colour candidates.

That's it.

[Applause]

Thank you.

[Applause and cheers]

