Spotlight Team International

Dear Madame Chair, thank you.

I'm [?] and I'm really delighted to be speaking here today on the behalf of the Spotlight Team and to be virtually surrounded by such inspirational people.

Spotlight Team is a Dutch NGO that invests in the development and the empowerment of newcomers, and it does so by creating social events, where people are welcome to share and perform art in the safe place, a safe place without stereotypes on minorities. I would like to calibrate your attention - there are continuous struggles for minorities to freely express themselves. Exercising cultural rights and having access to safe spaces should not be taken for granted. There's a real lack of cultural bridges and a lack of communication means in the majority of societies. It directly impacts minorities. And that has been increasingly emphasized by the COVID 19 outbreak. From here onwards, I would like to share with you the initiative that the Spotlight Team has undertaken with an UN OHCHR Minority Former Fellow during the spring lockdown. We truly want to inspire your overall organizations by highlighting the importance of online artistic initiatives in such difficult times. Well, as the Corona virus started hitting, we cannot guarantee this safe place in person anymore, and consequently turn online, like everyone else. We needed to give the people the same feeling of safety to share their artistic background and passion online, without discrimination and of course without hate speech. From this derived initiative, when the world poses, music and dance continue. The case of the campaign show that social media and online platforms can rightfully be used to prevent hate speech and instead spread solidarity.

From this Forum, we recommend you and UN Agencies and ask relevant stakeholders to support the artistic initiatives of organizations across the globe. We recommend assisting them towards their intended positive impact and open new doors for minorities to benefit from their cultural rights.

Thank you!