

## Social Enterprise Management and Non-Profit Consulting Team

Thank you Madame Co-Chair. I am honoured to address the Minorities Forum on social and economic issues facing Black queer persons. My name is Mario Burton and I am a PhD candidate in leadership and change at Antioch University and a Minorities Fellow representing Black and queer communities in the US. In 2016, I founded an organization called the [inaudible] Team. Through the [inaudible] Team, I have been able to engage youth with the UDHR, as well as advocate for fair housing for homeless persons, living wages for low-income families, and accessibility for those with disabilities. Regarding Black queer persons, Black queer people often face compounding discrimination and marginalization resulting in limited access to economic opportunities, education, and healthcare. Some of the current social and economic challenges facing Black queer or LGBTQ persons in the US include the following: over 500 anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced that would impact rights related to employment, as well as healthcare and free speech and expression; 70 bills were introduced last year that prevent students from learning about black and queer histories, and that punish educators and librarians for teaching or offering books about these histories; attacks on affirmative action and voting rights measures that were designed to offer protections in education, employment, and civic participation; ongoing concerns about the ability of Black transgender women to obtain appropriate IDs that would provide more expansive employment options; ongoing concerns with employment opportunities for Black queer youth and queer youth of color. Regarding social and economic empowerment, there has been a growing movement of Black and Black queer entrepreneurs and content creators in the US who are collaborating to create an ecosystem where opportunities are shared and money is circulated within our respective communities. These strides are occurring simultaneously as our rights are under attack and being stripped away in real time. To help address these issues, I would enact and enforce intersectional approaches to human rights that honor Afro-descendants and queer persons of color and that support our economic empowerment and upward mobility. Thank you.