

TENET Center for Social Transformations

Thank you Madame Chair. I am [inaudible], head of the Roma Youth Organization Tenet. I speak for the Roma youth of Ukraine, living at the intersection of two wars, the inherited memory of the genocide, and the brutal reality of Russian oppression. I know the price of historical silence personally. I reconstructed my family history from fragments, hidden not out of shame, but fear. Invisibility and the loss of identity is the true cost of forgetting. Today, Roma youth defend Ukraine, yet, we risk becoming invisible again. The absence of memory about our contributions today lays the ground for exclusion tomorrow. That is why Tenet is working on two fronts: preserving memory. We document war experiences and transform them into advocacy so that the next generation will not have to rebuild their history from pieces. Building capacity. Through the Roma youth coalition we engage displaced youth to counter hate speech, turning vulnerability into competence. But civil society cannot do this alone. We need a strategic shift from the UN and member states on two dimensions: first, invest in Roma leadership. We need a structural approach to education that empowers the new generation with real competencies, without it, in a decade, no one will be left to advocate for us. Second, shift from aid to agency. Prioritize institutional support over short-term aid. This ensures our participation at the negotiations table is based on equal partnership rather than symbolism. Only strong, sustainable institutions and youth conscious of their history can be the true foundation for peace.