

# Coc Netherlands

Madame President  
Madame High Commissioner  
Distinguished Panelists

Thank you very much to South Africa and other countries who helped make this panel happen. It is the first time in history that gender identity is listed as an agenda point at the Human Rights Council and it is high time. I do however note the absence of an expert specialized in gender identity issues on this panel.

'Trans\* people' is a term which we use as a placeholder for many expressions of gender identities. Trans\* people are known in some places as hijra, pengkid, kathoey, fa'atama, xanith, māhū, dilbaa, travesti, transsexual, or transgender. We always have and always will be part of all of your cultures and societies in one way or another.

Many trans\* people around the world experience violence and discrimination. Trans\* people get beaten, raped and murdered in the streets and in our homes, by strangers and by our own families.

Our governments fail us when they persecute us for who we are, or when we are forced into sex work and underground economies for lack of proper job options. Our governments also fail us when they deny us identity papers that reflect our identities or when they demand that we be sterilized to obtain one, like my government did to me. Germany's Constitutional Court has since outlawed the practice but the vast majority of countries still hold on to these requirements.

Our societies and families fail us when they kick us out in the streets, often early, when they deny us the education that we have a right to, when they deny us the jobs we could and should be getting.

Our healthcare systems fail us when they send us home with a broken arm or a gunshot wound because they 'don't treat people like that'. They also fail us when they claim that treatments we need in order to feel whole are not medically necessary – pushing many of us to quacks for black-market hormones, harmful injections of industrial-grade silicone or backyard surgery.

Human rights mechanisms fail us when they do not recognize us as people worthy of their protection and support.

Trans\* people have one thing in common: we are all born human and are therefore born with human rights that this Council needs to protect.