

I am Qadira Muhammad, Coordinator for the ICSWG UNPFPAD Youth Sub-Committee, Youth Representative for the IYLI and member of the International Coalition for People of African Descent. I have sat in this Forum, I am deeply disturbed, because: It is long overdue for the UN and governments to adequately acknowledge, address, and rectify abuse, misuse, mistreatment, and needless death of people of African Descent; and these and other serious human rights violations should be the central focus at this Forum.

However, it is abundantly clear that there is a clear lack of concern to address these issues, by the way we have been handled those who are representing and speaking on behalf of our people who could not be here today. The 1st and 2nd Permanent Forum, to say it kindly, have been logistical nightmares. The magnitude of these so-called oversights are the worse I and my colleagues have seen in nearly 10 years of engaging at the UN.

The UN expected an unprecedented number of participants, so why were we only allowed to get passes to access the UN less than two hours before the start of this Forum? Most individuals stood hours in line just to get inside, and when you got to the front, you might have been told that they lost your registration.

We have been pushed to the margins. We have not been able to hold a majority of our events at the UN - even though we've seen with other Forums this building has more than the capacity to do so. As a result, we were forced here, like back in Geneva, to travel across the city in order to attend the Forum's events. Furthermore, our funds for this Forum are so egregiously low that they could only sponsor a handful of people to be here.

I urge Civil Society, do not invest all of our power into the belief that the creation of this Forum is our "we have overcome" moment. Do not forget the power we hold collectively. If we are not given the funds to bring our people to this Forum, in particular our young people, we pool our resources and create proper funding opportunities. If they won't treat us properly - then we call for an investigation.

Recommendations: I recommend that the Forum hold whoever is responsible for creating this logistical nightmare at both Forums be investigated and if need be - fired - for not only their gross negligence, but seemingly intentional sabotage of this Permanent Forum.

Finally, on behalf of Youth Sub-Committee, I recommend in addition to members' verbal support of the youth - to create a space for us to have all youth panelists for at least two thematic discussions at the next permanent Forum - in addition to our recommendations at the previous Forum to create a youth forum.

While we want the support of members of the Forum, nevertheless we'll continue working on the ground and advocating to ensure the voices of Black youth are heard.