

Transatlantic Leadership Initiatives

Strengthening Transatlantic and Global Leaders



Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network

TILN Workshop 2015

March 17-22

Brussels, Belgium

**A Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative
of The German Marshall Fund of the United States**



FINAL REPORT

OVERVIEW

The Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network (TILN) advances leaders who are global in outlook, representative, culturally competent, and inclusive. TILN is the premier venue for young, diverse U.S. and European elected and civil society leaders to meet, enhance their inclusive leadership portfolio, and engage senior policymakers. Now entering its fifth year housed within the German Marshall Fund in conjunction with the U.S. Helsinki Commission, TILN is honored to partner with: the U.S. Department of State, Balkan Trust for Democracy, Open Society Foundations, Meridiam, IMPACT, ONCE Foundation, Operation Black Vote, Unitas Communications, New American Leaders Project, World Jewish Congress, and True Blue Inclusion.

TILN addresses the critical need to advance leaders committed to diversity and inclusion in the context of rapid demographic change. Central to the initiative, TILN annually hosts a political leadership workshop for young, diverse leaders from Europe and the United States. TILN IV convened March 17-22, 2015 in Brussels for a banner year, benefiting from lessons learned in previous sessions. The pilot TILN Workshop convened in April 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark with young, diverse leaders representing 26 countries. TILN II took place in Brussels in March 2013, with the added benefit of participation in GMF's major policy convening, Brussels Forum, through the Forum's Young Professionals' Summit. TILN convened for its third year in Brussels March 2014, with site visits to the European Parliament as well as to Ghent, Belgium to engage with grassroots leaders on the International Day Against Racism.

The 2015 TILN cohort gained leadership strategies, networked with U.S. and European political leaders as well as leaders of Europe-wide minority networks, engaged Corporate Chief Diversity Officers, and visited Antwerp, hosted by Belgian minority elected officials and community leaders. Highly regarded leaders in their own right, David Johns, Simon Woolley, and Sayu Bhojwani, facilitated the workshop and led peer learning sessions around such topics as personal mission, empowering diverse communities, shaping inclusive policies, and smart campaigns. TILN young leaders were also able to join high-level discussions with minority politicians from across the U.S. and Europe on the topic of caucuses. The TILN cohort participated in the Brussels Forum Young Professionals Summit, putting their inclusive leadership skills into practice with high-level officials and policymakers at GMF's flagship policy convening. A highlight was to see TILN participants taking active roles in Brussels Forum panels and discussions, and to see 'advancing diversity' selected at the Forum plenary as a key goal for the transatlantic partners.

TILN workshops have created an empowered network of rising diverse, young leaders that bridges the Atlantic and strengthens transatlantic relations for the future. TILN alumni are leveraging their experiences to reach new heights, such as serving in the U.S. Congress, as Ministers, Parliamentarians, and as regional and local elected leaders. Alumni have also run campaigns for the European Parliament.

*Tony Saunders, Marina Khatibi, Silvan Agius,
TILN 2015 participants*



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

DAY ONE: TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015

- 12:00-1:00 pm: Welcome Lunch and Orientation
- 1:15-2:00 pm: Personal Mission Statements (Icebreaking Activity)
- 2:00-2:30 pm: Network Assessments
- 2:30-3:00 pm: Owning Your Career: Leadership Opportunities (Boards, Appointments, Service)
- 3:15-4:15 pm: Shaping and Delivering the Message on Demographic Change
- 4:15-5:15 pm: U.S. & European Systems: How to Gain Buy-In for Inclusive Policies

DAY TWO: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015

- 9:00-10:30 am: Planning a Campaign I- Aims, Strategies, and Tactics
- 10:45-12:00 pm: Planning a Campaign II- Message Framing and Voter Outreach
- 12:00-1:15 pm: Lunch Discussion: Telling Your Authentic Story
- 1:30-4:30 pm: Working with the Media (interactive session)
- 4:30-5:00 pm: IMPACT Twitter Chat

DAY THREE-THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015

- 9:00-10:30 am: Inclusive Policies in Practice I: The EU Commission and Parliament (panel)
- 10:45-12:15 pm: Inclusive Policies in Practice II: Civil Society (panel)
- 1:00-2:30 pm: Arrive in Antwerp – Lunch and Networking with Civil Society Leaders
- 2:30-4:30 pm: Best Practices Discussion – Urban Strategies for Strengthening Social Cohesion

DAY FOUR- FRIDAY MARCH 20, 2015

- 10:00-11:00 am: Discussion - “Achieving Buy-In,” Power Networking at the Brussels Forum
- 11:30-2:30 pm: TMPLC Strategy Lunch “Maximizing the Potential of Minority Political Caucuses”
- 5:00 pm: Opening, Young Professionals Summit (YPS) ‘The Hotel’
- 7:30 pm: Welcome Dinner, Young Professionals Summit

DAY FIVE- SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015 (International Day Against Racism)

- 9:00-10:30 pm: Brussels Forum, Young Professionals Summit

DAY SIX- SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2015

- 9:00-10:45 am: Debrief and setting one year goals
- 11:00–2:30 pm: YPS joins Brussels Forum sessions

“I believe that this opportunity is something given once in a lifetime and I can assure you that after this experience of inclusion and understanding the uniqueness of every individual, irrespective of their race, nationality, religion, gender, age or sexual orientation, I will invest even more energy in future work.”

-Igor Ujhazi (Serbia)

"What I most like about the TILN training sessions is both visibly seeing these young individuals politically grow, but also how they felt free to talk about inequality and prejudice in a safe space which allows them to believe they are not alone whilst also learn from the experiences from within the group... These are no ordinary young politicians, and the trainers who were assembled were there to ensure these young men and women not only fulfill their great ambitions as leaders but also to have more of a global mindset that is underpinned by greater social and racial justice."

-Simon Woolley (United Kingdom)



Assia Benziane, Mpanzu Bamenga, Engy Abdelkadar, Ponka We Victors, TILN 2015 participants

"I have had the privilege of seeing the TILN community, curriculum and approach constantly strengthen over four years; the cohorts are cohesive and purposeful, and I see the power in these young leaders to create positive transformation across the U.S. and Europe toward truly representative government and inclusive policymaking." **-Lora Berg (United States)**



Opening: TILN 2015 opened March 17 at the Brussels Office of GMF led by its facilitation team: David Johns, Executive Director of White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans; Simon Woolley, Director, Operation Black Vote; and Sayu Bhojwani, President, New American Leaders. Participants were invited to hone their personal and professional goals and to assess how they leverage their current networks. The topic of empowered networks wove throughout the workshop, including as part of an opening evening dinner discussion with leaders of Europe-wide organizations focused on inclusion and civil rights. Day one also included time to recognize young leaders already serving on boards of directors in the public, nonprofit and private sectors, and for all to develop strategies for increasing board service.

Thomas Huddleston of the Migration Policy Group and Sayu Bhojwani put forward insights about how to best shape and deliver the message on demographic change in the transatlantic space, in order to gain buy-in for inclusive policies. TILN participant Ajenai Clemmons of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and facilitator Simon Woolley reflected on different approaches to policymaking in the U.S. and Europe, and former MEP Glyn Ford shared his thoughts on outflanking xenophobic and racist politics.

"It's been a unique experience for me that I can tell I'll never forget. Even more, I'm more than happy to leverage all these valuable skills and contacts in order to better contribute to promote inclusion across both public and private sectors. Our group was strongly connected and we all left Brussels with positive hope and determination to move things forward." -Emmanuel Birba (France)

"To have been with likeminded people who challenge your thoughts and views is something I am grateful for. I have come back with broader horizons, new thoughts and understanding and a great network of friends and peers." - Reena Ranger (United Kingdom)

TILN 2015 DETAILED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION – DAY 2 – MARCH 18

Planning a Campaign: Against the backdrop of the recent Paris and Copenhagen tragedies, the Belgian Minister appearing publicly in blackface, and expected gains by the far-right in some European national elections, TILN participants worked on Day 2 to enhance campaign and media strategies. Top U.S. and European political strategists presented the elements of planning a campaign: aims, strategies, and tactics, including framing of messages and voter outreach.

Sayu Bhojwani delved into the power of sharing one's story, and also strategies to stay on message and to pivot in interviews. Media Expert, Gareth Harding, offered insights on 'hooking' the media, as well as individual media coaching, and the group engaged in a Twitter chat with TILN alumni from across four years of the program.

In the evening, TILN alumnus and Netherlands media personality, Kamran Ullah, held a frank and open discussion about the importance of ethics for rising young leaders, and the need to pay scrupulous attention to ethics requirements.



Kamran Ullah



Gareth Harding, "What's Your Hook?"

TILN Online: TILN young leaders stay in touch both through a members only Facebook group and occasionally on the public page

www.facebook.com/inclusionleaders - #inclusionleaders #brusselsforum

<http://www.obv.org.uk/news-blogs/tiln-brussels-2015-conveyor-belt-success>

<http://www.globaldiversityexchange.ca/dear-friend-are-you-ready-to-lead/>

"Some of our current leaders see us as 'noncontributing' Muslims or migrants. Our generation is needed to help them embrace not only our talents, but also the long term idea of a diverse citizenry and the rights that go with that, no matter how we look or pray." -Farhia Bashir Nur (Norway)

Inclusive Policies in Practice: Day 3 provided rich insights into inclusive policymaking in government, civil society, and the corporate sector. TILN young leaders met with European Commission experts Massimo Serpieri and Sarah-Jane King on advancing equality legislation. Equinet head, Anne Gaspard, also offered perspectives on Europe-wide activism. Participants also engaged with the leadership of the European Roma Information Office, European Women's Lobby and European Youth Forum on inclusive leadership from the grassroots perspective.

Grass Roots Visit: TILN then boarded the bus for Antwerp where civil rights leader Omar Ba offered a rich afternoon of interaction with diverse elected officials and civil society leaders working on the ground in Belgium. With a focus on challenges and opportunities for diverse populations, issues from equitable policing and minority political participation were discussed. Noting that 2015 marks the launch of the International Decade for People of African Descent, several panelists also focused on racism and the situation of African descent populations in Belgium. See clips from the discussion [here](#).



Omar Ba, Civil Rights Leader, Belgium moderates a panel with Flemish MP Tracy Bilbo Tansia, MP Yasmine Kherbache, and Benedict Mayuku

An animated dinner with Chief Diversity Officers of major global corporations hosted by True Blue Inclusion capped Day 3. TILN young leaders gained insights into corporate inclusion strategies and how corporations and government can work together to advance inclusive policies. Cross-sector sharing of best practices is an essential aspect of TILN's curriculum, which TILN alumni are applying on their return to their home communities.



*Janice Little, Chief Diversity Officer, McKesson Corporation
addressing TILN young leaders*

Throughout TILN and the Young Professionals Summit at Brussels Forum, Clara Tecglen raised awareness about disability rights and the need for the transatlantic community to accelerate access for people with disability.



*Claudia Tecglen, Disability Rights Leader, Spain
(TILN participant, in partnership with ONCE Foundation)*

The magic of TILN happens when participants recognize that no matter their circumstance or place of origin, they share similar experiences. Through that realization comes the recognition of their ability to act collectively and maximize their impact. – Mischa Thompson, U.S. Helsinki Commission

"The need for leaders who understand how our world histories – from what was done to Native Americans in my country to how colonialism has shaped perceptions and treatment of Blacks, Asians and others in Europe – are key to ensuring the democratic values of our countries are not just applicable to the majority, but to all." -Ponka We Victors (United States)



*Rep. Gilda Cobb Hunter, Rep. Ponka We Victors, Dr. Mischa Thompson,
MP John Godson, MEP Emine Bozkurt*

Transatlantic Minority Political Leaders Conference (TMPLC): On day 4, TILN participants joined a Roundtable Discussion in cooperation with the Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference (TMPLC). The Roundtable solicited areas of cooperation for a transatlantic caucus on inclusive leadership that featured GMF Executive Vice President Barry Lowenkron; Roma MEP Damian Dragici; Polish MP John Abraham Godson; Dr. Hande Bozatli, President of the Assembly of European Regions (Turkey); and National Black Caucus of State Legislators Vice President, and South Carolina State Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter.



Philip Rosenberg, Assia Benziane, Tefik Mahmut and other TILN participants at the TMPLC

"The ethnic and other minority leaders were a selection of some of the most impressive and inspiring people that I have ever met...This was a group that was both smashing glass-ceilings for their own communities and offering new vision and leadership for their wider societies too...Above all, this part of the programme was an opportunity to share and compare the challenges our communities faced and to build coalitions to tackle them. We were not uniform in our views – there were powerful debates on immigration, extremism and quotas – but we were unified in our vision for a more equal and connected world." -Philip Rosenberg (United Kingdom)



David Johns, former MEP Eminze Bozkurt, MP John Godson, Rep. Ponka We Victors, Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, and Muddassar Ahmed - Chief Executive of Unitas Communications



Thierry Déau, CEO of Meridiam, addresses the Young Professionals Summit with panelists: Mr. Greg Horowitz, Representative Darrell Issa, MP Marietje Schaake, and Ms. Stephanie Vertongen



TILN participant Farhia Nur and Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary General

Opening, Young Professionals Summit (YPS) “The Hotel” The Young Professionals Summit of Brussels Forum (YPS) began in the late afternoon of March 20 and continued through March 22. TILN participants joined a wider group of high-potential young professionals with the common goal of fostering dialogue between generations and building new connections across sectors and nations. YPS allowed the TILN cohort to engage with top U.S. and European leaders on transatlantic security issues ranging from countering terrorism and Russia/Ukraine to TTIP (trade) and economic security. Additionally they were addressed by Rep. Darrel Issa, Senator Chris Murphy, former Security and State Department officials Derek Chollett, Reta Jo Lewis and

Esther Brimmer, and other high-level European and U.S. government officials. *Speakers Included:* Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sweden; Gordon Brown, Former Prime Minister, the United Kingdom; Joyce Chang, Managing Director, Emerging Markets Strategy, JP Morgan; Iain Conn, Chief Executive of Refining and Marketing, BP; Lyse Doucet, Presenter, BBC News; Kristalina Georgieva, Vice President, European Commission; Toomas Ilves, President, Republic of Estonia; Fawzia Koofi, Member, Afghanistan Parliament; Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Department of State, United States; and others.

Importantly, TILN participants challenged the assumptions of senior leaders and offered new approaches to addressing transatlantic security issues, prompting calls for increased intergenerational policymaking, in particular as it relates to the foreign fighters movement and solidarity efforts to combat anti-Semitism and other intolerance. For instance, Philip Rosenberg called for foreign fighters to be called “our children” (not Muslim children) – noting that if our societies refer to them as our children all of society can be enlisted in the counterradicalization fight as opposed to assuming the Muslim community can go it alone. Referencing Colombine, Ajenai Clemmons of the NBCSL, noted how mass killings by White youth prompted mental health discussions and calls to help our children – an approach also needed in response to Black and Muslim youth when discussing efforts to counter foreign fighters and Ferguson/discriminatory policing.



TILN participant Carlos Menchaca on the distinguished Brussels Forum panel discussing “Inclusive Security” with panelists: Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb, President Dr. Handi Bozatli, and Mr. Derek Chollet,

Next Steps. TILN alumni will be invited to participate in the full range of the German Marshall Fund’s leadership program alumni opportunities. Alumni will also be invited to apply for GMF leadership mini-grants to support inclusive governance projects in their home regions and to attend the fifth anniversary of the program in Washington, D.C. in June of 2015, where 120+ alumni of the program will convene to discuss their roles as change-agents. The success of the program against a troubling backdrop of increasing intolerance in Europe has resulted in requests that the program continue to grow.

Find out more about Brussels Forum and the Young Professionals Summit:

Brussels Forum Agenda - <http://brussels.gmfus.org/agenda>

Young Professionals Summit - <http://brussels.gmfus.org/young-professionals-summit>



For more information on the Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network (TILN):

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*With Special Thanks to TILN Founders: Rep. Alcee L. Hastings,
Laurie Fulton, Ambassador (ret.), and Farah Pandith*

*The goal is to have these young people, imbued with their sense of worth, courage to speak truth, and
aptitude for action – harness this power to change the world.*

– Representative Alcee L. Hastings, Member of the U.S. Congress

PARTICIPANTS

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Reena Ranger, Councillor of Moor Park, Eastbury, Three Rivers (United Kingdom)

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Claudia Tecglen, President of *Convives con Espasticidad Advocacy Group for Spasticity Awareness* (Spain), assisted by the Secretary of the organization, Alejandra Pereira Calvo

Ponka We Victors, Kansas State Representative (United States)

Igor Ujhazi, Chairman, "Svi Zajedno" Novi Sad *All Together for Novi Sad* (Serbia)

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STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

In cooperation with the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

B | T | D The Balkan Trust
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