



UN Commission of the Status of Women
69th Session – Beijing+30
General Discussion
Oral Statement

Mr/Madam Chair,
Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Thirty years after the Beijing Platform for Action, women—especially mothers—continue to take on the vast majority of unpaid care and domestic work – A care gap that comes at the cost of their financial autonomy, career progression, and long-term security—including pensions.

This **‘Motherhood Penalty’** is a key driver of gender inequality and economic hardship, yet it remains largely **unmeasured, unacknowledged, and invisible**.

The reality is stark: **A recent Make Mothers Matter survey found that 50% of mothers in Europe report suffering from a mental health condition.** And in too many countries, becoming a mother still means risking one’s life.

Yet, time and again, discussions on gender equality **ignore** motherhood. By failing to even say the word *mothers*, we fail to recognize the unique **discrimination, human rights violations, and systemic barriers** they face.

We also miss a crucial opportunity—because empowering mothers is **not** about restricting women to one role, but about ensuring that motherhood is factored into policies that drive **substantive gender equality – whether** in the workplace, society, or politics.

We welcome the recognition of maternity-related discrimination in the agreed conclusions. But let’s be clear: **Motherhood remains the unfinished business of Beijing.**

We urge governments to:

- **Acknowledge and address** the specific discrimination and challenges faced by mothers in policymaking.
- **Close the data gap**—measure the Motherhood Penalty and make it visible.

Women should **never** be penalized for being mothers. At *Make Mothers Matter*, we say it loud and clear: **It’s time to put motherhood at the heart of gender equality discussions. This is not an option—it’s an imperative.**

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) - Paris, France
mmmi@makemothersmatter.org - www.makemothersmatter.org
Contact UN Delegation in New York: un-newyork@makemothersmatter.org

Make Mothers Matter believes in the power of mothers to make the world a better place, advocating for their recognition and support as changemakers. Created in 1947, MMM is an international NGO with no political or religious affiliations, transparently voicing the concerns of mothers at the highest level: the European Union, UNESCO and the United Nations (general consultative status).