



Human Rights Council 62nd Session
Interactive Dialogue with the Special
Rapporteur on
Violence against Women
Oral Statement

Make Mothers Matter congratulates the Special Rapporteur on her excellent report and thanks her for bringing attention to a topic that is too rarely discussed at the Human Rights Council: motherhood.

Motherhood is one of the many roles women fulfil in society—an essential and valuable one. Yet it often creates significant barriers to their full economic, political and social participation.

Motherhood also carries substantial costs: in career progression, financial autonomy, long-term economic security, health and wellbeing, and increased vulnerability to violence, discrimination and abuse.

The “Motherhood Penalty” remains a major driver of gender inequality worldwide. Yet it continues to be insufficiently measured, inadequately addressed, and largely invisible in public policy and human rights discussions.

By failing to even name *mothers*, we fail to acknowledge the specific forms of discrimination, human rights violations, and structural barriers they face.

In doing so, we also miss a crucial opportunity. Empowering mothers is **not** about confining women to a single role; it is about ensuring that the realities of motherhood are fully reflected in the laws, policies and institutions that advance **substantive gender equality** – in the workplace, in public life, and in society as a whole.

Women should **never** be penalised for becoming mothers. At *MMM*, we say it loud and clear: **It is time to place motherhood at the heart of gender equality and women’s rights discussions. This is not an option—it’s an imperative.**

Thank you.