

## UPR Submission on Lebanon

### Right of Lebanese women married to a Foreigner to pass their Nationality to their Children

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) would like to draw the attention of the Council on the last 2010 UPR Session recommendation 82.17 & 82.18. on the right of women married to foreigners to pass their nationality to their children (Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Lebanon - A/HRC/16/18).

In the current situation:

- The 1925 Lebanese nationality law, which is based on the principle of patrilineal *jus sanguinis*, still forbids a Lebanese woman married to a foreign man from passing on her Lebanese citizenship to her children.
- Lebanon ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), but it expressed reservations about several articles, among them article 9 (2) stipulating that states should grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

Such discrimination against women married to foreigners violates the basic principle of equality between men and women as stated both in the UN Charter, and the Lebanese Constitution.

Such discrimination is also extremely prejudicial for Lebanese women married to foreigners and their children due to numerous legal and administrative restrictions against foreigners, including residency of children and husband, access to public welfare (schools, hospitals, etc.), employment / access to work, real estate propriety, inheritance, etc. In fact, this discrimination against women in the Lebanese nationality law affects the whole family, starting with children. It violates many Human Rights (notably the right to health, right to education, right to work, etc...) and is the direct cause of socio-economics problems.

As stated in the UNDP 2009 Research report, Predicament of Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese, the right of a woman to pass her nationality to her children is a „*natural right of a blood tie between a mother and her child which is certain, unique and essential. The mother's nationality is not one of an emergency that is given to the newborn in an exceptional case defined by the law, as is the case with the child of an 'unknown father'. It is an authentic nationality that should be given to every child originating from her womb. All Lebanese, men and women, are equal in what they share. Hence, the right of a Lebanese woman to her nationality should not be undermined just because she is married to a foreigner*“.

Make Mothers Matter therefore calls on the government of Lebanon:

- to fulfill its human rights obligations and amend its 1925 Nationality Law to allow Lebanese women married to a foreigner, including those living abroad, to pass their nationality to their children, regardless of the nationality of their husband;
- to remove its reservations on CEDAW, notably on article 9.