

URGENT ACTION

CRITICAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEGALIZE ABORTION

In March 2020, Argentina's President Alberto Fernandez publicly committed to present a bill to Congress to legalise abortion before the year's end. This commitment has still not been fulfilled as we quickly approach the end of Congress' current session on 30 November. After this date the possibilities of getting this vital bill approved will diminish significantly. We are therefore calling on the president to honour his word and meet Argentina's human rights obligations to respect, protect and fulfil women and girls' rights, life, health and autonomy by urgently presenting the bill to legalize abortion before the end of the year.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Alberto Fernandez
President of the Republic of Argentina
Email: documentacionpresidencial@presidencia.gob.ar
Twitter: @alferdez

Dear Alberto Fernandez,

The legalization of abortion in Argentina cannot be postponed. Restricting access to abortion causes a serious and urgent public health problem, leading to avoidable deaths of women and pregnant people, generally from the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

According to public research, half a million women undergo unsafe abortions every year in Argentina, more than 3,000 have paid with their lives for the criminalization of abortion since the reinstatement of democracy and another 39,000 women are hospitalised for complications related to abortions every year.

Over the last 25 years, more than 50 countries have changed their laws to allow for greater access to abortion, recognizing the vital role that access to safe abortion plays in protecting lives and health. Argentina has an historic opportunity to say goodbye to unsafe abortion and comply with their international human rights obligations.

Therefore, we call on to you to honour your commitment and meet Argentina's obligations under international human rights law to respect, protect, and fulfil women and girls' rights to life, health and autonomy, by introducing a bill that fully decriminalizes and guarantees universal access to abortion in Argentina to the Congress before the end of 2020.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In June 2018, the lower chamber of the Argentinian Congress [supported a bill to completely decriminalize abortion during the first 14 weeks of the pregnancy](#). It was a historic victory for the growing movement in Argentina to legalise abortion, commonly referred to as the [Marea Verde \(Green Wave\)](#), and one which came after two months of public demonstrations as well as public and participatory hearings before the deputies (members of parliament).

The bill [was narrowly defeated in the Senate](#), the upper chamber of the Argentinian Congress, despite unprecedented numbers of activists demonstrating in the streets in support of the bill and a huge campaign of international solidarity. Amnesty International mobilised members, pressuring governments officials and other influential individuals across the world to speak out in favour of the bill and even buying [a full page ad on the back page of the New York Times](#) calling on Senators to vote in favour of the bill.

Many [United Nations human rights mechanisms](#) have urged Argentina to protect sexual and reproductive rights including the decriminalization of abortion in order to guarantee the life, health, dignity, privacy, and life without violence of women and other individuals with the ability to become pregnant. More recently, the United Nations Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice issued a [statement](#) congratulating the Argentine legislature for introducing and debating the issue. The letter upholds the significance and urgency of expanding women's reproductive rights and explicitly calls for the approval of this bill.

After the 2019 elections, Argentina has a new Congress, which means that a bill to legalise abortion can be tabled and voted on again according to procedure rules. President Alberto Fernandez has already made public his support of legalising abortion in Argentina and has committed to present a bill to Congress this year. It would be the first time in Latin American history that a President introduces a bill supporting the decriminalization and legalization of abortion. However, this process has been delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic and there is now concern that the bill may not be tabled. If it is not tabled this year, the bill will probably not be introduced because of the unfavourable political context, as next year is an election year for the Congress. Consequently, we aim to pressure the President to fulfil his commitment and ensure that the bill is presented to Congress *in 2020*.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: SPANISH

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 November 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Women and Girls in Argentina (Them, theirs)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: n/a