

URGENT ACTION

ABORTION DECRIMINALIZED IN CHILE

Chile's Constitutional Tribunal has ruled in favour of decriminalizing abortion under three specific circumstances. This is an important step toward ensuring the protection of women and girls' human rights across the country.

A Chilean Constitutional Tribunal ruling on 21 August confirmed that the country's constitution now allows for the decriminalization of and access to abortion under three circumstances: when the pregnancy poses a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or girl, when the foetus would be unable to survive outside the womb, or when the pregnancy is the result of rape.

This good news follows months of discussion amongst Chilean legislators regarding the draft "Law Regulating the Decriminalization of the Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy in Three Causes", which was approved by the Senate in July and the Chamber of Deputies in August. During the discussion of the bill many worrying amendments were introduced into it, which would have restricted possible access to legal abortion and sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls, putting their lives and well-being at risk. However, following further debate and campaigning by national and international human rights organizations and civil society groups, including Amnesty International, the decriminalization of abortion in all three specific circumstances has been upheld.

Chile was one of the few countries in the world with a total ban on abortion. Now, only seven countries criminalize abortion without exceptions, six of which are in the Americas: Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Suriname.

No further action is required of the UA network at this time. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 161/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr22/6730/2017/en/

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