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### **Dutch abortion ship to dock Thursday in Morocco**

A Dutch ship promoting legal abortions set to dock in Morocco is operating outside the law and could possibly be stopped before arriving at a northern Mediterranean port, Moroccan authorities said Wednesday.

By AZIZ EL YAAKOUBI and PAUL SCHEMM

The Associated Press

RABAT, Morocco — Moroccan authorities said Wednesday that a Dutch ship promoting legal abortions set to dock in Morocco is operating outside the law and could possibly be stopped before arriving at a northern Mediterranean port.

The Dutch ship, which promotes safe and legal abortions worldwide, was invited by a Moroccan women's group to raise awareness in the struggle to legalize abortions, which are forbidden in the conservative Muslim country. The ship is scheduled to arrive at the port of Smir on Thursday.

It would be the "Women on Waves" boat's first landfall in a Muslim country.

According to a statement by the organization, the ship can provide women with safe and legal abortions under Dutch law in international waters until the sixth-and-a-half week of pregnancy.

The organization said it had set up a hotline for women to give information about abortion, including locally available pharmaceuticals that can be safely used to perform abortions at home.

"There are between 600 and 800 abortions a day in Morocco; that's an enormous amount," said Ibtissame Lachgar, a member of MALI (Alternative Movement for Individual Liberties), the group that invited the boat.