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Drone used to fly abortion pills across Irish border

NI 21 JUN 2016

Pro-choice campaigners have used a drone to fly abortion pills into Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland.








Two women claimed to have taken the pills when the drone landed. ©Marc Godefroy/Women on Waves

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Story by UTV Ireland Staff, Dublin



On Tuesday morning, the drone carrying the drugs flew from

Omeath in Co Louth to a site across the border near Narrow Water Castle in Co Down, a short distance away.

The stunt was a collaboration between Alliance for Choice, Rosa, Labour Alternative and Women on Waves to “mark the different reality for Irish women to access safe abortion services compared to women in other European countries”.

Two women claimed to have taken the pills when the drone landed.

One of the women, Courtney Robinson, commented that whether or not she was pregnant “is protected by my right to privacy”.

Speaking about the demonstration, Rita Harrold from Rosa said: “Abortion is criminalised in both Northern Ireland and the Republic. We sent the pills across the border today as an act of solidarity with women in NI who are currently facing prosecutions.”

Anti-abortion organisation Precious Life had written to PSNI Chief Constable George Hamilton to express its concern about the stunt.

The organisers insisted no laws had been broken and police said they were monitoring the situation.

A PSNI Superintendent said: “As a police service we respect the rights of people to protest as long as it is within the parameters of the law.

“Anyone who chooses to participate in the protest should do so peacefully. We will continue to monitor the situation and engage with all interested parties moving forward.”

In Northern Ireland, the maximum penalty for the crime of administering a drug to induce miscarriage under the relevant law, namely the Offences against the Person Act 1861, is life imprisonment.

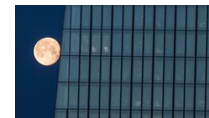
After the abortion drone flight, the campaigners held a protest in front of the Court of Appeal in Belfast where an appeal regarding the decision by the High Court that Northern Ireland’s abortion law breaches the European Convention on Human Rights was being heard.

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