

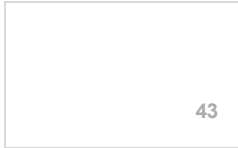
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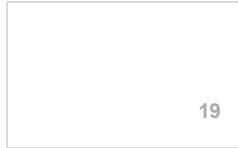
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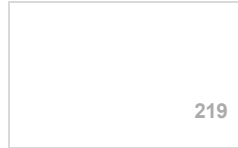
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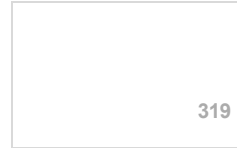
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Warships Meet Abortion Doctors Outside of Morocco

by [Jessica Pieklo](#) | October 8, 2012 | 1:00 pm

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Moroccan warships met Dutch abortion rights activists [Women on Waves](#) outside the port of Smir, preventing the group from docking their ship to spread awareness about safe medical abortions in the Muslim country.

The group, founded in 1999, operates a ship that provides family planning services, information and trainings outside territorial waters in countries where abortion is illegal. The Moroccan trip was part of a larger [campaign to raise awareness](#) about the safety of medical abortions and to provide medical abortion services on the ship on international waters for women who needed such services.

In Morocco, like a lot of other Muslim states, abortion is illegal and punishable by steep prison sentences. Outlawing abortion though hasn't made the need disappear. Women on Waves estimates that between 600-800 illegal abortions take place in Morocco daily. Most are carried out in underground clinics or using homeopathic herbal medicines and all are carried out in [conditions much riskier](#) than if the procedure were legal.

Women on Waves have made similar visits to traditionally Roman Catholic countries like Spain, Portugal and Ireland in the past and continue to visit countries [where access to abortion services are cut off](#), ensuring women across the globe have access to safe family planning services.

It's a critical need and one that is becoming more acute as conservatives take their fight against women's autonomy and comprehensive family planning global. Like in the United States, religious organizations increasingly provide and run more and more social services abroad and restrict abortion and family planning assistance from those services provided. The results are devastating to women across the globe.

The fight for abortion access in countries like Morocco serves as a good reminder of what's on the line in the fight for abortion rights stateside. Abortion was illegal at one time in this country, and conservatives are doing all they can to make that fact a reality again. In [places like Mississippi](#), where the state's only clinic is on the verge of being regulated out of existence, it almost is a reality. How long till Women on Waves docks outside of Biloxi?



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author: Sign Against Stroke, in support from Bayer HealthCare

signatures: 86,872

sign petition

17 comments



Sophie C.

sad

5:26pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012



Lynn D.

Sad that women don't have the right to decide for themselves what they want to do with their bodies!

5:25pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012



Winn A.

Nothing new. It's still happening throughout the world.

5:23pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012



Jennifer C.

Noted. No abortion.

5:22pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012



Nyack C.

Noted- thank you

5:22pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012



cecily w.

Thomas P. is correct. Access to safe legal abortion is in jeopardy--or never existed--wherever there is inadequate separation between church and state. Morocco has had a national family planning program since 1968. According to the Population Reference Bureau, more than 40% of Morocco's married women age 15-49 are on the pill. Morocco's Total Fertility Rate, at 2.3, although high by western standards, is getting closer to falling below 2.0. (The U.S. TFR just declined to 1.9 in 2011.) These women are diligent and intelligent. They should have access to safe legal abortion if they choose it when contraception fails.

4:59pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012

We are not safe yet. Access to safe legal abortion has declined for women in some states. Please keep that in mind when you vote.

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For all of you who claim to be doing something; I agree with Mary Beth M. You are doing nothing more...



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Sue H.

4:44pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012

Seems like Women on Waves need to change their tactics... maybe use the internet to let folks know that they are coming or send members on the ground before hand. Stay in international waters and ferry those in need out to them??? Facing Warships seems like putting their mission at risk. ??



Duane B.

4:38pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012

Thank you for sharing.



Nicole B.

4:35pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012

Every woman should be aware of the pros and cons of abortion, adoption, and raising a child (yes there are cons, usually financially), and once fully informed make the choice herself for what she wants to do. Sadly, there are people out there, not just Muslims, but other religions (we all know which ones, or at least which ones have the most evil voices), that don't want a woman to be fully informed as to what will happen, what chances there are and so on and so forth. Even if a woman decides to keep the child, she needs to be fully informed as to what happens during and after a pregnancy and there are people that don't want that out, the very same people who don't want abortion to be an option.



Thomas P.

3:25pm PDT on Oct 8, 2012

This happens in Christian countries as well. For me it gets really old hearing Muslims get bashed for all the maladies of the world. The problem is closed mindedness, and unfortunately there are plenty women politicians (although the majority are men) both in America and abroad who are in favor of restricting a woman's right to choose.

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