

Chilean President Proposes Plan to Legalize Selective Abortion



Santiago de Chile, February 2 (RHC-NNN) -- Chilean President Michelle Bachelet plans to end the country's complete ban on abortions and legalise it when a mother's life is at risk, a fetus will not survive pregnancy, or when a woman is raped.

Chile, a predominately Roman Catholic country, initiated its complete ban on abortion in 1990 under dictator Augusto Pinochet.

The ban, which imposes a punishment of up to five years in prison, has been challenged a few times since its inception with little success. Estimates as to how many illegal abortions are performed each year are disparate, ranging from 15,000 to 160,000.

Bachelet stated in her address, "I know this is a sensitive issue. ... There isn't always agreement on issues that relate to each person's conscience."

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