

## **Amnesty: El Salvador abortion law breeding 'atmosphere of fear'**

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### **Body**

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(JURIST) - El Salvador's complete ban on abortion [Penal Code, Chapter 2, in Spanish] negatively affects not only women and girls, but also their families, according to an Amnesty International (AI) [advocacy website] report [press release] released Monday. The report indicates that woman who suffer miscarriages or complications in the course of their pregnancy can be charged with counts of abortion or even aggravated homicide, which **breeds** an **atmosphere** of suspicion and **fear** surrounding the pregnancy process. According to AI, a lack of financial abilities and transportation in the rural areas of El Salvador are contributing factors to the general feeling of unrest concerning pregnancy and abortion.

El Salvador's complete ban on abortion went into place in 1998, when the nation's conservative government rescinded exceptions to the already-strict abortion laws that only allowed the procedure in the case of rape or if birth posed a serious health risk. This restrictive **atmosphere** was enhanced in 1999, when Article 1 of the Constitution of El Salvador [text, in Spanish] was amended to recognize a right to life from the moment of conception. International human rights groups have long worked to overturn the law to no avail. In May 2013 the Supreme Court of El Salvador denied [JURIST report] requests of doctors to perform a therapeutic abortion on a 22-year-old woman, pregnant with a baby developing without a brain, where the woman's life was threatened by kidney failure and lupus symptoms aggravated by her pregnancy. After the ruling, El Salvador's health ministry allowed [Guardian report] the woman's doctors to perform a C-section in order to save her life because at 26 weeks, her pregnancy had advanced to a stage not regulated by the country's strict abortion laws. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court refused [CBS news] to reconsider that country's complete ban on abortions, despite international encouragement [JURIST report] to do so. 2015 Legal Monitor Worldwide.

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