

# The legalization of abortion in Argentina and the next steps in Brazil

On December 29th, Argentina approved the right of women to decide on the termination of pregnancy until the 14th week of pregnancy. The project, which was voted for the ninth time, marked the victory of a long battle between feminists, senate and church.

A great precursor of the conquest was the movement known as Ni Una A Menos, which emerged in 2015 claiming the urgency of women's rights on the political agenda, fighting especially against misogyny, femicide and the rape culture, and managed to bring together individuals from different ideological backgrounds and take thousands to the streets.

Prior to this movement, the Green March was already taking place, which defended the autonomy of women's bodies and their territories, claiming the legalization of abortion through mobilizations with the presence of green scarves, which became a symbol of the struggle for abortion legalization in Argentina, after the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion in 2005.

From these feminist uprisings, it was possible to request the legalization of abortion to the legislature for the first time in 2018. Even though the project was not approved, the Green March was essential for the issue to come out of the drawer and reach part of the population that did not have access to the debate before. Conservatives were forced to discuss the issue due to pressure from girls and women who were no longer willing to accept that they decide for them what to do with their bodies. The pressure on the streets was essential for the fight to be won in the legislature.

The fight for legal and safe abortion does not end with the passing of a law. Understanding that religious fundamentalists will not cease to be a threat, the Argentines joined with the Uruguayans against the obstacles and difficulties in accessing the law. Latin America has quite restrictive laws on abortion and the country of Pope Francis shows its neighbors that religious morality should not be applied to the entire population, because it kills, a fact observed in the face of total disregard with Argentinean indigenous women, according to the Movement of Indigenous Women for Good Living. They are abandoned to poverty, having their education and access to information denied and health services precarious, being kept under the strong influence of the church, which represses and prevents the advance of the debate about their reproductive rights.

In Brazil, the disrespect to the body of others follows by not opening the chance for discussion about the legalization of abortion. On the one hand, Jair Bolsonaro, who does not care about human lives, strongly refuses to elaborate policies that preserve women's lives, since many have recourse to illegal abortion, which is not safe and, in most cases, they die. Of another, Damares Alves who, like the non-president, makes discussions about the issue in Brazil impossible, and whenever she can, defends herself with the fake news that are her obsession: sexuality and childhood.

Last year we had a case in Espírito Santo of a 10 year old child pregnant after being raped by her uncle who opened a common reality in the country: the rape of children committed by relatives or people close to the family. Any sexual relationship with children under 14 is rape of the vulnerable, according to ECA. This shows us the absurdity of the difficulty of access to legal, safe and free abortion, even in cases where they are guaranteed by law. In this same case, Minister Damares Alves even offered benefits to the local guardianship council to prevent the abortion of this child.

The abortion debate cannot fail to pass through the racial agenda. If in Argentina we have to pay attention to the indigenous women, here in Brazil we also have to talk about who are the women who die the most due to illegal abortion: black women. In a country where about 54% of the population is black and of this total, 28% are black women, these women are marginalized, abused and denied a fundamental right: the right to generate or not a life.

That is why it is urgently necessary to discuss public policies that make abortion legalization possible so that women stop dying. It has never been more necessary to shout for NOT HIM, understanding that Bolsonaro's impeachment is a very urgent step to ensure the lives of women and the entire population, but not the last for the debate on legal abortion in Brazil. This debate, as we have seen with the Argentines, is made over a long road and full of disputes, especially on the streets.

The legalization of abortion in Argentina was an important advance and brings winds of hope in the search for reproductive rights in Latin America. We followed in Brazil the fight for sexual education to decide, contraceptives to not abort and safe abortion to not die. May the green march advance across our continent!