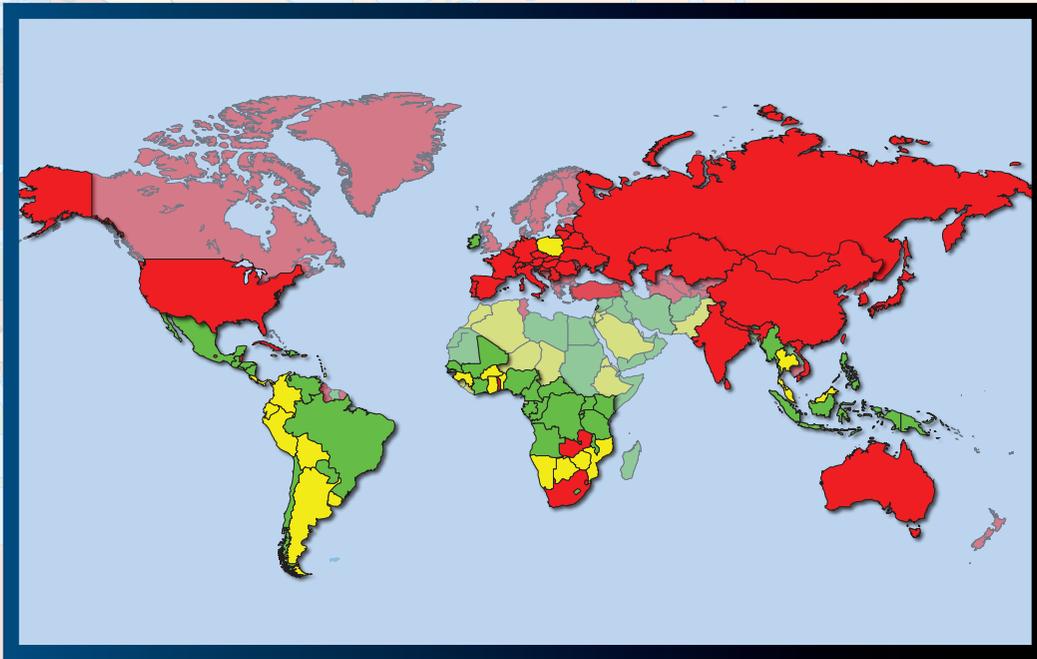


# Human Life International



## *State of Abortion Laws Around the World*



2010

# State of Abortion Laws Around the World

Human Life International's Pro-Life Research Series (PLRS) is meant to arm the active pro-lifer with accurate and relevant information on life issues around the world. The case for life is easy to establish, at least to those of good will, when the facts are known.

In this edition, we present the current state of abortion laws worldwide. There are two main keys that tell the story: First, there is the color-coding of countries, which indicate the existence—or non-existence—of pro-life laws. Second, the countries where Human Life International's pro-life missionaries are currently active are named and presented in darker colors.

As the maps clearly show, legalized abortion has overwhelmed the Northern Hemisphere. In many of these radically secularized countries, small compromises on abortion have led, as they always do, to abortion on demand. It is also worth noting that these laws are almost never chosen democratically—but are rather imposed by courts, legislatures, or dictators who have divorced themselves from responsibility to their constituents.

The difference between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres could not be clearer. In still-religious and mostly developing nations, the culture of death has made slower inroads. But the assault is well underway: Western elites are now pouring billions of dollars into pro-abortion propaganda and abortion clinics that operate often illegally and with little supervision.<sup>1</sup> Birth rates are falling in the developing world<sup>2</sup>, following the troubling demographic trends of the developed world, as population controllers endeavor to convince the families of Africa, Latin America and other regions that they should “get with the times” and stop having children.

It is our hope that by providing this information, all those of good will may wake up to the destruction being wrought by the Western elites' culture of death and join in the fight for life around the world. We are called to solidarity, especially with the weakest and poorest of our brothers and sisters, and they desperately need our help.

To share this information, visit [www.hli.org/research](http://www.hli.org/research), and click on the PLRS link. From here you can download the document as a PDF or contact HLI to order more copies for your parish, school, or other organization.

Finally, please pray for the children and families who are threatened by abortion, and for the success of the pro-life missionary efforts of Human Life International and others who are fighting for life around the world.

## Pro-life Laws KEY

	<b>Laws Protecting Life</b>
	<b>Laws Allowing Exceptions for Abortion</b>
	<b>Abortion On Demand</b>

## Country Names KEY

**Country names in regular type face denote HLI Affiliates.**

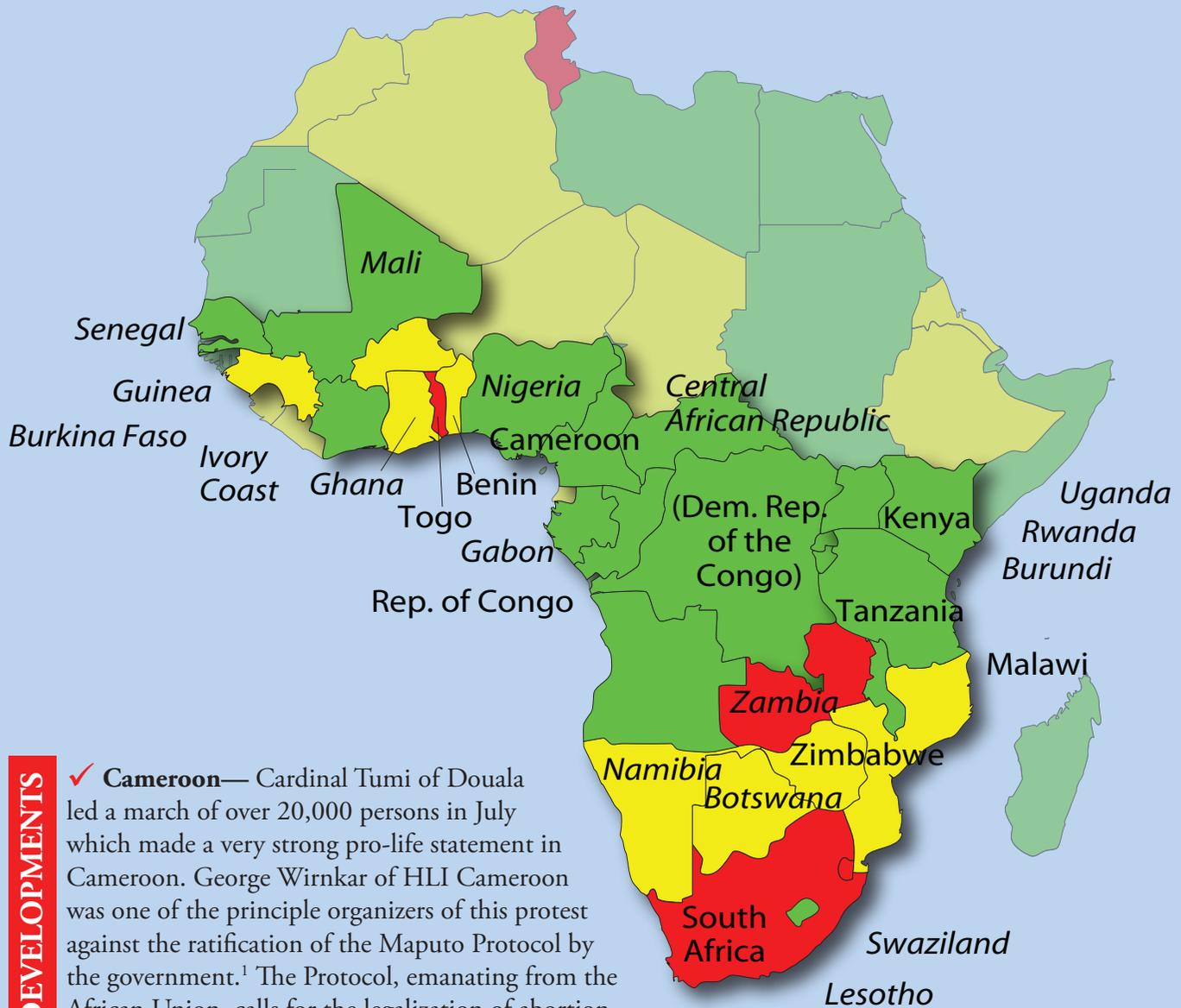
**Country names in parentheses denote HLI Associates.**

**Country names in italics denote countries where HLI works without permanent affiliate or associate.**

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us\\_and\\_americas/article6350303.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article6350303.ece)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009\\_docs/DonFederRoseDinnerspeech.pdf](http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009_docs/DonFederRoseDinnerspeech.pdf)

# ABORTION LAWS IN AFRICA



## COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

✓ **Cameroon**— Cardinal Tumi of Douala led a march of over 20,000 persons in July which made a very strong pro-life statement in Cameroon. George Wirnkar of HLI Cameroon was one of the principle organizers of this protest against the ratification of the Maputo Protocol by the government.<sup>1</sup> The Protocol, emanating from the African Union, calls for the legalization of abortion.

✓ **Nigeria**—Health ministers from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) called for the passage of “safe abortion” laws at the conclusion of their meeting in October 2009 in Nigeria. Almost all the countries in West Africa do not permit abortion, and this statement by government ministers provoked widespread outrage.<sup>2</sup>

1 <http://spuc-director.blogspot.com/2009/07/good-news-from-cameroon-20000-march-for.html>  
2 <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/90855/6795648.html>

# ABORTION LAWS IN EUROPE AND ASIA

## COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

✓ **Luxembourg**—Parliament passed a law legalizing assisted suicide in March, making Luxembourg the third European country to do so. Grand Duke Henri de Luxembourg courageously refused to sign the bill, choosing to risk his throne rather than violate his conscience. The Parliament subsequently modified the Constitution to strip him of the monarch's traditional prerogative to stop a law by refusing to sign it.<sup>1</sup>

✓ **Slovakia**— In September a law adopted by the National Council of the Slovak Republic went into effect requiring that a woman seeking an abortion be provided information about the risks of abortion, be provided information on pro-life alternatives, and be required to wait for 48 hours before the procedure can occur. This law was adopted in part due to the work of Marek Michalcik of the Forum Zivota, HLI's affiliate in heavily Catholic Slovakia.

✓ **Spain**— Despite a massive pro-life rally which brought out over a million people in Madrid in October, the Spanish Parliament legalized abortion on demand for any reason up to 14 weeks of pregnancy. They also rescinded requirements for parental consent for abortions sought by minor girls.<sup>2</sup>

✓ **Switzerland**—Pro-Life groups, including HLI Switzerland, filed a lawsuit to prevent the sanctioning of assisted suicide. The Swiss Government has been embarrassed by so-called “Death Tourism” in which persons come to Switzerland to be euthanized by the *Dignitas* clinic or other groups. A new law restricting euthanasia is expected in March 2010.<sup>3</sup>

✓ **East Timor**—In defiance of great pressure from Western elites, the parliament of East Timor passed a new penal code that maintains the criminalization of abortion in June. East Timor is one of the most Catholic countries in the world with 93% of the population in the Church.<sup>4</sup>

✓ **Philippines**—The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines issued its first “Catechism on Family and Life” in December to guide the faithful in voting during the 2010 elections. For several years anti-life “Reproductive Health” bills have been introduced in the Filipino legislature. All have been defeated so far.<sup>5</sup>



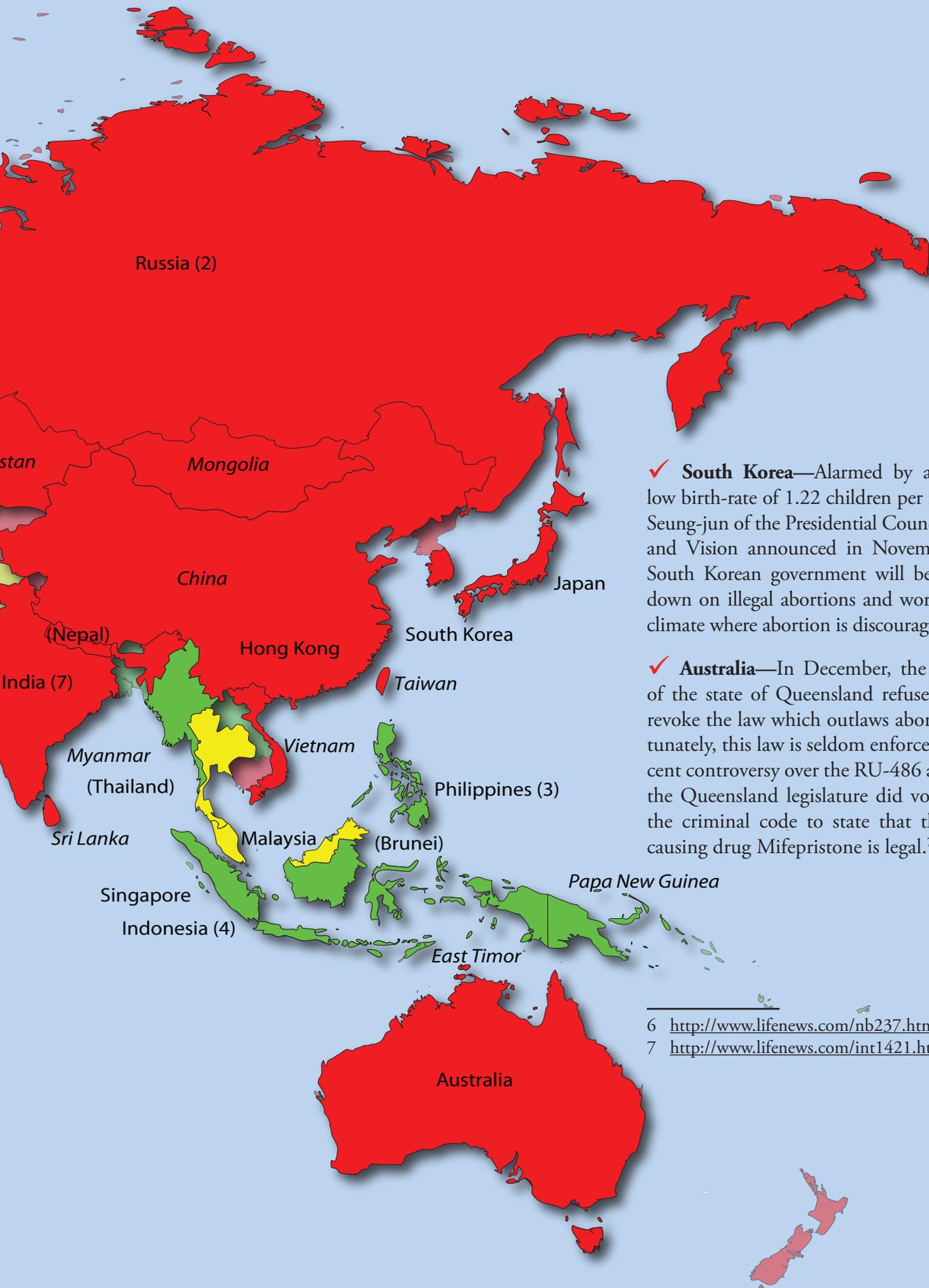
1 <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/luxembourg-legalizes-euthanasia-after-putting-limits-on-grand-dukes-power/>

2 <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gZkwyCkZ-yQOutlW67a02dnLqQAD9CL4ML00>

3 <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/news/international/2009/Oct/Swiss-Government-May-Restrict-or-Even-Ban-Assisted-Suicide.html>

4 <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009/jun/09061003.html>

5 <http://monkshobbit.wordpress.com/2010/01/04/cbcps-catechism-on-family-and-life-for-the-2010-elections/>



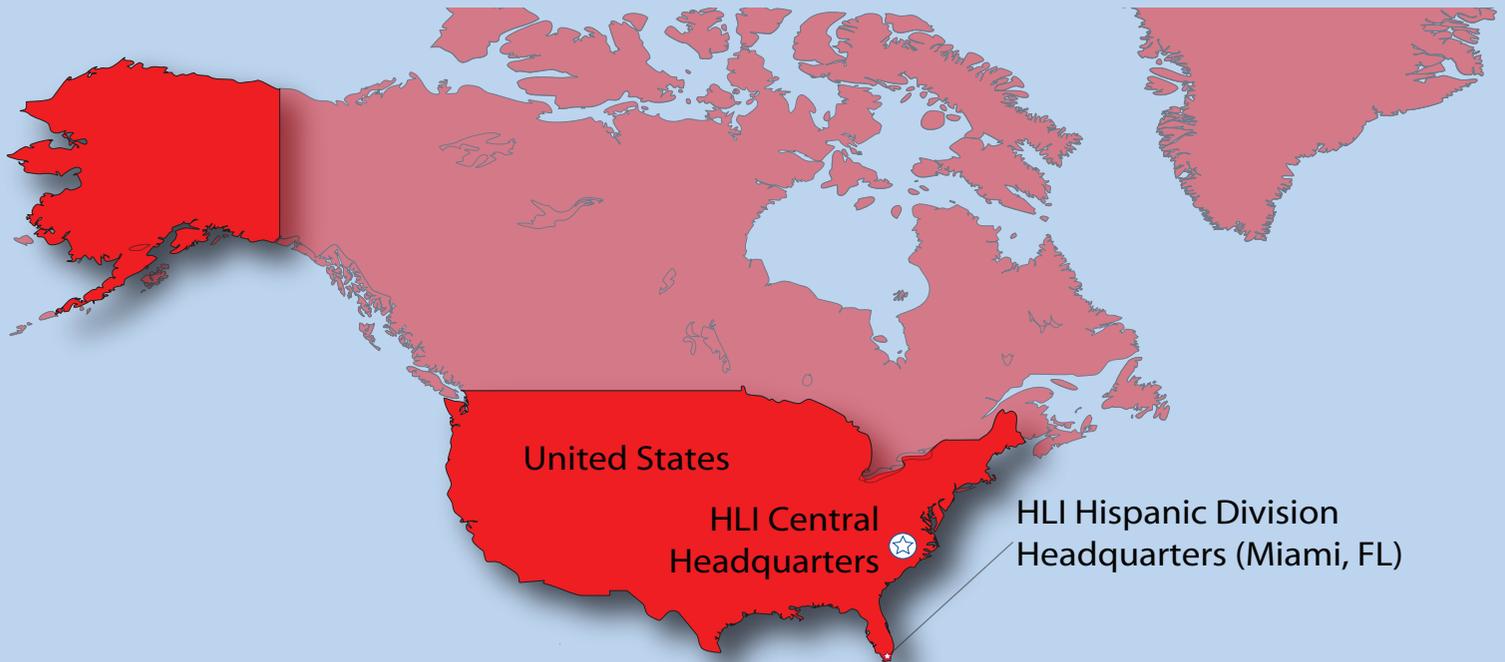
✓ **South Korea**—Alarmed by an incredibly low birth-rate of 1.22 children per family, Kwak Seung-jun of the Presidential Council for Future and Vision announced in November that the South Korean government will begin a crack-down on illegal abortions and work to create a climate where abortion is discouraged.<sup>6</sup>

✓ **Australia**—In December, the government of the state of Queensland refused to vote to revoke the law which outlaws abortion. Unfortunately, this law is seldom enforced. After a recent controversy over the RU-486 abortion pill, the Queensland legislature did vote to amend the criminal code to state that the abortion-causing drug Mifepristone is legal.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/nb237.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/int1421.html>

# ABORTION LAWS IN NORTH AMERICA



## COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

✓ **United States**—(Obviously, too many assaults on life occurred in the United States in 2009, so we just mention some of the most important events here) January was a very bad month for the cause of Life in the United States, and indirectly, the rest of the world. The U.S. Senate confirms Obama appointee Hillary Rodham Clinton as Secretary of State, and she promptly promised to promote abortion “rights” globally. The next day, President Obama issued a statement on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* (1973) praising the court’s move. The very next day, an executive order from Obama revokes the Mexico City Policy that formerly withheld U.S. taxpayer dollars from organizations that promote abortion overseas.

In March President Obama rescinds former President Bush’s executive order limiting federal funding for stem cell research. From then on, tax dollars go to harvesting stem cells from new human embryos.<sup>1</sup>

In April, Kathleen Sebelius is confirmed as the Obama administration’s Secretary of Health and Human Services despite, as Governor of Kansas, vetoing late-term abortion bans and taking campaign donations from the late abortionist George Tiller.<sup>2</sup>

In December, President Obama signed an omnibus spending bill containing almost \$700 million for or-

ganizations that promote and perform abortion abroad, including \$55 million for the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), which is on record as assisting China’s coercive one-child policy. The same bill created funding for abortions for poor women in the District of Columbia.

✓ **Canada**—Abortion is considered by many to be even more sacrosanct and unchallengeable in Canada than in the United States. Yet in a rare pro-life statement at the national level, MP Maurice Vellacott challenged the status quo in November, saying “As a compassionate, caring, progressive society, we should provide the kind of support and options for the expectant mother, so that she doesn’t feel her only choice is to choose death for her offspring.”

Since, from the anti-life perspective, the abortion battle has been won, this progressive nation is now looking for ways to legalize euthanasia. In May, Francine Lalonde, a Member of Parliament, introduced a bill to legalize euthanasia in Canada. This latest such bill would add an exception to the criminal code, ensuring that doctors will not face criminal prosecution if they help a person die who is at least 18 years old and who, after being given or refusing treatment, continues to “experience severe physical or mental pain without any prospect of relief,” or suffers from terminal illness. This was the fourth such bill introduced in the last five years, the others having failed to pass. (Source: LifeSiteNews)

1 <http://www.lifenews.com/obamaabortionrecord.html> and <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009/may/09050808.html>

2 Bloomberg News, April 28, 2009

# ABORTION LAWS IN LATIN AMERICA

## COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

✓ **Brazil**—Archbishop José Cardoso Sobrinho courageously fought to save a young girl from having an abortion and announced that those who facilitated the aborting of her preborn twins were excommunicated. He was attacked in the press, even by a fellow archbishop in Rome. HLI gave Archbishop Cardoso the Cardinal von Galen Award in April in recognition of his pro-life stand.<sup>1</sup>

✓ **The Dominican Republic**—Included in this Caribbean nation's new constitution is an article which declares "the right to life is inviolable from conception until death." This measure passed in September with an overwhelming majority of 128 to 34 among members of the constitutional assembly. The Dominican Republic now has some of the strongest pro-life legal protections in the world.<sup>2</sup>

✓ **Honduras**—Despite recent serious political disruptions, Honduras passed a law banning all forms of the "morning-after pill" or "emergency contraception" as it is sometimes called. They relied on scientific evidence that these pills can have an abortifacient effect by preventing the implantation in the uterus of a newly conceived child. The law from April was vetoed by then-President Zelaya, but it was subsequently promulgated as a law in November by Interim President Micheletti.<sup>3</sup>

✓ **Mexico**—To date, 17 state governments have amended their state constitutions to protect life from conception to natural death. These pro-life laws came in response to the legalization of abortion in the state government of Mexico City. Many Mexican bishops have strongly spoken out for the Right to Life.<sup>4</sup>

✓ **Peru**—The Constitutional Court ruled in October that the "morning-after pill" may not be distributed at public health care facilities because the abortifacient effect of these pills would violate their pro-life laws. Those in favor of the morning-after pill were incapable of proving that they did not kill conceived children by preventing their implantation in the wombs of their mothers.<sup>5</sup>

✓ **Uruguay**—In Uruguay's November election a former Marxist guerilla, José Mujica, won the presidency. He has pledged to legalize abortion, and his ruling coalition may have the votes to do so in 2010. A previous attempt to legalize abortion in Uruguay was prevented by the veto of former president, Tabaré Vazquez.<sup>6</sup>



1 <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009/apr/09041709.html>

2 <http://www.dominicantoday.com/dr/local/2009/9/18/33282/Pro-life-groups-get-their-way-in-Dominican-Constitution>

3 [http://www.womenslinkworldwide.org/pdf\\_press/press\\_release\\_20091126\\_en.pdf](http://www.womenslinkworldwide.org/pdf_press/press_release_20091126_en.pdf)

4 <http://www.hli.org/index.php/mission-field/latin-america-and-the-caribbean/678?task=view>

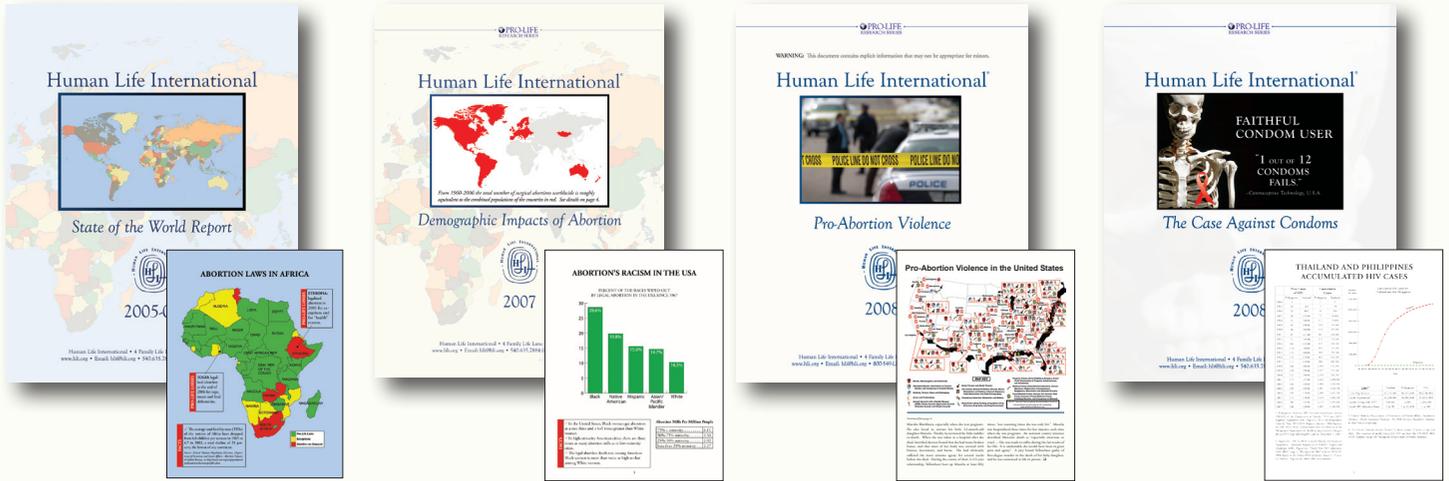
5 [http://www.genethique.org/En/press/press/2009/october/26\\_30.html](http://www.genethique.org/En/press/press/2009/october/26_30.html)

6 <http://www.lifenews.com/nb237.html>

# PRO-LIFE RESEARCH SERIES

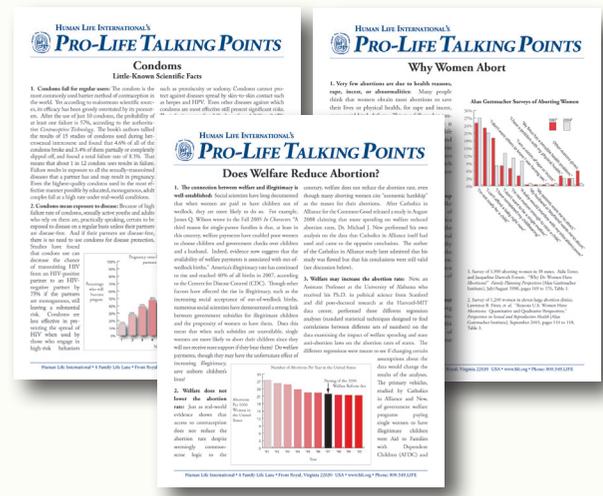
The mission of Human Life International is to create effective opposition to the culture of death around the world. HLI's *Pro-life Research Series* provides up-to-date information on the status of life issues around the globe in order to equip you with the resources needed to understand and fight this battle for life.

Included in this series is "State of Abortion Laws Around the World," "The Demographic Impacts of Abortion," "Pro-Abortion Violence," and "The Case Against Condoms."



## HUMAN LIFE INTERNATIONAL'S PRO-LIFE TALKING POINTS

HLI's *Pro-Life Talking Points* series provides pro-life activists with clear and concise information with which to argue against common misinformation they encounter while debating life issues. Feel free to download ([www.hli.org](http://www.hli.org)), copy, and distribute these one-page (two-sided) documents as needed.



# www.HLI.org

HLI Research (available at [www.hli.org](http://www.hli.org)) is an extensive online resource center for life issues. This easy-to-use online version of HLI's own library is made available to you so that you can tap into our vast collection of pro-life data, analyses, and tools, which are now specially formatted for online use.

Visit [www.hli.org](http://www.hli.org) for a free PDF downloads of HLI's Pro-Life Research Series or Talking Points. You may also request free hard copies by calling HLI at 800-549-LIFE.