

March 2012

Dear President of the Congress of the Republic of Honduras:

We write on behalf of an international network of physicians committed to improving reproductive health status around the world to express our concern over the recent Honduras Supreme Court decision to ban emergency contraception. The Court's ruling not only denies access to this medically safe and effective form of contraception but also makes it a crime to possess it. The government and Supreme Court have eliminated a valuable contraceptive option for Honduran women. Emergency contraception allows women to prevent unintended pregnancies, particularly when other methods of birth control have failed, after a sexual assault, or due to other unforeseen circumstances.

Honduras currently has the highest adolescent birthrate in Central America; more than half of women between the ages of 20-24 give birth by age 20 and it is estimated that one-third to one-half of sexually active young women in Honduras lack access to modern contraceptives. Early motherhood is associated with increased risks of poverty and infant mortality. Given the limited access to contraceptives, the ban on emergency contraception places Honduran women at great risk of unintended pregnancies. The ban also interferes with medical practice, thus undermining the standards of health care afforded to all Hondurans.

Global Doctors for Choice calls on the Supreme Court of Honduras to reverse the ban on emergency contraception, and thereby conform to evidence-based medical standards of care by providing women with an additional effective means of safeguarding their health.

Sincerely,

Global Doctors for Choice