**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE STANCE ON ABORTION:**

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL:**

Amnesty International is a London-based non-governmental organization focused on human rights. The organization claims to have over 7 million members and supporters around the world. The stated objective of the organization is "to conduct research and generate action to prevent and end abuses of human rights, and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated."

Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961, following the publication of the article "The Forgotten Prisoners" in The Observer on 28 May 1961 by the lawyer Peter Benenson. Amnesty draws attention to human rights abuses and campaigns for compliance with international laws and standards. It works to mobilize public opinion to put pressure on governments that let abuse take place. Amnesty considers capital punishment to be "the ultimate, irreversible denial of human rights". The organization was awarded the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize for its "campaign against torture", not in citation given and the United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights in 1978.

In the field of international human rights organizations, Amnesty has the third longest history, after the International Federation for Human Rights and broadest name recognition, and is believed by many to set standards for the movement as a whole.

**FUNDING OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL:**

Amnesty International is financed largely by fees and donations from its worldwide membership. It says that it does not accept donations from governments or governmental organizations. According to the AI website, "these personal and unaffiliated donations allow AI to maintain full independence from any and all governments, political ideologies, economic interests or religions. We neither seek nor accept any funds for human rights research from governments or political parties and we accept support only from businesses that have been carefully vetted. By way of ethical fundraising leading to donations from individuals, we are able to stand firm and unwavering in our defense of universal and indivisible human rights."

However, AI did receive grants from the UK Department for International Development, the European Commission, the United States State Department and other governments.

AI(USA) was also funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. However, these funds are only used "in support of its human rights education work"

**KEY DEFINITIONS:**

**Abortion:**

Abortion is the ending of pregnancy by removing a fetus or embryo before it can survive outside the uterus. An abortion that occurs spontaneously is also known as a miscarriage. An abortion may be caused purposely and is then called an induced abortion, or less frequently, "induced miscarriage". The word abortion is often used to mean only induced abortions. A similar procedure after the fetus could potentially survive outside the womb is known as a "late termination of pregnancy"

**TYPES OF ABORTION:**

**Induced**

Approximately 205 million pregnancies occur each year worldwide. Over a third are unintended and about a fifth end in induced abortion. Most abortions result from unintended pregnancies In the United Kingdom, 1 to 2% of abortions are done due to genetic problems in the fetus. A pregnancy can be intentionally aborted in several ways. The manner selected often depends upon the gestational age of the embryo or fetus, which increases in size as the pregnancy progresses. Specific procedures may also be selected due to legality, regional availability, and doctor or a woman's personal preference.

Reasons for procuring induced abortions are typically characterized as either therapeutic or elective. An abortion is medically referred to as a therapeutic abortion when it is performed to save the life of the pregnant woman; prevent harm to the woman's physical or mental health; terminate a pregnancy where indications are that the child will have a significantly increased chance of premature morbidity or mortality or be otherwise disabled; or to selectively reduce the number of fetuses to lessen health risks associated with multiple pregnancy. An abortion is referred to as an elective or voluntary abortion when it is performed at the request of the woman for non-medical reasons. Confusion sometimes arises over the term "elective" because "elective surgery" generally refers to all scheduled surgery, whether medically necessary or not.

**Spontaneous**

Spontaneous abortion, also known as miscarriage, is the unintentional expulsion of an embryo or fetus before the 24th week of gestation. A pregnancy that ends before 37 weeks of gestation resulting in a live-born infant is known as a "premature birth" or a "preterm birth". When a fetus dies in utero after viability, or during delivery, it is usually termed "stillborn". Premature births and stillbirths are generally not considered to be miscarriages although usage of these terms can sometimes overlap.

Only 30% to 50% of conceptions progress past the first trimester. The vast majority of those that do not progress are lost before the woman is aware of the conception, and many pregnancies are lost before medical practitioners can detect an embryo. Between 15% and 30% of known pregnancies end in clinically apparent miscarriage, depending upon the age and health of the pregnant woman. 80% of these spontaneous abortions happen in the first trimester.

The most common cause of spontaneous abortion during the first trimester is chromosomal abnormalities of the embryo or fetus, accounting for at least 50% of sampled early pregnancy losses. Other causes include vascular disease (such as lupus), diabetes, other hormonal problems, infection, and abnormalities of the uterus. Advancing maternal age and a woman's history of previous spontaneous abortions are the two leading factors associated with a greater risk of spontaneous abortion. A spontaneous abortion can also be caused by accidental trauma; intentional trauma or stress to cause miscarriage is considered induced abortion or feticide.

**HISTORY OF ABORTION:**

**Aristotle**, in his treatise on government Politics (350 BCE), condemns infanticide as a means of population control. He preferred abortion in such cases, with the restriction "it must be practised on it before it has developed sensation and life; for the line between lawful and unlawful abortion will be marked by the fact of having sensation and being alive".

In **Christianity**, Pope Sixtus V (1585–90) was the first Pope to declare that abortion is homicide regardless of the stage of pregnancy; the Catholic Church had previously been divided on whether it believed that abortion was murder, and did not begin vigorously opposing abortion until the 19th century. A 1995 survey reported that Catholic women are as likely as the general population to terminate a pregnancy,

 Protestants are less likely to do so, and Evangelical Christians are the least likely to do so.

 **Islamic tradition** has traditionally permitted abortion until a point in time when Muslims believe the soul enters the fetus, considered by various theologians to be at conception, 40 days after conception, 120 days after conception, or quickening. However, abortion is largely heavily restricted or forbidden in areas of high Islamic faith such as the Middle East and North Africa.

In Europe and North America, abortion techniques advanced starting in the 17th century. However, conservatism by most physicians with regards to sexual matters prevented the wide expansion of safe abortion techniques. Other medical practitioners in addition to some physicians advertised their services, and they were not widely regulated until the 19th century, when the practice (sometimes called restellism) was banned in both the United States and the United Kingdom. Church groups as well as physicians were highly influential in anti-abortion movements. In the US, abortion was more dangerous than childbirth until about 1930 when incremental improvements in abortion procedures relative to childbirth made abortion safer. Soviet Russia (1919), Iceland (1935) and Sweden (1938) were among the first countries to legalize certain or all forms of abortion. In 1935 Nazi Germany, a law was passed permitting abortions for those deemed "hereditarily ill", while women considered of German stock were specifically prohibited from having abortions. Beginning in the second half of the twentieth century, abortion was legalized in a greater number of countries.

**THE ABORTION DEBATE:**

The abortion debate is the ongoing controversy surrounding the moral, legal, and religious status of induced abortion. The sides involved in the debate are the self-described "pro-choice" movement and the "pro-life" movement. "Pro-choice" emphasizes the right of women to decide whether to terminate a pregnancy. "Pro-life" movement emphasizes the right of the embryo or fetus to gestate to term and be born. Both terms are considered loaded in mainstream media, where terms such as "abortion rights" or "anti-abortion" are generally preferred. Each movement has, with varying results, sought to influence public opinion and to attain legal support for its position, with small numbers of anti-abortion advocates sometimes using violence.

**Worldwide stances:**

**Countries that refuse abortions:**

As of December 2016, there were 6 countries that banned abortion: El Salvador, the Vatican, Chile, Malta, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua. This bans women from an abortion for any reason (underage, fetal impairment, rape/incest), even if it might mean saving her life. All of these countries have a punishment if it is done illegally of jail time.

**Countries with strict laws:**

Ireland only allows abortions if it is a risk to the woman's life. It is also a very expensive procedure. There are also penalties of jail time if an abortion is induced for any other reason. China has a free abortion policy but for the reason of complying with the one child policy - so many times it is forced upon them. The Philippines also only have abortions in place to save the woman's life but it is not stated in the law. This means that it is also punishable by jail time.

**Effects of legalization/illegalization:**

Pro-choice advocates argue that illegalization of abortion increases the incidence of unsafe abortions, as the availability of professional abortion services decreases, and leads to increased maternal mortality. According to a global study collaboratively conducted by the World Health Organization and the Guttmacher Institute, most unsafe abortions occur where abortion is illegal.

The effect on crime of legalized abortion is a subject of controversy; with proponents of the theory generally arguing that "unwanted children" are more likely to become criminals and that an inverse correlation is observed between the availability of abortion and subsequent crime.

Economist George Akerlof has argued that the legalization of abortion in the United States contributed to a declining sense of paternal duty among biological fathers and to a decline in shotgun weddings, even when women chose childbirth over abortion, and thus to an increase rather than a decrease in the rate of children born to unwed mothers.

**Amnesty International's abortion policies since 2007 and the Catholic Church:**

In April 2007, Amnesty International changed its neutral stance on abortion to supporting access to abortion in cases of rape and incest, and when the life or the health of the mother might be threatened. Amnesty's official policy is that they "do not promote abortion as a universal right" but "support the decriminalization of abortion." According to deputy secretary general Kate Gilmore, the debate over the change was difficult, but eventually the overwhelming majority of national Amnesty chapters supported the change. The change was opposed by several organizations, notably by senior figures in the Catholic Church, traditionally a strong supporter of Amnesty International, and a group of US legislators. She admitted a small number of members had quit over the issue.

The Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in June 2007 issued a statement urging Catholics not to donate to Amnesty because of its abortion stance. Cardinal Renato Martino said that abortion was murder, as was "to justify it selectively, in the event of rape, that is to define an innocent child in the belly of its mother as an enemy, as 'something one can destroy'." In an interview with the National Catholic Register, the Cardinal said he believed that "if in fact Amnesty International persists in this course of action, individuals and Catholic organizations must withdraw their support, because, in deciding to promote abortion rights, AI has betrayed its mission." The Church withdrew funding globally for Amnesty, and churches in various locations took other steps to sever their ties with the group.

Questions:

# Is it true that Amnesty International's pro-abortion campaign is shamelessly anti-Catholic and has a conflict with many religions?

# If so, why is the outside world ignorant and doing literally nothing to take an action?

Is it true that Amnesty is exploiting the tragedies of people like the Linehans for the sake of a political campaign against the Catholic Church?

What Suitable actions can be taken if the allegations against AL are correct?

How will it effect the human life and world population if AL succeeds with it’s agendas?

Does AL ideology and beliefs about people denying women their right to have control over their sexuality and reproduction true?

Does abortion ban do not stop abortions, instead it causes women and girls to resort to clandestine and sometimes dangerous methods?