



GLOBAL NEWS | #Women's rights | NEWS
Published on June 29, 2022 09:53. Updated on July 03, 2022 12:55.

'An injury to one is an injury to all': International Geneva reacts to Roe v. Wade ruling

By [Liv Martin](#)



The decision to reverse Roe v. Wade — a 50-year-old law protecting the right to abortion in the United States — has reverberated around the world. In Geneva, many within the international community have already condemned the US Supreme Court’s ruling.

A wave of statements from high-level officials, agencies and rights groups were released following the decision. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet called it “a huge blow to women’s human rights and gender equality” in [her response](#) to the 24 June ruling.

UN Women [said](#) “reproductive rights are integral to women’s rights”. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN’s sexual and reproductive health agency, [stated](#) “decisions reversing progress gained have a wider impact on the rights and choices of women and adolescents everywhere”.

The Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, also [denounced the decision](#) to overturn the near half-century legal precedent that has protected women’s right to choose to have an abortion.

Almost half of the US’s 50 states will likely be impacted by the decision, as many have “trigger” laws in place to outlaw abortion immediately, or highly restrict it. Mere days after the ruling, people able to get pregnant are already suffering the consequences.

Global implications

Despite societal trends of increased abortion access globally, fear has spread within the international community that the Court’s decision could lead to further restrictive abortion laws around the world.

“The anti-choice movement is very strong, and has been biding its time until something happens, like what just took place in the US,” said Paola Salwan Daher, associate director of global advocacy at the Center for Reproductive Rights in Geneva.

“It has branches and partners across the world, and has been attacking access to abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, access to contraception and assisted reproduction,” she added.

Since news broke of the ruling, the Center for Reproductive Rights has started monitoring the impact of the decision, and whether it will galvanise anti-abortion groups around the world who want to “replicate” the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

Salwan Daher spoke on a panel of the Human Rights Council Monday on behalf of the Center for the Council’s annual discussion on the human rights of women. She specifically underlined that the right to access free, safe and legal abortion is an important principle within the rights to equality, non-discrimination, health, sexual and reproductive health and life.

But even while the Supreme Court was gearing up to ban abortion, there were numerous big wins for the pro-abortion movement around the world in recent years, such as in Latin America, where Mexico, Argentina and Colombia all [decriminalised or legalised abortion in the last two years](#). This March, France extended its legal abortion timeframe and [expanded access](#) to non-surgical abortion.

“The US is an aberration in the broader landscape of normative development on abortion rights,” Salwan Daher told Geneva Solutions.

A ‘united front’

In Geneva, the group [Grève Féministe Internationale](#) organised a pro-abortion solidarity rally at Place de Nations, in front of the UN Tuesday evening. The group also coordinated demonstrations in Fribourg, La-Chaux-de-Fonds, Neuchâtel, Sion, Lucerne, St. Gall and Zürich. “The only way to guarantee the rights of all women even in privileged territories is to have them guaranteed by everyone in the world,” the group [tweeted](#). Another rally is planned to be held in Lausanne Friday.

“In Switzerland, we know that an injury to one is an injury to all. We’ll be organising based on solidarity, but because we are also mindful of what might be coming to us,” she said.

The Center for Reproductive Rights’ priority is normalising progressive standards on abortion at the international level. They are advocating for these standards to be reflected in Human Rights Council resolutions, monitoring political commitments from states and amplifying the demands of the pro-abortion, feminist movement at the global level.

“We are as strong as we are united. Now is the time for all of these international organisations to band together,” Salwan Daher said. “We have to continue the work we’re doing, because women and people who can get pregnant’s lives are on the line.”

#Women's rights #Women Health #International Geneva

Geneva Solutions content is licensed under [Creative Commons BY 4.0](#).

RELATED ARTICLES

GLOBAL HEALTH | #International Geneva | NEWS
Women in Global Health launches Switzerland chapter
By [Megha Kaveri](#)

DISPATCHES FROM WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN | EPISODE N° 12
Breaking the taboo around female health issues in Afghanistan
By [Tooba Neda Safi](#)

GLOBAL NEWS | #International Geneva | ANALYSE
Amid Davos business talk, international community struggles to find a voice
By [Paula Dupraz-Dobias](#)

GLOBAL NEWS | #International Geneva | NEWS
2022: key takeaways for international Geneva
By [Pip Cook](#) [Paula Dupraz-Dobias](#) [Kasmira Jefford](#) [Michelle Langrand](#)

PEACE & HUMANITARIAN | #Women's rights | INTERVIEW
Quaker United Nations Geneva director: 'Freedom is a constant struggle'
By [Kasmira Jefford](#)

Newsletters

Enter your email address & select your newsletters

I have read, understood and accept the present [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of use](#).

DAILY BRIEF

Your morning update on International cooperation and development, seen from Geneva. Sent Monday to Fridays at 6 AM. We cover five core themes: Climate, Global Health, Peace & Humanitarian, Technology, and Sustainable Business & Finance, featuring opinion pieces as well as guest-edited newsletters.

Free | Monday to Friday | [Archives](#)

[Register](#)

MONTHLY DIGEST

The GS Monthly Digest is sent every last Wednesday of the month. It features our top stories of the month for each of our five themes (Climate, Global Health, Peace & Humanitarian, Science & Technology, Sustainable Business & Finance) as well as the latest opinion pieces.

Free | Monthly | [Archives](#)

[Register](#)