

Abortion Drone Is the Best Drone



Kate Knibbs

Filed to: ABORTION DRONES 6/23/15 2:00pm



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This Saturday, a small drone carrying the abortion-inducing pills mifepristone and misoprostol will fly from Germany to a border town in Poland. And yes, “Abortion Drone” sounds like the name of an anarchist punk band, but this is the most badass drone aid mission yet.

The drone will deliver medication to reproductive health groups, who will distribute the pills to people who want to terminate their pregnancies and can’t access abortion legally. Abortion is heavily restricted in Poland, and the drone project is a collaboration between Women on Waves and a few other reproductive health and women’s activist groups.

Women on Waves doesn't need authorization from Germany or Poland to fly the abortion drone because it's under five pounds, won't be used commercially, and the pilot will be able to see it during the short border flight. Even though it's illegal to take the pills in Poland, it's not illegal to fly them in, providing a crucial loophole for helping people receive access to safe medicine.

It's a gimmick, but a worthwhile one. Part of the mission is raising awareness about Poland's prohibitive reproductive health laws, but it's also physically delivering medication to people who don't have access.

People are using drones as aid tools all over the world. South African rhino conservationists use them to scare poachers. In Malta, an American businessman uses drones to spot migrants being smuggled by human traffickers. There's even a nonprofit called UAViators devoted to linking drone pilots with humanitarian missions, and another nonprofit called Syrian Airlift Project plans to use drones to sneak medical supplies in Syria.

The Women on Waves abortion drone is different, though. Just calling it a humanitarian project downplays how contentious abortion is. Receiving the medication isn't just a health care decision—it's a political statement. With this mission, drones are becoming tools of political dissent.

[Women on Waves via Telegraph]

Contact the author at kate.knibbs@gizmodo.com.

Public PGP key

PGP fingerprint: FF8F 0D7A AB19 6D71 C967 9576 8C12 9478 EE07 10C

Image: Women on Waves



Mister Sterling ▶ Kate Knibbs

6/23/15 2:23pm

Women on Waves helped legalize abortion in Spain and Portugal. Poland and Ireland are next. They are doing amazing, necessary work.



Kevin ▶ Kate Knibbs

6/23/15 2:24pm

It's going to be very interesting when drones have ranges to deliver payloads meaningful distances discreetly. For instance, imagine how hard it would be for a government like North Korea to defend against swarms of drones delivering food, medial supplies, and counter-propaganda to their people.



Imvix ▶ Kate Knibbs

6/23/15 3:37pm

Hi, Kate - shouldn't you be on Jezebel? This is Gizmodo, thinly veiling feminist agenda shouldn't really belong here should it?

Also 'Abortion Drone is the Best Drone'? Revolting.



Luke Emery ▶ Imvix

6/23/15 4:03pm

Gizmodo is not able to talk about basic human rights?



CrispyAardvark ▶ Imvix

6/23/15 4:06pm

The drone is the tech aspect. I didn't realize providing medication to allow abortion for those who can't legally get it, even if raped, was feminism.. I feel enlightened..



D.V. ▶ Imvix

6/23/15 4:20pm



Here you go, sir.

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