



# International New York Times

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Muslims in mourning Widows at a mosque Thursday in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, where Muslims and Christians are fighting a civil war. FRED DUFOUR/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

## Belgium nears law on child euthanasia

BRUSSELS

Measure would extend the right to die to those under 12 and gravely ill

BY ANDREW HIGGINS

With strong support from lawmakers and the medical profession, Belgium on Thursday took a big step toward becoming the first democratic country to allow euthanasia for young children, a move that religious leaders here condemned as entering "a logic that leads to the destruction of society's foundations."

The idea of euthanasia for children has been a taboo in most countries, not only for religious reasons but also because of the horrors of Nazi Germany, which killed thousands of mentally and physically handicapped children under a program known as Kinder Euthanasie.

After months of public debate, however, the upper house of the Belgian Parliament, the Senate, voted by large majority to extend a 2002 law legalizing euthanasia for adults to minors afflicted with "constant and unbearable physical suffering" and equipped "with a capacity of discernment."

Fifty of the 71 members of the Senate — fragmented among 10 parties and divided by Dutch and French speakers — voted for the measure. Just 17, mostly from the conservative, and traditionally Catholic, Christian Democrats, voted against. Four cast no vote.

Before becoming law, the changes must be voted on by the federal parliament's lower house, which is expected to take up the matter before elections in May. The measure seems likely to pass, and would put Belgium in a separate category from almost any other nation when it comes to allowing the terminally ill to choose to die.

Belgium's neighbor the Netherlands already allows euthanasia in special cases for gravely ill patients as young as 12. But Belgium — where adult euthanasia cases already number around 1,000 a year — is the first country to propose lifting all age restrictions.

Philippe Mahoux, a Socialist Party senator and fervent opponent of the death penalty who sponsored the 2002 legislation and the amended version

voted on Thursday, described giving terminally children the right to "die in dignity" as the "ultimate gesture of humanity." He dismissed the views of religious leaders who oppose the move as unrepresentative of the views of many ordinary believers, who he said supported the legal change.

He said the legislation did not seek to define death — "that is for theologians and philosophers" — but to allow young people, with the assent of their parents, to choose the manner of their dying in the event of terminal illness and intolerable physical pain.

He said in an interview before the vote that euthanasia for terminally ill children was already practiced on occasion in some Belgian hospitals and that the law would not lead to a surge in medically accelerated death among sick children but would save doctors from potential criminal prosecution.

The amended law extending the "right to die" to children mandates that euthanasia can be carried out only at the demand of a patient and that such a request be "voluntary, considered and repeated and not the result external pressure."

Unlike adults, children would not be allowed to choose death on the grounds of "psychological suffering" but only in cases where there is no hope of recovery from an illness that involves extreme physical pain. Parents must give their approval in writing.

Although generally far more accepting of euthanasia or assisted suicide than the United States, Europe has only a handful of countries that have formally legalized medical interventions to cause death. The Netherlands allows euthanasia for patients 12 or older, and Luxembourg permits it for adults. Switzerland allows doctors to help patients die but not to actively kill them.

For religious groups, however, Belgium's efforts to extend its already controversial 2002 law to children marks a dangerous erosion of moral barriers protecting the sanctity of life. "We mark out opposition to this extension and express our trepidation in the face of the risk of a growing trivialization of such a grave reality," the leaders of Belgium's Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities said in a statement.

During a sometimes heated debate in BELGIUM, PAGE 4

## Big Tobacco steps up its barrage of litigation

Threat of costly battles prompts poorer countries to back off restrictions

BY SABRINA TAVERNISE

As countries around the world adopt tough antismoking laws, tobacco companies are striking back with a little-noticed legal tactic to delay or block their enactment.

The companies, eager to retain easy access to markets, are using an expand-

ing web of investment and trade treaties to thwart these tobacco control measures. They are warning economically struggling governments that are ill-equipped for costly, prolonged legal battles that their laws violate the treaties, according to public health experts and officials.

The tactic has gained momentum in recent years as smoking rates in rich countries have fallen and tobacco companies have sought to keep open access to fast-growing markets in developing countries. Industry officials say that there are only a few cases of active litig-

ation, and that giving a legal opinion to governments is routine for major players with interests at stake. But advocates say their use of this tactic is undermining the ability of low- and middle-income countries to tackle one of the gravest health threats facing them: smoking.

Each year, more than five million people die of smoking related causes, more than from AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined, according to the World Health Organization.

Alarmed about rising smoking rates among young women, Namibia passed a tobacco control law in 2010, but quickly

found itself bombarded with stern warnings from the tobacco industry that the statute violated the country's obligations under international trade treaties.

"We have bundles and bundles of letters from them," said Namibia's health minister, Dr. Richard Kamwi.

Three years later, the government, fearful of a punishingly expensive legal battle, has yet to carry out a single major provision of the law, like limiting advertising or placing large health warnings on cigarette packaging.

The issue is particularly urgent now as TOBACCO, PAGE 5

## Privileged residents of Monaco have it all, except for dissent

MONACO

BY SARAH LYALL AND MAÏA DE LA BAUME

As protests go, it was tiny: just a handful of people gathering quietly at a condemned building they thought should not be torn down. But in a place where dissent is rare, the demonstration counted as daring, even radical.

And futile, too, given that the protest was aimed at a company controlled by the entity that controls just about everything here: Monaco's royal family.

"There's nothing, really, that anybody can do," said Elizabeth Wessel, a fashion designer opposed to the demoli-

tion of the 81-year-old Sporting d'Hiver, a former gambling club and one of the region's last remaining Art Deco buildings, to make way for a vast development backed by the royal family's business interests. Claude Rosticher, a 77-year-old painter who organized the September demonstration, said: "The principality always has the final word."

Monaco seems like the most benign of places, a slice of unreality on the French Riviera that is smaller than a square mile, or 2.6 square kilometers, and has a population of about 36,000; a per capita income of more than \$150,000; and an unemployment rate of zero. Home to a collection of privacy-craving, super-rich MONACO, PAGE 4



Protesters on Thursday in Kiev, Ukraine. The foreign policy chief of the European Union said Ukraine's president "intends to sign the association agreement" with the Union. SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## From Ukraine's east, a message to protesters in Kiev: Go home

DONETSK, UKRAINE

BY ANDREW ROTH

As workers streamed into the Donetsk Metallurgical Plant, a sprawling, Soviet-era metal works that locals in Ukraine's industrial heartland refer to as the DMZ, they had a message for the students and opposition leaders on Independence Square in the capital calling for European integration and denouncing recent police crackdowns: Get back to work.

On a frigid morning under the steady hum of the factory combines, the workers called the protests that have gripped Kiev "a mess," "chaos" and "the dis-

grace of all Ukraine."

"The answer is simple: Get some tanks and drive them off the square," said Viktor Ruzhenko, a 30-year veteran of the factory, who was coming off the night shift into the early morning frost. "Even under the Communists I never saw anything so disgraceful."

Top Western diplomats and opposition leaders have called on President Viktor F. Yanukovich to respect public sentiment and sign an association agreement with the European Union. But in a country deeply divided between the pro-European West and the pro-Russian East, that is only half the story. Here in eastern Ukraine, the base of Mr. UKRAINE, PAGE 5

### INSIDE TODAY'S PAPER

#### Possible lifeline for Peugeot

PSA Peugeot Citroën acknowledged Thursday that it was in negotiations with Dongfeng Motor, a state-owned Chinese company, that could lead to a capital increase. BUSINESS, 15

#### Progress made on Vatican Bank

But despite improvements, the Holy See needs to tighten its controls of the Vatican's financial institutions, according to a report. BUSINESS, 16

#### Bankers under siege

Big banks have gone from being viewed as national champions to being seen as a potential source of national disaster, Floyd Norris writes. BUSINESS, 19

#### When snooping derails diplomacy

Australian spying on the cellphones of the Indonesian president and of his inner circle has set off a diplomatic firefight, Julia Baird writes. OPINION, 7



CABBAGE, JUST IN CASE Mounds of cabbage waiting to be sold in Beijing. Chinese hoard the vegetable in winter, the vestige of an era of scarcity that haunts older people. WORLD NEWS, 8

#### Catalonia clashes with Madrid

Spanish officials rejected a move by a Catalan leader to hold an independence referendum next year. WORLD NEWS, 4

#### A glitch at Mandela memorial

Sign-language experts accused an interpreter, who says he has schizophrenia, of faking. WORLD NEWS, 8

### ONLINE AT INYT.COM

#### U.S. senators pull angry all-nighter

A procedural war has broken out in the Senate as Republicans, furious that Democrats changed the rules to prevent the minority from filibustering most nominations, say they are intent on drawing attention to what they depict as a power grab. nytimes.com/politics

#### Kerry warns Texas on execution

The scheduled execution next month in Texas of a Mexican national threatens to damage relations between the United States and Mexico and complicate the ability of American officials to help citizens detained overseas, Secretary of State John F. Kerry has warned officials in the state. nytimes.com/americas

#### The Golden Globe nominations

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association was to unveil Thursday the nominations for the 71st Golden Globe Awards. carpetbagger.blogs.nytimes.com

### NEWSSTAND PRICES

Andorra €3.00	Bulgaria €3.55	Denmark DKK 26	Gibraltar €1.35	Lithuania €4.00	Northern Ireland £1.50	Saudi Arabia SR 13.00	Turkey TL 3.00
Austria €3.00	Canada C\$ 3.50	Egypt EGP 15.00	Hungary HUF 700	Lithuania €4.15	Norway NOK 28	Senegal CFA 1,500	Turkey TL 5
Belgium €3.00	Chile P\$ 1,550	France €3.00	India INR 110.00	Latvia €3.00	Poland PLN 2.20	Slovakia €3.00	Ukraine UHS 5.00
Brazil R\$ 12.00	China P\$ 1,550	Germany €3.00	Indonesia Rp 12,000	Latvia €3.10	Portugal €3.00	Slovenia €3.00	United Arab Emirates AED 12.00
Belgium €3.00	Colombia C\$ 1,875	Greece €3.00	Japan ¥ 1,500	Latvia €3.20	Prague €3.00	Spain €3.00	Venezuela VES 1.75
Bermuda B\$ 3.50	Costa Rica C\$ 2,500	Ireland €3.00	Korea ₩ 1,500	Latvia €3.30	Prague €3.00	Sweden SEK 20	United States \$ 3.00
Bhutan Nu 2.75	Cuba C\$ 120.00	Italy €3.00	Malaysia RM 2.00	Latvia €3.40	Prague €3.00	Switzerland CHF 4.00	U.S. Military (Europe) US\$ 1.75
Bosnia & Herzegovina KM 5.00	Cyprus € 2.00	Japan ¥ 1,500	Mexico MXN 130	Latvia €3.50	Prague €3.00	Syria S\$ 1,500	
Brazil R\$ 12.00	Czech Rep. CZK 110	Germany €3.00	Nigeria N\$ 300	Latvia €3.60	Prague €3.00	The Netherlands €3.00	

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### CURRENCIES NEW YORK, THURSDAY 12:30PM

▼ Euro	€1=	\$1.3750	\$1.3790
▼ Pound	£1=	\$1.6330	\$1.6370
▼ Yen	¥1=	¥103.800	¥102.420
▼ S. Franc	₣1=	SF0.8900	SF0.8860

### STOCK INDEXES THURSDAY

▼ The Dow 12:30pm	15,754.24	-0.56%
▼ FTSE 100 close	6,445.25	-0.96%
▼ Nikkei 225 close	15,341.82	-1.12%

Full currency rates Page 18

OIL NEW YORK, THURSDAY 12:30PM  
▼ Light sweet crude \$97.57 -\$0.16