

No need to tighten anti-abortion laws

WARSAW, Poland - A Polish archbishop has said there is no need to tighten anti-abortion laws by amending the Polish Constitution.

“I’m convinced our constitution protects life decisively enough at this moment,” said Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski of Gdansk. “The stable situation now created should prompt us not to take actions which could dramatize or complicate things even more.”

The archbishop told Poland’s Catholic information agency, KAI, March 11 that people have the “right to life from conception to natural death - if we want to be Christians, we should never abandon this.”

However, he said that Poland “must be guided by realism, and not let loose some yearning for good which causes a drama.”

In an interview with Poland’s Radio Zet he said Poland already had “one of the best laws” in Europe restricting abortions and would risk “unleashing a (political) war” if further changes were attempted.

Lawmakers have been preparing to debate a bill in late March to include the right to “life from conception” in the Polish Constitution. Currently, abortions are legal in cases of rape, incest and severe fetal damage, or if a woman’s health is endangered.

Speaking at a Warsaw press conference March 13, Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski said he doubted the constitutional amendment would gain the necessary two-thirds support when debated in late March.

In a March 8 letter to lawmakers, retired Archbishop Kazimierz Majdanski of Szczecin-Kamien urged politicians to support the amendment and said it would conform to the wishes of Pope John Paul II.

“It’s time for a radical and healthy change in our national mentality toward defending life,” he said. “Let this be a glorious chapter of the current government and Parliament. The value of life has no alternative – it’s the greatest richness of our homeland and the only guarantee for its happy future.”