**PRESS RELEASE – AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

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**Netherlands: Landmark ruling as Court of Appeal bans ethnic profiling**

This morning, the Court of Appeal in the Netherlands issued a landmark ruling in the case of two citizens, in a case brought by Amnesty International, Control Alt Delete, RADAR and NJCM-PILP against ethnic profiling by Dutch border police (Royal Marechaussee).

The Court ruled that the current practice constitutes a form of racial discrimination and issued a ban. The Court ruled that the border police must change its practices with immediate effect, regardless of whether the State appeals the ruling.

The case revolved around the question whether the border police may select people for a stop and check at the border (partially) because of their race. The coalition that started the case argued that the use of race in selection decisions is form of racial discrimination.

**Particularly serious form of discrimination**

The Court of Appeal held that the border police discriminate on the basis of race in its daily practice of selecting people for a check, and concluded that this is a particularly egregious form of discrimination. The court recognized that ethnic profiling leads to people feeling unaccepted in society and treated as second-class citizens. u

“I feel strengthened in my belief that racism has no place in our society. This is a great victory not only for me and people of colour but for everyone who, for years, fought against racism, ethnic profiling and for equal treatment,” said Mpanzu Bamenga, one of the plaintiffs.

**Stigmatization and negative impact**

The Court of Appeal emphasized that the methods of the border police lead to stigmatization and feelings of pain and frustration among the people who are selected for border checks, including the two citizens who co-filed this lawsuit. The court also underlined the negative impact of ethnic profiling on society.

“The court clarifies that one’s appearance and color are not indicative of someone’s nationality. This is an important correction to the earlier ruling of the court in first instance that shocked many people of colour and made them feel as if we were second-class citizens,” said Dionne Abdoelhafiezkhan, from anti-racism organization Control Alt Delete.

**What is next?**

This is a historic ruling. It is an important step in the elimination of ethnic profiling by the Royal Marechaussee, the police and other law enforcement agencies.

“The coalition that filed this lawsuit has been fighting ethnic profiling for years. This victory shows what we can achieve together,” said Dagmar Oudshoorn, Director of Amnesty International Netherlands.

“It inspires us to continue with the collective effort to eliminate racism and discrimination in law enforcement.”