

Police visit Amnesty employee at home after peaceful protest

An Amnesty International employee, Paul, was visited at home by the police in December 2024 because of his participation in a peaceful protest. In February 2025, he filed a police complaint about this. The police state that the home visit was intended to gather personal information about Paul, including his motivations for participating in the protest, as well as gathering information on his living environment. The police have registered information about Paul and the protest in their systems, including that he works for Amnesty International.*

Unlawful ID check and home visit

On December 2, 2024, Paul took part in a one-person protest organized by Amnesty International. The municipality of The Hague had been informed about the protest. During the protest, a police officer demanded to see Paul's ID. A week later, around 8pm on Monday, the police arrived unannounced at his home. Although Paul explained that the action was on behalf of Amnesty International and that the police could inquire about it there, the officer insisted that he wanted to have a personal conversation and that it would be better to do so inside Paul's home, as it would take some time.

During the visit, the police asked Paul questions about his political views and his employer. The officer specifically referenced the subject-matter of the protest and messages on the protest signs. The police had taken photos of his protest and forwarded them to the phone of the officer visiting Paul's home. Paul found the home visit intimidating and shocking:

"He said that the police 'didn't know who I was' and that the police 'didn't have me in their systems,' so he had been asked to visit me 'to see who I was and why I was demonstrating'. At the officer's insistence, and facing a uniformed police officer, late at night, I felt obliged to let the police in. I didn't want to wake up my two young children who were sleeping upstairs. I felt like I was being viewed with suspicion, as if I had done something wrong.

In hindsight, I shouldn't have answered the questions or let the police into my home, but the police didn't tell me that the visit and questioning would be "voluntary" - quite the opposite. Frankly, at that moment, and not being used to dealing with the police, I didn't feel able to refuse such a sudden and unexpected visit from the police. The morning after it happened, I messaged my colleagues asking if such a practice was normal. It seemed so odd, and I couldn't believe it when they said this happens to other protesters as well."

Chilling effect on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

Paul is not the first protester to experience this type of police visit. [Amnesty International has found that the Dutch police regularly visit peaceful protesters at home to ask them questions.](#)

In June 2025, following a lawsuit by Extinction Rebellion, [the police promised to improve their policies on home visits](#). However, Paul's case shows that the police intend to continue their home visits to protesters. In response to Paul's complaint, the police deny any unlawful conduct – claiming that home visits are common practice and that the data processing is based on law and policies.

Amnesty International is concerned about home visits to peaceful protesters because of its chilling effect. These visits, and the related unlawful ID checks and registrations, can discourage people from protesting. The threat of surveillance can have a chilling effect on freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly, as it can deter people from exercising their rights.

Read more about the impact of data processing on human rights in our report [*Unchecked power: checks and collection of data from peaceful protesters in the Netherlands*](#).

Violation of the right to privacy and data protection

According to the police, the visit to Paul was a 'CTER home visit', during which the police gather information about a person's living environment and home as part of research into terrorism, extremism, and radicalization. CTER-registrations can have serious consequences: they may prevent people from traveling to certain countries or even lead to detention abroad. This restricts their freedom of movement. [*The National Ombudsman has found that there is a lack of effective oversight and legal protection for CTER-registrations*](#).

Information about your participation in protests, and its subject-matter, touches on the core of your political beliefs. And political views are considered sensitive personal data under international human rights law. Human rights require additional legal protection for the processing of such sensitive data. Similarly, gathering information about a person's family situation, living conditions, and employment, among others, also fundamentally affects right to respect for private and family life.

In the Netherlands, the police claim to have discretionary power to enter data into police systems, and visit people at home, without proper assessment of the relevance to any real danger or specific criminal offence. This is clear violation of the right to privacy, as Amnesty International explains in the report [*Unchecked power: checks and collection of data from peaceful protesters in the Netherlands*](#).

As a protester, it is difficult to defend yourself against unlawful data processing. The police do not inform you about it, and if you submit a request for access to find out whether data about you has been collected, you will not receive all the information. Paul has not yet received all information the police keep in their systems about him – despite explicitly asking for this in his complaint. [*Amnesty International has therefore called on the Dutch Data Protection Authority and the National Ombudsman to strengthen their supervision on police databanks*](#).

Amnesty and Paul continue their case to stop unlawful surveillance

In a complaint procedure, Paul is urging the police to remedy the unlawful home visit and data processing, with the help of lawyer Willem Jebbink. Paul states:

'A number of issues need to be resolved urgently. First, how my personal data and political opinions were collected, processed and possibly even shared by the police, leading to the home visit. Secondly, how the home visit took place. I am very concerned about the severe invasion of my private and family life, as well as the absurdity of treating the visit under the auspices of addressing terrorism, extremism, and radicalization. And lastly, how the information about me was, processed and stored, and how it may be used or shared by the police in the future.

"A person's home is a place of safety and sanctuary. This place must have the highest degree of legal protection and privacy, including from the police. In many respects, once the sanctity of your home, family life and privacy is violated, it is very hard to undo that damage.

While there are many issues and harms to be resolved in my complaint, I am asking the police to at least remove the unlawful registrations from the police systems. I also want the police to ensure that myself and other peaceful protesters will not be subjected to unlawful registrations or home visits in the future. The police have apologised for "the manner in which the home visits were conducted". They argue that their visits can be improved in the future by calling or sending a letter prior to a home visit. But being warned that the police plan to come to your home and

infringe your rights to privacy and family life is, of course, not a solution. The police must stop visiting and registering peaceful protesters.

While this visit will not stop me from exercising my right to protest in The Netherlands. But I am sure that some people would think twice before exercising their fundamental rights to protest and free speech if they knew that the police would then come to their home to ask them questions, including questions about their employer.”

**Paul is a fictitious name.*