



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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JOINT STATEMENT ISSUED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THE CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH ON UPCOMING SESSION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL TRIBUNAL IN POLAND

Amnesty International, the Center for Reproductive Rights and Human Rights Watch will be sending independent expert monitors to the forthcoming hearing of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal as the court prepares to issue a decision regarding the constitutionality of access to abortion on the ground of “severe and irreversible foetal defect or incurable illness that threatens the foetus’ life”¹ on 22 October 2020.

Given our long standing and publicly expressed concerns about the human rights of women and girls that are at stake, we view it as essential to observe the proceedings in this important case. The Constitutional Tribunal’s upcoming proceedings take place in the context of repeated government attacks on women’s rights and efforts to roll back reproductive rights, as well as legal and policy changes that have undermined the independence of the judiciary and rule of law in Poland. The observers will report directly to the respective organizations on the proceedings and any outcome decision of the court following their observer mission.

All three organizations have written to the Constitutional Tribunal to formally request seats in the court for their observers to be able to observe the proceedings. Trial observations take place in both criminal and civil cases, and other types of judicial proceedings, where human rights concerns of a critical nature are at stake. The organizations will draw on experienced and respected jurists who have expertise in international human rights law to observe the proceedings.

¹ Article 4a, sec. 1 point 2 and Article 4a sec. 2, first sentence of the Act on Family Planning, Human Embryo Protection, and Conditions of Legal Pregnancy Termination.