

Amal Women's Association

Women supporting women in the Community

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Hijab Ruling a clear breach of human rights, says Muslim women's group In the Name of Allah, Most Compassionate Most Merciful

We from Amal Women's Association are shocked by the surprising decision by the European court of justice ruling that garments can be banned as part of general policy covering religious symbols. We believe that living in the EU, a supposedly democratic open minded place, we'd have the right to choose what we wear to work without the fear of prejudice and discrimination. The ruling is a clear breach of human rights; it infringes our right as Muslim women to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This decision has sparked outrage among Muslims and non-Muslims alike; no one is supposed to be a subject to such compulsion and pressure.

This decision will affect Muslim women across all walks of life and practices, discouraging Muslim women to express themselves in the work place, in turn making them uncomfortable. This will, oppress women and give license to unscrupulous employers who believe they have control over what their employees should and should not wear. Nor Nasib, a Chartered Accountant, expressed how she is "disappointed and upset" continuing to say "It's hard enough getting professional work as accountant due to headscarf that I wear, I believe now this ruling will make Muslim women think twice before choosing to be themselves. We have the right to wear what we want, this does not even affect our ability to work at all"

It is clear from the ruling that it is faith communities that are no longer welcome. The backing of this ruling by the highest court of justice in Europe is, in our opinion, a serious threat to the principles of equality, justice and freedoms that the EU states it advocates. Muslim women are already one of the most targeted groups in Europe. In the workplace, they face a triple penalty because of their gender, ethnicity and religion. "This ruling will just further prevent Women from strengthening their political, economic and social independence in the work place as well as in society. It's a form oppression not to be able to cover my body and have a profession. Covering or not doesn't increase or change my ability to perform within a work environment" says college student Ryma Halfaoui.

"As a victim of hijab snatching," Said Rabea Tabassum, "I see this ruling against the veil as almost punishing women just for being Muslim. It's naked discrimination... where are the European values of equality and multiculturalism?"

The Amal Women's Association have been inundated with calls from Muslim women who are scared and angered about the decision. We are as surprised as they are. We never expected such a thing could happen. Many of the people who contacted us are concerned about legitimised discrimination in the workplace or increased difficulty getting jobs.

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A young Muslim man compared the ruling to the Muslim ban in Trump's America. Ahmad Ryklief went on to say "it's an effective ban on visible Muslim women in the workplace. This is discrimination not only against the headscarf but against people's free will and choice." expressing how he worries about the effects this will have on his wife, sisters and friends who are in the work force and looking to join in.

We here at Amal Women's Association, strongly condemn and deplore the decision rendered today by the European Court of Justice.

About Amal Women's Association: Amal Women's Association is a Dublin based Muslim women's organisation operational on volunteering basis since 2013. We provide a range of services to vulnerable Muslim women and their families. Our aim is to provide culturally specific services for women and children from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds in Ireland.

ENDS

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