January 15, 2019

Jeffrey P. Bezos
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

David Zapolsky
General Counsel and Senior Vice President
Amazon.com, Inc.

Dear Mr. Bezos and Mr. Zapolsky,

We are a coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights and liberties and safeguarding communities. We write today to reiterate our demand that Amazon stop providing its face surveillance product, Rekognition, to the government. Protecting communities and retaining customer trust requires that Amazon act immediately.

Since we sent our first letter in May 2018, Rekognition has been the subject of widespread attention and opposition. Over 150,000 consumers have signed petitions demanding Amazon stop providing Rekognition to governments. Dozens of members of Congress, including the Congressional Black Caucus, have recognized Amazon's responsibility to protect people from the harms of face surveillance. Institutional shareholders have sounded the alarm about Rekognition's impact on Amazon's business. More than 400 Amazon employees, including senior engineers, have made it clear that they do not want to build products like Rekognition that will harm vulnerable communities.

The dangers of face surveillance can only be fully addressed by stopping its use by governments. Face surveillance provides government agencies with an unprecedented ability to track who we are, where we go, what we do, and who we know. Face surveillance gives the government new power to target and single out immigrants, religious minorities, and people of color in our communities. Systems built on face surveillance will amplify and exacerbate historical and existing bias that harms these and other over-policed and over-surveilled communities. In a world with face surveillance, people will have to fear being watched and targeted by the government for attending a protest, congregating outside a place of worship, or simply living their lives.

Instead of acting to protect against the very real dangers of face surveillance, your company is ignoring community concerns and further pushing this technology into the hands of government agencies. It was recently revealed that Amazon has discussed Rekognition with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a deal that if realized would supersize the government's ability to target and separate families living in our communities. The F.B.I. is also piloting the use of Rekognition. All the while, you have refused to provide meaningful answers to Congressional inquiries, including basic information about the company's government customers.

Amazon's inaction in response to widespread concerns about face surveillance stands in contrast to the steps taken by its competitors. In

December 2018, Google announced it will not sell a face surveillance product until the technology's dangers are addressed, with its CEO Sundar Pichai warning that the tech industry "just can't build it and then fix it." And Microsoft's President Brad Smith rightly acknowledged the risks associated with face surveillance and the company's obligation to act internally to address potential harms. It is wholly irresponsible to wait for society to develop an "immune response" to technologies like face surveillance, as Mr. Bezos has suggested. As your employees wrote, "we already know" Rekognition will "ultimately serve to harm the most marginalized." The dangers are clear, and so are the steps to address those dangers.

By continuing to sell your face surveillance product to government entities, Amazon is gravely threatening the safety of community members, ignoring the protests of its own workers, and undermining public trust in its business. Amazon must stop providing a face surveillance product to governments.

We look forward to your written response to this letter.

Signed,

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ACLU of Massachusetts
ACLU of Washington
New York Civil Liberties Union
18MillionRising.org
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Access Now
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American Friends Service Committee
American Muslim Empowerment Network-Muslim Association of Puget Sound
American Muslims of Puget Sound
Arab American Institute
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice- Asian Law Caucus
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area
Californians United for a Responsible Budget
Campaign for Accountability
Casa Latina
Center for Media Justice
Center on Policy Initiatives
Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice
Color Of Change
Council on American Islamic Relations, Massachusetts

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Justice for Muslims Collective
LAANE (Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy)
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
Library Freedom Project
Lucy Parsons Labs
Make the Road New York
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Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee of Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court
Mijente
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OCCORD (Orange County Communities Organized for Responsible Development)
OneAmerica

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The Greenlining Institute
The Legal Aid Society (NYC)
The Project on Government Oversight
Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment
Unitarian Universalist Mass Action
War Resisters League
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
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January 15, 2019

Sundar Pichai
Chief Executive Officer

Kent Walker
Senior Vice President, Global Affairs
Google LLC

Dear Mr. Pichai and Mr. Walker,

We are a coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights and liberties and safeguarding communities. We are encouraged by the initial steps Google has taken to recognize the harms of invasive surveillance technologies and artificial intelligence. As Mr. Pichai has said, the tech industry has a responsibility to think about the consequences of its technology, it "just can't build it and then fix it." We were also encouraged to see Google announce that it has not, and will not, sell a facial recognition product until the technology's dangers are addressed, acknowledging its susceptibility to abuse and the importance of Google's artificial intelligence (AI) principles.

We write today to call on Google to follow its AI principles and fully commit to not releasing a facial recognition product that could be used by governments.

Google has positioned itself as a leader in the field of responsible and ethical artificial intelligence. This year, in response to sustained employee activism over its work for the Pentagon, Google published its AI principles, pledging that the company will only seek to develop AI that is socially beneficial, free from unfair bias, and tested for safety. The Principles specifically state that Google will not release technologies that gather or use information for surveillance that violates international norms. Consistent with these Principles, Google announced in December 2018 that it has not, and will not sell a facial recognition product until the technology's dangers are addressed.

The dangers of face surveillance can only be fully addressed by stopping its use by governments. Face surveillance provides the government with an unprecedented ability to track who we are, where we go, what we do, and who we know. Face surveillance gives the government new power to target and single out immigrants, religious minorities, and people of color in our communities. Systems built on face surveillance will amplify and exacerbate historical and existing bias that harms these and other over-policed and over-surveilled communities. In a world with face surveillance, people will have to fear being watched and targeted by the government for attending a protest, congregating outside a place of worship, or simply living their lives.

This past year, Google employees have made it clear that they expect the company to stand up for the vulnerable and refuse to "outsource the moral responsibility of our technologies to third parties." In recent months, there has been widespread public concern about face

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surveillance, with dozens of members of Congress, shareholders, and over 150,000 members of the public blowing the whistle on the dangers of face surveillance both to the public and to public trust in companies.

By finalizing its commitment not to sell a face surveillance product, Google would also be safeguarding the trust of its workers, shareholders, and customers. Google has a responsibility to follow its AI principles. Selling a face surveillance product that could be used by the government will never be consistent with these Principles. It's time for Google to fully commit to not releasing a face recognition product that could be used by governments.

We look forward to your written response to this letter.

Signed,

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Satya Nadella
Chief Executive Officer

Brad Smith
President
Microsoft Corporation

Dear Mr. Nadella and Mr. Smith,

We are a coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights and liberties and safeguarding vulnerable communities. We commend Microsoft for acknowledging the grave risks associated with face surveillance and the need for action. We write today to call on Microsoft to commit that it will not provide its face surveillance product, Face API, to governments.

Microsoft has acknowledged the dangers of face surveillance and its responsibility to build and disseminate technology that does no harm. In a speech and blog post published on December 6th, Mr. Smith observed how widespread face recognition can lead to a surveillance society where bias and discrimination are exacerbated, privacy is virtually non-existent, and our democratic freedoms are eviscerated. Mr. Smith also acknowledged Microsoft's responsibility to take internal company steps to address these issues.

The dangers of face surveillance can only be fully addressed by stopping its use by governments. This technology provides the government with an unprecedented ability to track who we are, where we go, what we do, and who we know. With that power comes the ability to target and single out immigrants, religious minorities, and people of color in our communities. Systems built on face surveillance will amplify and exacerbate historical and existing bias that harms these and other over-policed and over-surveilled communities. In a world with face surveillance, people will have to fear being watched and targeted by the government for attending a protest, congregating outside a place of worship, or simply living their lives.

In his December 6 post, Mr. Smith acknowledged many of these dangers, but then proposed wholly inadequate safeguards. Reducing bias, providing notice to consumers, and requiring court orders for individual tracking will not prevent the grave consequences of face surveillance, particularly on vulnerable communities. Those safeguards will do nothing to stop the government from developing face surveillance systems that allow for general and widespread monitoring and tracking. Microsoft should not be helping to build this future.

Microsoft should listen to its employees, the public, and also take heed of competitor commitments. In June, Microsoft's own employees called on the company to "take an ethical stand, and put children and families above profits" in deciding how to do business with governments. In recent months, there has been widespread public concern about face surveillance, with dozens of members of Congress,

shareholders, and over 150,000 members of the public blowing the whistle on the dangers of face surveillance both to communities and to public trust in companies. In contrast to Microsoft, which is currently selling its Face API product, Google announced in December 2018 that it has not, and will not, sell a facial recognition surveillance product until the technology's dangers are addressed.

Microsoft has a responsibility to do more than speak about ethical principles; it must also act in accordance with those principles. This means that Microsoft must ensure that there is a meaningful debate about face surveillance before it is in the hands of government. There cannot be a meaningful debate about ethical use of this technology if it is already spreading to government agencies. We call on Microsoft not to provide a face surveillance product to governments.

We look forward to your written response to this letter.

Signed,

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