

Dutch alarm over ICC email block spurs tech review



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The Dutch government has expressed serious concern after Microsoft blocked the email account of Karim Khan, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. The move, reportedly linked to U.S. sanctions imposed under former President Donald Trump, has sparked a reassessment of the Netherlands' reliance on American technology providers.

According to De Volkskrant, the email block followed the ICC's issuance of an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. As a U.S.-based company, Microsoft complied with federal policy, cutting off Khan's access to critical communication tools.

"This incident has triggered red alerts throughout government," a senior Dutch official told De Volkskrant. "We are urgently reviewing our digital infrastructure and dependencies."

Dutch central bank chief Klaas Knot echoed these concerns, warning that many national systems, including iDEAL, the Dutch payment network, rely on U.S. firms. He highlighted the dominance of Amazon, Google, and Microsoft in cloud services used by Dutch banks and government agencies.

As scrutiny intensifies, interest in domestic alternatives has surged. Ludo Baauw, CEO of Intermax Group, a Rotterdam-based cloud provider, confirmed that at least 10 public institutions recently contacted his firm to reduce their dependence on U.S. platforms.

Baauw said migrating from Microsoft systems could take six months to three years, citing entrenched dependencies, including hiring practices favoring Microsoft-certified professionals.

Intermax is now assisting institutions with storing email backups within Dutch borders to prevent service disruptions, De Volkskrant reported.

The Dutch response reflects a growing concern in Europe over digital sovereignty and geopolitical risks tied to foreign-controlled tech infrastructure.

