

# HASHTAG PALESTINE 2025



7amleh - The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media

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February 2026

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## Executive summary

Hashtag Palestine 2025 is 7amleh's annual publication, looking at how Palestinian digital rights are being restricted through the combined role of the state, tech companies, and emerging technologies. In the context of ongoing occupation, war, and major human rights violations, state actors and technology companies have played a significant role in a system that enabled censorship, repression, surveillance, and control over information.

The findings of Hashtag Palestine 2025 show that this repression is built through a combination of Israeli laws, political pressure across borders, platform rules and discriminatory policies, and automated enforcement systems. Israeli authorities have expanded laws that criminalize online speech, symbolic solidarity, and political organizing. At the same time, surveillance of social media activity and consequent repressive actions have increased. As a result, many Palestinians, including students, journalists, and human rights defenders, practiced self-censorship or left digital spaces altogether out of fear of consequences.

Social media platforms played a central role in this reality. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, and X have removed, restricted, or reduced the reach of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian content in the last year. In many cases, users received no clear explanation and had no effective way to appeal decisions. Automated moderation systems, coordinated mass-reporting, and government takedown requests have led to the removal of content that documented human rights violations, expressed political opinions, or raised funds for humanitarian aid. At the same time, hate speech and incitement against Palestinians often remained online or was amplified through algorithms and paid content. 7amleh documented a total of 3,452 digital rights violations last year across social media platforms, including violent content and censorship cases.

The report also addressed the close relationship between major technology companies, including Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Palantir, as well as surveillance firms such as NSO Group, with Israeli military and intelligence bodies. Through cloud services, AI systems, data analysis tools, and spyware, these companies support large-scale surveillance and targeting of Palestinians during genocide. Gaza was and continues to be a testing ground for AI-based military technologies, where autonomous targeting systems inflicted great harm on the civilian population in an unprecedented manner globally.

Violations of Palestinian rights were further worsened by repeated internet shutdowns, destruction to telecommunications infrastructure, and the blocking of access to digital economy platforms and restrictions on fundraising for humanitarian aid.



## Report Methodology

Hashtag Palestine is based on a combination of documented cases, monitoring data, and desk research. The aim is to identify patterns of censorship, surveillance, and digital repression affecting Palestinians and pro-Palestinian expression, rather than focusing on isolated incidents.

The main source of data is *7or* - The Palestinian Observatory of Digital Rights Violations, 7amleh's digital rights monitoring and case-support platform. Through this platform, individuals, civil society actors, and partners submit reports of digital rights violations. These include content removals, account suspensions, shadowbanning, reduced reach and online harassment. Reported cases were reviewed, documented, and followed up to understand how platforms apply their rules in practice.

The report also draws on data from 7amleh's Violence Indicator, an automated monitoring tool used to track harmful and violent content in Arabic and Hebrew. The tool relies on machine-learning models trained on data annotated by 7amleh's team, allowing for better understanding of language, context, and political meaning.

In addition, the analysis is informed by 7amleh's ongoing engagement with affected users, including activists, journalists, academics, and human rights defenders. This includes case follow-ups, appeal processes, communication with platforms, and continuous monitoring of moderation trends, especially during periods of escalation.

Finally, desk research was conducted to place these findings within a broader context. This included reviewing investigative journalism, academic research, and civil society reports on platform governance, surveillance technologies, content moderation, and political repression.



## ◊ The Authorities

Israel escalated legal repression against its Palestinian citizens by criminalizing online expression, political activity, and symbolic solidarity. In March 2025, Israeli Knesset advanced draft legislation that would bar university student organizations from expressing support or solidarity with Palestinian groups deemed "hostile" to Israel, in a measure seen explicitly aimed at student unions and political blocs linked to Palestinian students in Israeli universities, effectively curtailing their political expression on campus<sup>1</sup>. This, along other previous legal amendments<sup>2</sup>, produced a pervasive climate of fear, driving widespread self-censorship, removal of posts on social media, and withdrawal from digital spaces, as online expression increasingly carried legal and administrative consequences.

In November 2025, the Israeli Knesset saw a bill introduced under the direction of National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir that aims to expand police powers to investigate alleged "incitement" without the oversight of the State Attorney's Office. The bill would dangerously lower the threshold for criminal investigations into online expression, allowing the police to open cases and detain individuals based on arbitrary interpretation of speech<sup>3</sup>. Even before the introduction of this bill, and since Ben Gvir took office as Minister, approximately 96% of related investigations targeted Palestinian citizens of Israel and Jerusalemites, while comparable posts by Jewish Israelis went largely unpunished<sup>4</sup>. During the Gaza war, over 1,400 Palestinians were arrested for social media activity, many later released without charge, highlighting the arbitrary and discriminatory application of these powers<sup>5</sup>.

The repression of pro-Palestinian expression also extended beyond Israel during the reporting period. Research indicated that activists, academics, and students in the United States and Europe faced increased scrutiny, including surveillance, workplace repercussions, visa-related consequences, and legal constraints due to their pro-Palestine political activism<sup>6</sup>. These developments created added legal and professional uncertainty for individuals expressing solidarity with Palestinians and suggested a widening impact of restrictions on Palestinian advocacy across borders.

At the same time, the space for political expression narrowed further in parts of Europe through the growing use of artificial intelligence in content monitoring. In Germany, authorities introduced AI-based tools to identify what was classified as "antisemitic content," using definitions that also covered certain forms of criticism of Israel<sup>7</sup>. This approach led to content removals and formal inquiries and had a chilling effect on public discussion, especially among Palestinians and those engaged in pro-Palestinian advocacy. The reliance on automated systems, which often lacked contextual sensitivity, contributed to uneven

<sup>1</sup> Middle East Monitor (2025). Israel Declares War on Its Own Palestinian Citizens.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250320-israel-declares-war-on-its-own-palestinian-citizens/>

<sup>2</sup> New Law Prohibiting the Consumption of Terrorist Publications (2023) <https://7amleh.org/post/7amleh-releases-a-position-paper-on-the-israeli-law-prohibiting-the-consumption-of-terrorist-publications>

<sup>3</sup> 7amleh – The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement (2025). Israel moves to expand police powers on Palestinian free expression. <https://7amleh.org/post/israel-moves-to-expand-police-powers-on-palestinian-free-expression-en>

<sup>4</sup> Under Ben-Gvir, 96% of Incitement Cases Opened by Israel Police Targeted Arabs (2025) <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/202510-11-ty-article/.premium/israeli-police-data-nearly-all-incitement-investigations-under-ben-gvir-targeted-arabs/0000019a-6a4b-dod1-a9bb-fb6ba4550000>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Inkstick Media (2025). Deep Dive: The American War on Palestine Solidarity. <https://inkstickmedia.com/deep-dive-the-american-war-on-palestine-solidarity/>

<sup>7</sup> Jacobin (2025). Germany Is Using AI to Erase Pro-Palestinian Speech. <https://jacobin.com/202505//germany-ai-palestine-israel-antisemitism>

outcomes and raised concerns about how political speech was being assessed and restricted.

The UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression Irene Khan highlighted that states and technology companies increasingly converge in regulating online platforms, often justifying restrictions under security or counterterrorism frameworks, which can disproportionately suppress marginalized voices and politically sensitive content<sup>8</sup>. Algorithmic moderation, automated enforcement, and opaque content policies were identified as major threats to freedom of expression, allowing arbitrary removal, shadow banning, and disproportionate targeting of certain users or communities.

Taken together, these developments reveal a converging architecture of control that integrates state legislation, policing, platform governance, transnational pressure, and AI-driven surveillance. This environment systematically restricts Palestinian and pro-Palestinian expression, eroding freedom of speech and highlighting the increasingly precarious digital-rights landscape faced by marginalized communities.

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations General Assembly (2025). Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, A/80341. <https://docs.un.org/en/A/80341/>

## ◊ Social Media Platforms

In 2025, social media platforms became increasingly contested spaces where narratives about Palestine were shaped and restricted. YouTube permanently deleted the channels of three prominent Palestinian human rights organizations—Al-Haq, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights—erasing more than 700 videos documenting war crimes in Gaza and the West Bank<sup>9</sup>. The company confirmed the removals were carried out to comply with U.S. government sanctions imposed over the groups' cooperation with the International Criminal Court. This action eliminated large bodies of evidentiary material from public access and exemplified how state pressure, mediated through U.S.-based tech platforms, were used to obstruct accountability and silence Palestinian civil society.

Through 7amleh's research, LinkedIn was found to have applied content moderation practices that disproportionately restricted Palestinian political expression. Users reported post removals, account limitations, and reduced visibility for content addressing Gaza, Israeli military actions, and Palestinian rights, while content dehumanizing Palestinians often remained accessible. The findings illustrate unequal enforcement of platform policies and show how professional networking platforms contributed to the marginalization of Palestinian voices.<sup>10</sup>

Bluesky has also faced backlash over censorship of Gaza-related fundraising accounts. Users reported their accounts were labeled as "spam," faced suspensions or restrictions, and in some cases were prevented from creating new accounts.<sup>11</sup>

Academic expression has also come under increasing pressure from corporate moderation last year. Google was documented to have removed a petition calling for the suspension of European funding to Israeli institutions, citing concerns over complicity in genocide.<sup>12</sup> The takedown of the petition restricted visibility among scholars and activists, exemplifying a broader trend in which major tech companies limit criticism of Israeli policies and constrain academic solidarity efforts, particularly when such initiatives challenge institutional ties or funding linked to state actors.

A Wikipedia controversy further illustrated these dynamics. After volunteers created a detailed entry on the Gaza genocide, the platform's co-founder blocked further edits, citing claims of bias.<sup>13</sup> This intervention froze documentation at a critical moment, curtailing open-source reporting on mass atrocities.

Reporting by Drop Site News revealed large-scale Israeli government campaigns to remove pro-Palestinian content on Meta's platforms. Since October 7, 2023, Meta complied with 94 % of takedown requests, removing over 90,000 posts—often within 30 seconds. Requests targeted users primarily in Arab and

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<sup>9</sup> The Intercept (2025). YouTube Quietly Erased More Than 700 Videos Documenting Israeli Human Rights Violations. [https://theintercept.com/2025/04/11/youtube-google-israel-palestine-human-rights-censorship/?utm\\_content=buffer69040&utm\\_medium=buffer&utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_campaign=theintercept](https://theintercept.com/2025/04/11/youtube-google-israel-palestine-human-rights-censorship/?utm_content=buffer69040&utm_medium=buffer&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=theintercept)

<sup>10</sup> 7amleh (2025). New Report by 7amleh Exposes Biased Content Moderation Practices on LinkedIn During the Genocide in Gaza. <https://7amleh.org/post/digital-rights-under-threat-en>

<sup>11</sup> MADR Alliance (2024). Bluesky is suspending Palestinian fundraiser accounts — here's how to avoid it. <https://madr.network/bluesky-is-suspending-palestinian-fundraiser-accounts-heres-how-to-avoid-it/>

<sup>12</sup> Aurdip (2025). Google takes down academic petition "STOP European Funding for Israeli Institutions – Stop Complicity in Genocide, Occupation and Apartheid." <https://aurdip.org/en/google-takes-down-academic-petition-stop-european-funding-for-israeli-institutions-stop-complicity-in-genocide-occupation-and-apartheid/>

<sup>13</sup> New York Post (2025). Wikipedia co-founder blocks editing of Gaza genocide page over "egregious anti-Israel claims." <https://nypost.com/2025/03/11/business/wikipedia-co-founder-blocks-editing-of-gaza-genocide-page-over-egregious-anti-israel-claims/>

Muslim-majority countries, making Israel the largest originator of government takedown requests globally. Automated moderation expanded, leading to approximately 38.8 million posts being removed. Posts expressing Palestinian perspectives that did not violate policy were frequently actioned, illustrating coordinated censorship with disproportionate impact on pro-Palestinian expression.<sup>14</sup>

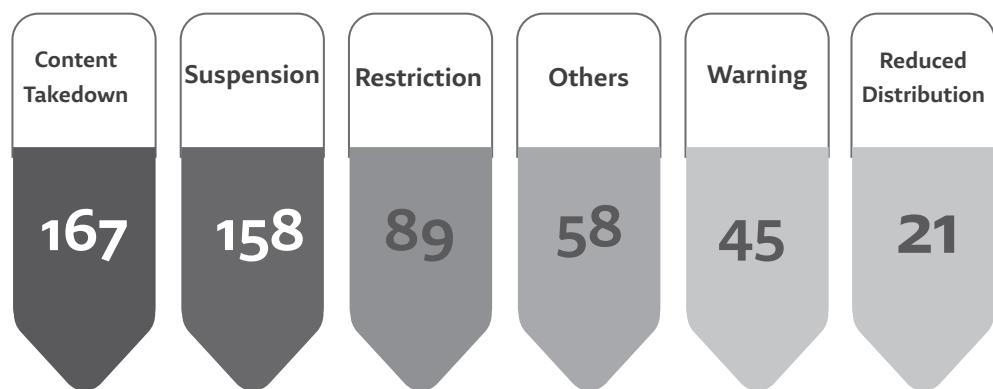
Finally, TikTok's moderation and governance emerged as a flashpoint amid U.S. debates over a potential ban. While official rationales centered on national security and Chinese ownership, real opposition has also been influenced mainly by the visibility of pro-Palestinian content. Analysts note that TikTok's recommendation algorithms and content visibility are entangled with geopolitical pressures, shaping public perception on the conflict. Changes in TikTok's ownership toward American tech and media figures aligned with conservative political networks raise concerns about future suppression of pro-Palestinian content, though users continue to seek alternative platforms for political expression.<sup>15</sup>

Below is an analysis of the censorship cases that 7amleh received through 7or Platform:

## Total



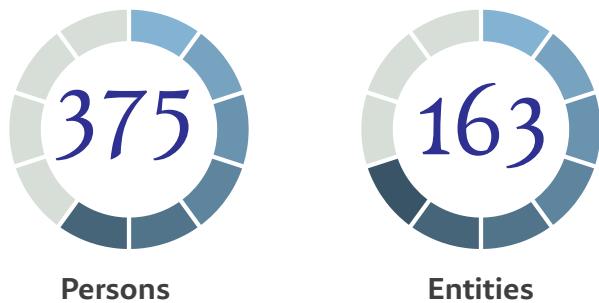
## Type Of Censorship



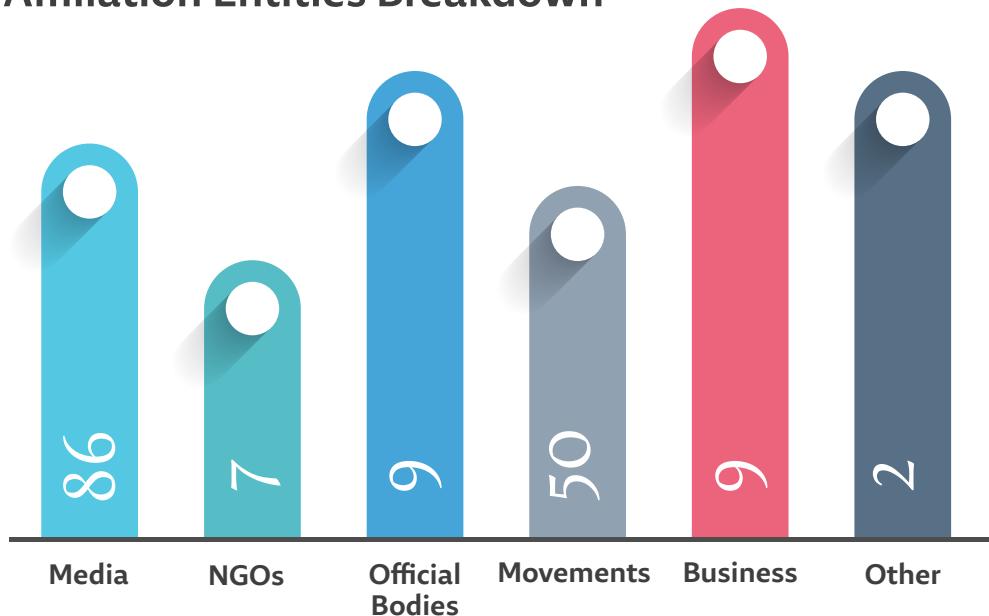
<sup>14</sup> Dropsite News (2025). Leaked data reveals Israeli censorship on Meta. <https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/leaked-data-israeli-censorship-meta>

<sup>15</sup> 7amleh – The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement (2025). Civil society express concern over the impending sale of U.S. TikTok. <https://7amleh.org/post/civil-society-express-concern-over-sale-of-tiktok-en>

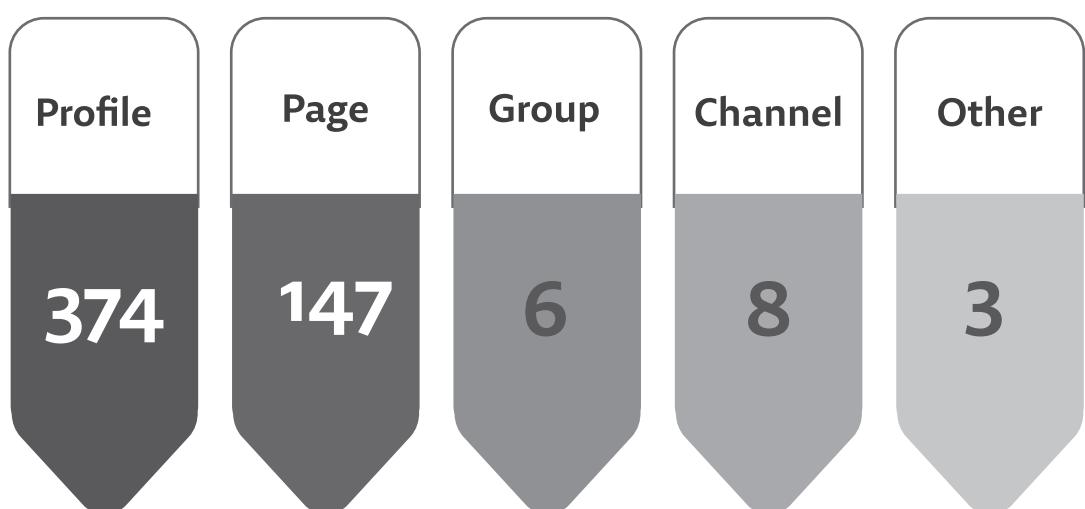
## Affiliation



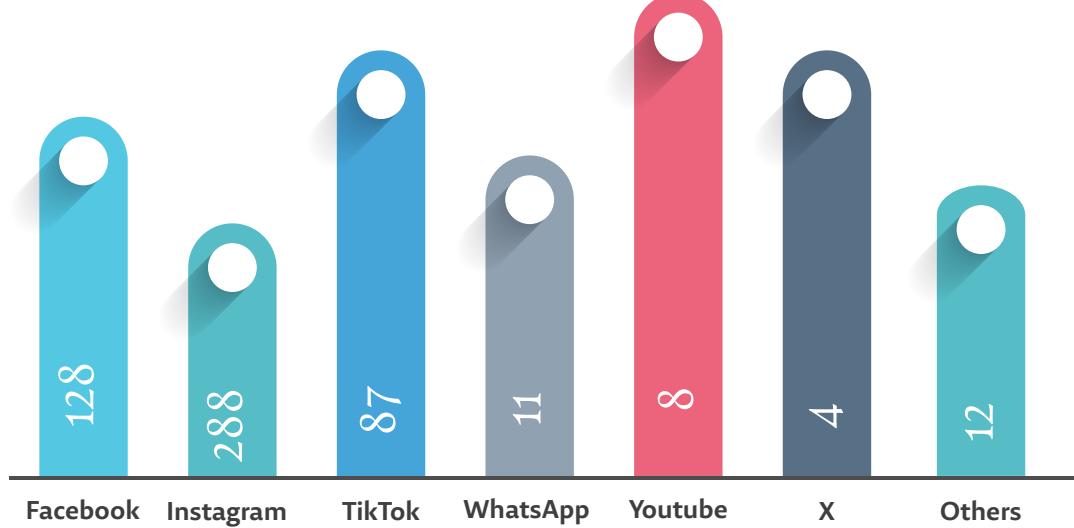
## Affiliation Entities Breakdown



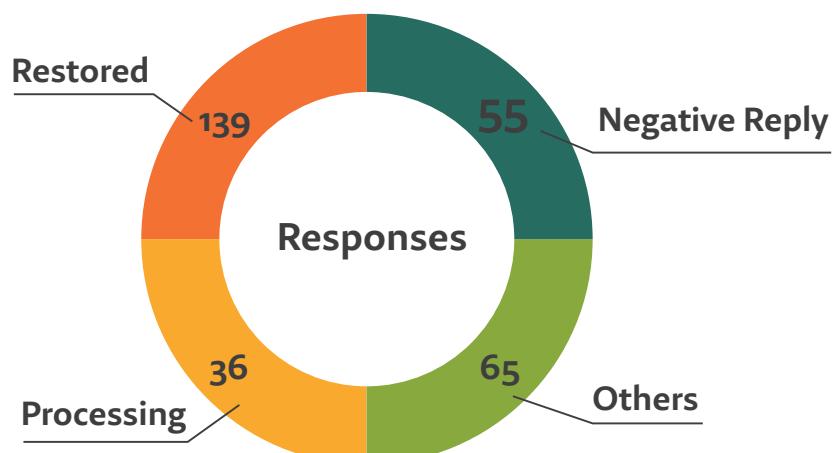
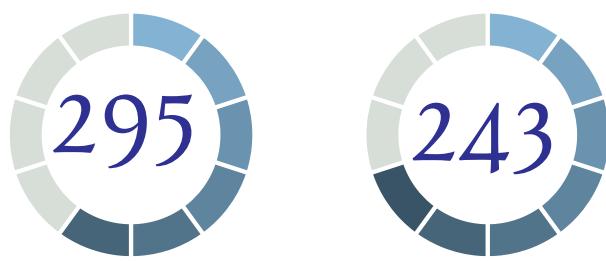
## Account Type



### Platform Breakdown



### Escalation Status

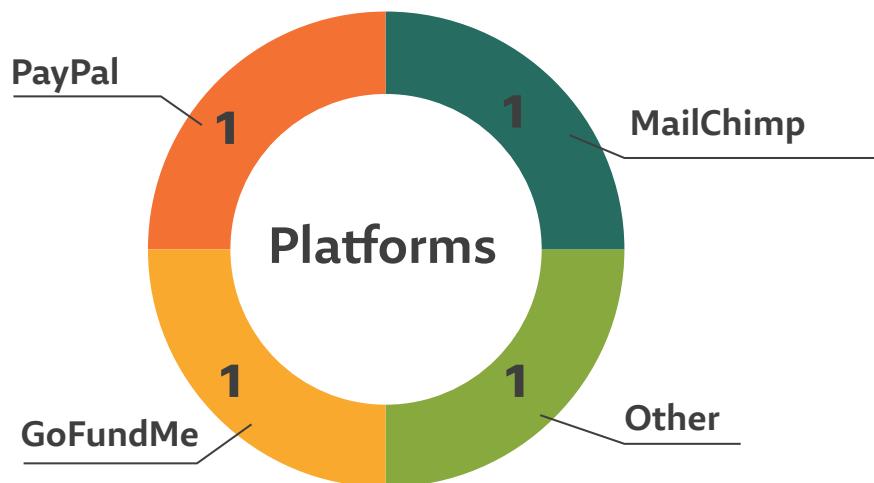


7amleh received the following cases where digital economic platforms suspended Palestinian accounts:

**Total**



**Platforms**





## The Duty to Ban Hateful and Discriminatory Content

Last year, Israel has increasingly turned to advanced digital propaganda to rebuild U.S. support for the genocide in Gaza. Recent findings show that the Israel funded AI-generated content, church-based outreach, and VR experiences crafted to promote its narrative while erasing Palestinian realities.<sup>16</sup> These tools produced tailored emotional messaging, fabricated testimonials, and immersive simulations presenting a one-sided view of the conflict. By deploying emerging technologies in targeted persuasion campaigns, Israel was seen to be amplifying misleading and discriminatory narratives, further distorting public perception and contributing to an online environment where Palestinian voices were marginalized.

Building on this, anti-Palestinian racism continued to shape global audiences' interpretation of the war, reinforcing harmful stereotypes and diminishing empathy for Palestinian civilians. Researchers highlighted that media outlets and social platforms often depicted Palestinians through dehumanizing tropes, framing them as inherently violent or responsible for their own suffering. This bias influenced how audiences processed images of destruction and civilian casualties, making them more likely to justify or overlook Israeli violence. Consequently, discriminatory content ecosystems flourished online, where hate speech targeting Palestinians spread widely while expressions of Palestinian identity or grief were disproportionately policed or removed.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to these structural biases, investigations revealed that Israeli government bodies and affiliated groups used YouTube ads to counter global concern over famine conditions in Gaza<sup>18</sup>. These ads downplayed the humanitarian crisis, questioned verified reports of starvation, and portrayed criticism of Israel's blockade as misinformation.

This digital manipulation extended to coordinated online discourse campaigns. Research showed that digital spaces had become central battlegrounds where Palestinians faced systematic delegitimization and dehumanization. Waves of coordinated hate speech, incitement, and disinformation framed Palestinians as enemies, justified violence against civilians, and portrayed humanitarian concerns as propaganda. Influential accounts, political actors, and algorithmic systems amplified these narratives, while Palestinian voices documenting human rights violations were removed or suppressed at far higher rates. This digital asymmetry reinforced real-world discrimination, creating an environment where harmful, racist narratives circulated unchecked.<sup>19</sup>

A recent example is a closed-door meeting convened by Israeli leadership, which illustrated a more targeted approach: social-media influencers from diverse platforms were recruited and paid per post to promote Israel's narrative, presenting military actions as justified and countering criticism. Influencers

<sup>16</sup> The New Arab (2025). Israel funds AI, "church," and VR propaganda to rebuild US support. <https://www.newarab.com/news/israel-funds-ai-church-and-vr-propaganda-rebuild-us-support>

<sup>17</sup> DW (2025). How anti-Palestinian racism shapes public perceptions of war on Gaza. <https://www.dw.com/en/how-anti-palestinian-racism-shapes-public-perceptions-of-war-on-gaza/a-74544117>

<sup>18</sup> The Washington Post (2025). Google email shows it ruled Israel's ads claiming 'There is food in Gaza' aren't misleading. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2025/10//israel-ads-youtube-famine-gaza/>

<sup>19</sup> 7amleh – The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement (2025). A War Without Bullets: How Disinformation Reshapes the Reality of Palestinian Youth on the Backdrop of a Genocide. <https://7amleh.org/post/a-war-without-bullets-en>

received talking points, curated visuals, and messaging strategies to influence Western audiences, particularly youth. This strategy demonstrated a shift from using social media as a communication tool to treating it as a strategic battleground in narrative warfare.<sup>20</sup>

Concurrently, platform moderation policies contributed to these dynamics. At the beginning of 2025, Meta relaxed content moderation on Facebook and Instagram, allowing a wider range of derogatory and dehumanizing speech targeting races, ethnicities, nationalities, gender identities, and sexual orientations. The changes suspended parts of fact-checking programs and allowed expressions of contempt toward protected groups. Enforcement was selective, reflecting political influence rather than neutral policy, and experts warned these shifts risked amplifying dehumanizing narratives and perpetuating real-world discrimination.<sup>21</sup>

Meta platforms also hosted paid ads soliciting donations for IDF military equipment, since March 2025, at least 117 ads explicitly requested funding for combat-related purposes, reaching at least 76,000 impressions in the EU and UK alone. Meta said it reviewed and removed the ads for violating company policy after the Guardian and Ekō reached out for comment.<sup>22</sup> However, repeated approval of identical content demonstrated insufficient enforcement, illustrating how online platforms could facilitate real-world violence.

Meta's platforms played as well a role in amplifying harmful content that incited violence against Palestinians, justified collective punishment, or celebrated military attacks amidst the Genocide. While automated enforcement tools and opaque moderation processes disproportionately targeted Arabic-language content and Palestinian political expression, resulting in large-scale erasure of documentation and testimony, Meta failed to apply its policies consistently and contributed to an information environment in which Palestinian suffering was obscured, accountability was undermined, and digital spaces normalized dehumanization during the genocide.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, Meta platforms hosted paid advertisements promoting illegal Israeli settlements and far-right settler activity in the occupied West Bank. Over 100 ads marketed homes in settlements such as Ariel, Ma'ale Adumim, and Efrat, sometimes calling for the demolition of Palestinian homes or soliciting funds for military operations in Gaza<sup>24</sup>. Framed as standard property listings, the ads bypassed moderation, despite international law deeming West Bank settlements illegal. Legal experts argued Meta could be complicit in violations by hosting and profiting from such content, demonstrating how platform algorithms and advertising systems amplified discriminatory narratives online<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> The New Arab (2025). Narrative warfare: Inside Israel's battle for influence on social media. <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/how-social-media-became-new-frontline-israels-digital-war>

<sup>21</sup> The Intercept (2025). Leaked Meta Rules: Users Are Free to Post "Mexican Immigrants Are Trash!" or "Trans People Are Immoral." [https://theintercept.com/202509/01/facebook-instagram-meta-hate-speech-content-moderation/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter](https://theintercept.com/202509/01/facebook-instagram-meta-hate-speech-content-moderation/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter)

<sup>22</sup> The Guardian (2025). Meta allows ads crowdfunding for IDF drones, consumer watchdog finds. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jul/21/meta-idf-drone-ads-israel>

<sup>23</sup> 7amleh – The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement (2025). Meta's Role in Amplifying Harmful Content During Genocide in Gaza.. <https://7amleh.org/post/meta-s-role-during-genocide-en>

<sup>24</sup> Al Jazeera (2025). Meta profits as ads promote illegal Israeli settlements in West Bank. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/202531/3/meta-profits-as-ads-promote-illegal-israeli-settlements-in-west-bank>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

Digital platforms also facilitated state-coordinated campaigns that included disinformation. Evidence indicated that Google allowed the Israeli government to purchase sponsored search content targeting the Global Sumud Flotilla, a nonviolent coalition aiming to break the Gaza blockade. Sponsored content misrepresented participants as aligned with terrorist groups, framing them as threats and undermining their humanitarian mission. This effort formed part of a \$45 million contract spanning Google search and YouTube, illustrating how digital platforms were leveraged to amplify state-sponsored disinformation, shape public perception, and endanger civilians.<sup>26</sup>

In line with those updates, 7amleh detected and documented a huge number of violent and harmful posts targeting Palestinians and pro-Palestine activists across social media platforms, mainly in Hebrew.

Hebrew Violence Indicator Data

**Total**



**Distribution of Violence Across Platforms**



**Facebook**

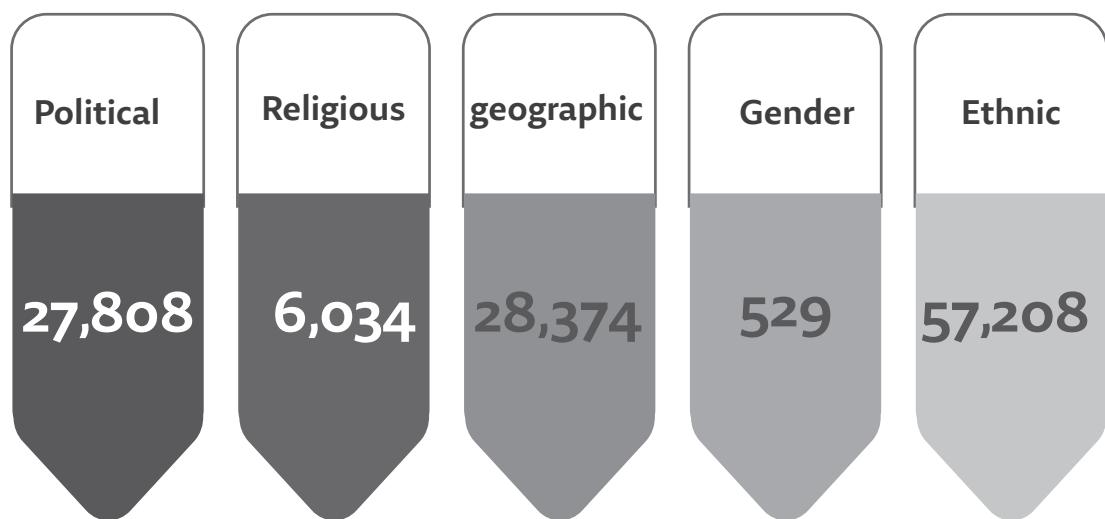


**X**

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<sup>26</sup> Truthout (2025). Google allows Israel-sponsored propaganda about Global Sumud Flotilla. <https://truthout.org/articles/google-allows-israel-sponsored-propaganda-about-global-sumud-flotilla/>

## Distribution of Basis of Violence



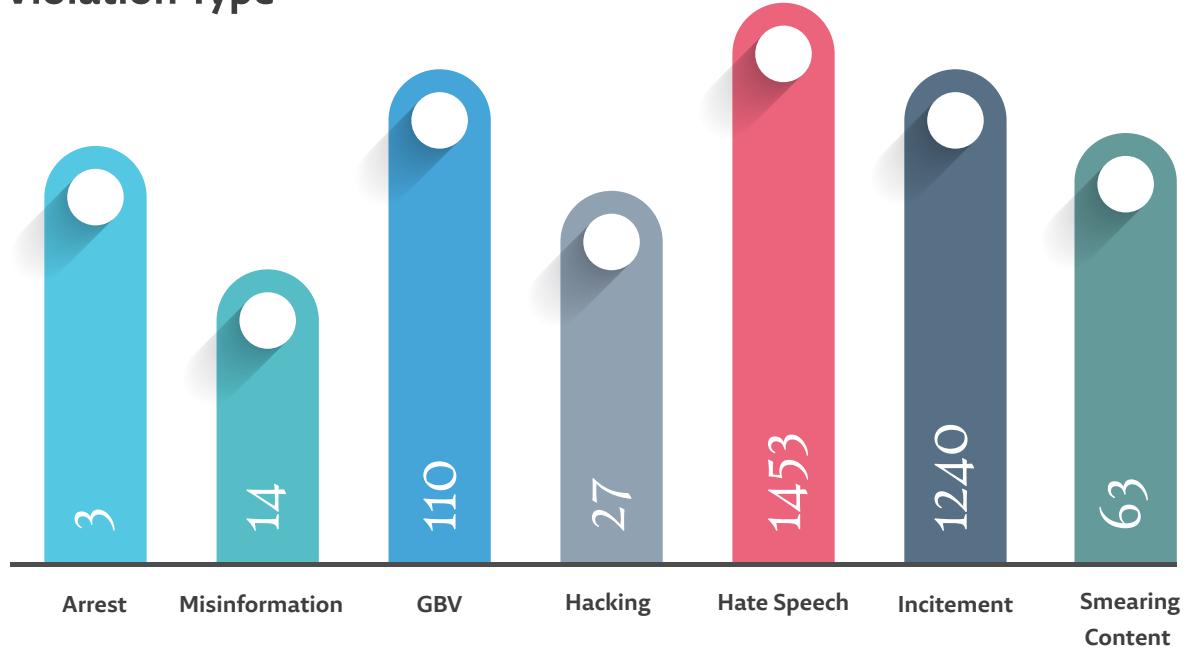
## Engagement

	Hate Speech	Incitement	Insults	Smearing	Others
Cases Count	33,732	83,098	8,632	190	295
Engagement	2,133,066	4,376,621	350,166	17,092	38,176

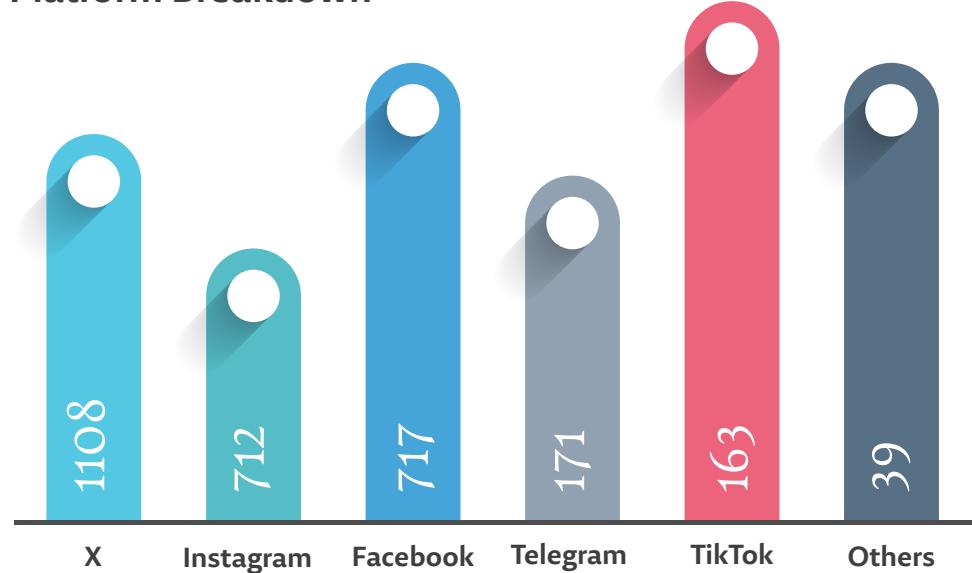
**Total**



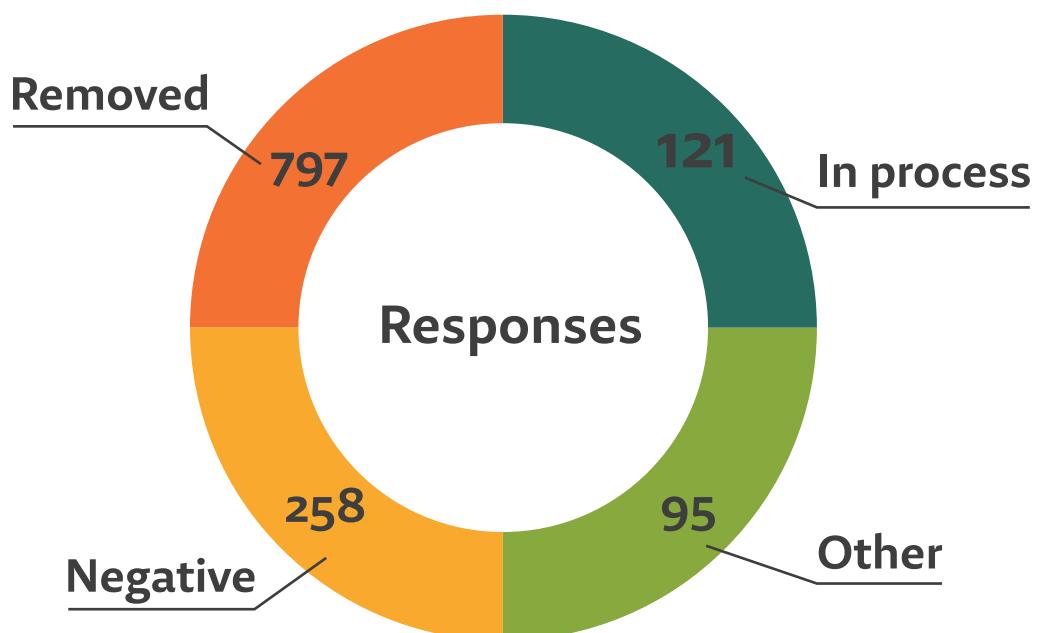
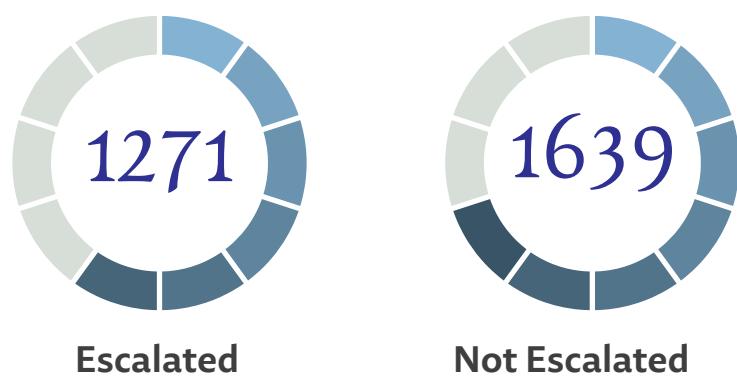
**Violation Type**



## Platform Breakdown



## Action Taken



## ◊ Big Tech

In 2025, major tech companies—including Microsoft, Meta, Google, and Amazon—continued supplying surveillance and AI tools that directly supported Israeli military operations in Gaza and the West Bank, enabling mass monitoring, censorship, and targeting of Palestinian communities.

Reports documented that Microsoft, Meta, Google, and Amazon went on in their complicity in supporting Israeli surveillance and military operations in Gaza and the West Bank. Leaked documents and whistleblower accounts showed these firms providing cloud computing, AI, and data analytics that enabled mass surveillance, AI-assisted targeting, and censorship of Palestinian voices.<sup>27</sup>

Microsoft was implicated in enabling Israeli military surveillance in Gaza and the West Bank. Investigations revealed that Israel's Unit 8200 used Microsoft Azure cloud services to store and process over 11,500 terabytes of intercepted communications, supporting systematic monitoring of Palestinians.<sup>28</sup> Programs like "Lavender" assisted in target identification, while translation and AI services accounted for most usage. Between June 2023 and April 2024, military cloud storage rose 155%, peaking before the Rafah offensive in May 2024, with engineering support reportedly costing \$10 million and further projects planned.<sup>29</sup>

Google's Project Nimbus highlighted as well corporate complicity in militarized AI deployment. New internal documents revealed that before signing the contract, Google acknowledged it could not fully monitor how its cloud and AI tools would be used. The agreement, extendable up to 23 years, also restricted Google from responding to foreign legal requests without Israeli approval. Despite recommendations to withhold AI tools, the company proceeded, estimating \$3.3 billion in revenue from military, financial, and corporate clients. Employee protests demanding protection for Palestinian and Arab staff led to retaliatory firings, exposing the moral and legal dilemmas of supplying dual-use technologies in conflict zones.<sup>30</sup>

Big tech companies not only continued providing Israel with the technical infrastructure for its military operations, but also increasingly penalized internal advocacy for Palestinian rights, exposing employees and users to censorship and retaliation.

A recent lawsuit against Meta alleged that a Muslim employee was fired after opposing the Gaza genocide and advocating for Palestinian human rights. According to the complaint, the employee faced escalating retaliation for sharing internal messages calling for accountability and raising concerns about Meta's

<sup>27</sup> Anadolu Agency (2025). 2 years of genocide: Big Tech complicit in Israel's destruction of Gaza? <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/2-years-of-genocide-big-tech-complicit-in-israel-s-destruction-of-gaza/3711449>

<sup>28</sup> The Hindu (2025). How Israel used Azure to monitor Palestinians | Explained. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/how-israel-used-azure-to-monitor-palestinians-explained/article70103052.ece>

<sup>29</sup> Dopsite News (2025). The Israeli military is one of Microsoft's top AI customers, leaked documents reveal. [https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/microsoft-azure-israel-top-customer-ai-cloud?publication\\_id=2510348&utm\\_campaign=email-post-title&r=i80go&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/microsoft-azure-israel-top-customer-ai-cloud?publication_id=2510348&utm_campaign=email-post-title&r=i80go&utm_medium=email)

<sup>30</sup> The Guardian (2025). Microsoft launches inquiry into claims Israel used its tech for mass surveillance of Palestinians. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/15/microsoft-launches-inquiry-claims-israel-used-tech-mass-surveillance-palestinians>

<sup>30</sup> The Nation (2025). I've worked at Google for decades. I'm sickened by what it's doing. <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/google-employee-speaks-out-war-contracting/tnamp/> & The Intercept (2025). Google worried it couldn't control how Israel uses Project Nimbus, files reveal. <https://theintercept.com/2025/05/google-nimbus-israel-military-ai-human-rights/>

censorship of Palestinian content. The case illustrates how political pressures shape not only what users can express online but also what employees can say internally, creating an environment in which pro-Palestinian rights viewpoints are treated as risks.<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, in October 2025, Amazon terminated Ahmed Shahrour, a Palestinian employee, after he publicly protested the company's contracts with the Israeli government. Shahrour criticized Amazon for providing technology and logistics services used in surveillance and other operations targeting Palestinians, framing his activism around concerns over corporate complicity in human rights abuses.<sup>32</sup>

The cases demonstrate that employees who raise human rights concerns about their employer's engagements with states accused of violations can face retaliation, including dismissal.

Furthermore, last year, GoFundMe blocked or froze fundraising campaigns intended to provide humanitarian aid to Gaza. These restrictions prevented critical access to medical care, emergency supplies, and other life-saving support, reflecting digital discrimination in conflict zones. The platform's policies underscored the need for corporate responsibility to ensure equitable access to humanitarian assistance and raised broader concerns about digital rights, financial inclusion, and accountability during crises.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) (2025). CAIR Sues Meta for Discriminatory Treatment of Muslim Employee Over Pro-Palestine, Anti-Genocide Advocacy. [https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/cair-sues-meta-for-firing-of-muslim-employee-over-pro-palestine-anti-genocide-advocacy/](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-sues-meta-for-firing-of-muslim-employee-over-pro-palestine-anti-genocide-advocacy/)

<sup>32</sup> CNBC (2025). Amazon fires employee who was suspended for protesting company's work with Israel. <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/10/10/amazon-fires-ahmed-shahrour-for-protesting-companys-work-with-israel.html>

<sup>33</sup> 7amleh (2025). GoFundMe Must Stop Blocking Lifesaving Fundraising Campaigns to Gaza. <https://7amleh.org/post/gofundme-must-stop-blocking-lifesaving-fundraising-campaigns-to-gaza>



## Conclusion

The evidence in Hashtag Palestine makes one thing clear: digital technologies are central to the systems of control imposed on Palestinians. This is not a collection of isolated incidents, but a coherent pattern in which state power, corporate infrastructure, and algorithms all reinforce one another. Through surveillance, censorship, and restrictions on digital access, Palestinians face domination that stretches far beyond the physical world into the digital realm.

Technology companies play a critical role in this landscape. By providing cloud services, AI tools, data analytics, and content moderation infrastructure to Israeli state and military institutions, they have moved from passive providers to active enablers of human rights violations. Claims of neutrality did not hold up against documented evidence of knowledge, sustained partnerships, and profit-driven expansion into military and security applications. The use of Gaza as a testing ground for AI-enabled warfare sets a troubling precedent with implications far beyond the region.

At the same time, social media platforms have fallen short of even their own commitments to free expression, equality, and safety. Palestinian voices are disproportionately silenced, humanitarian fundraising is obstructed, and racist or dehumanizing content is tolerated—or even amplified. Platform governance, shaped more by political pressure than by rights-based principles, distorts public discourse and produces real harm, isolating communities and undermining accountability for mass atrocities.

Restrictions on internet access, gendered digital violence, and economic exclusion deepen inequality and vulnerability. Yet Palestinians continue to resist. Through documentation, alternative platforms, secure communication, and collective organizing, they assert their presence in spaces designed to erase them.



## Recommendations

### To Social Media Platforms and Technology Companies

- Streamline reporting mechanisms for digital violations, ensuring timely and evidence-based responses.
- Allocate resources and expertise—regional, linguistic, and socio-political—to moderate content in ways that respect human rights.
- Conduct regular, transparent human rights impact assessments and implement their recommendations within clear timelines.
- Ensure proportionality, accountability, and due legal process in content moderation.
- Provide users with clear explanations and opportunities to appeal content removal decisions, while retaining removed content for a reasonable period.
- Avoid one-size-fits-all policies and ensure non-discrimination.
- Respect press freedom and allow content from citizen journalists, even if it references banned organizations or conflict-related events.
- Should not deploy technologies with known military applications in ways that could facilitate human rights violations.
- Provide full transparency on content moderation processes, government requests, and the use of automated systems and algorithms, including keyword lists in relevant languages.



## To Civil Society and International Actors

- Urge immediate measures to halt systemic violations of Palestinian digital rights and establish accountability mechanisms for severe abuses, including attacks on telecommunications infrastructure.
- Ensure online platforms comply with the Digital Services Act (DSA) and other regulations in a manner that is grounded in international human rights standards, context-sensitive, non-discriminatory, and informed by global perspectives.
- Address gaps in AI and platform regulation, including technologies deployed outside Europe, to prevent discriminatory practices against Palestinians.
- Require companies to adhere to human rights principles, International Humanitarian Law, and due diligence obligations, especially during crises.
- Promote active engagement with civil society to safeguard and advance Palestinian digital rights effectively.

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