

Key questions for stakeholders

The Special Rapporteur invites stakeholders, including Member States, international organizations, national human rights institutions, digital technology companies, civil society organizations, media representatives, and scholars to share their views.

In particular, she would welcome contributions in response to one or more of the following questions:

1. a) Please describe specific situations where disinformation, misinformation or propaganda have been used or restrictions have been placed on the media or access to the Internet in order to instigate, aggravate or sustain hatred, violence or conflict. What means and methods are used to manipulate information in such situations?

Social media platforms in Israel and Palestine are heavily silencing and censoring Palestinian voices and perspectives. This is contributing to a false narrative about what is happening on the ground, and erasing documentation of human rights violations. There has long been discussion around bias and manipulation in legacy media's coverage of Israel and Palestine, but as social media becomes more and more influential, there needs to be a greater emphasis in protecting Palestinians Freedom of Expression on social media platforms. Currently, Palestinian content is being double over moderated; while, hate speech and incitement of violence against Palestinians in Hebrew is proliferating across different platforms. This is due to insufficient content moderation processes that over moderate content about Palestine, and content in Arabic, leading to Palestinians content being double-over moderated. Opaque content moderation policies make it confusing for Palestinians to understand why their posts are taken down, and leave little recourse for individual users. Finally, the state of Israel holds a special relationship with Meta, which results in further take downs of Palestinian content, while Hebrew content is left almost entirely alone.

Recently, after the assassination of the Palestinian veteran journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh, which was confirmed by different media outlets like CNN, AP among others that she was killed by the Israeli authorities, 7amleh has escalated a piece of content of Meta to be labeled as disinformation, this video was published by the Israeli spokesperson, Meta didn't take any action in this regard and kept the disinformation video on its platform, which affects the Narrative and contributes to Israel impunity.

In addition to that, 7amleh's "Index of Racism and Incitement on Israeli Social Media in 2021", an increase in incitement by 3 times since 2020. Violence speech against Palestinians, Arabs and their representatives further intensified, constituting 11% of overall speech online – an unprecedented rate since 2017. It also indicated an increase in hate speech by 8% since 2020, monitored 620,000 conversations including violence and

inciting speech against Arabs, and recorded an increase by 46,000 posts including violence speech, compared with 574,000 in 2020. The peak of violent speech was recorded in March 2021, during Israeli elections, and April-May, during the May Uprising and Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip. Which led to a real world harm, where the Israelis were spreading incitement and hate speech, mobilizing and organizing themselves in the online spaces to attack Palestinians on the offline spaces.

c) What has been the impact on human rights and the lives of people? Which groups of people have been particularly affected and in what ways?

This has led to a chilling effect within Palestinian society. Palestinians now self-censor, and when they do feel brave enough to speak out, their content is often flagged and taken down. This has also led to the erasure of documentation of human rights violations. Just within the last year, Palestinians live streaming forced evictions in Jerusalem, Palestinians being beaten and harassed by Israeli police while praying at Al-Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan, and Palestinians being generally harassed by the Israeli army has all been flagged as “Against Community Standards” and taken down. Not only is this a violation of Palestinians Freedom of Expression, it is an intentional manipulation of the media, so as to confuse an international audience about the truth of what is happening in Palestine.

Please share any relevant documents, reports, news or academic articles that you believe should be considered by the Special Rapporteur.

[Hateful Network:](#)

- 7amleh report on hate speech against Palestinians on Social Media

[Position Paper on the Bill for Preventing Incitement on Social Media, 2021](#)

- Legal Analysis on Israel’s so called “Facebook Law”

[Facebook's Secret Blacklist of “Dangerous Individuals and Organizations”](#)

[How a Secretive Cyber Unit Censors Palestinians - The American Prospect](#)

['Burn Their Homes': Israeli WhatsApp Groups Are Organizing Attacks on Arabs](#)

[Oversight Board overturns original Facebook decision: Case 2021-009-FB-UA](#)

- Meta Oversight Board’s recommendation that Meta commission an independent review of Hebrew and Arabic content moderation on their platforms with regards to Israel and Palestine