

Open Letter to Meta Regarding its Response and Actions during the Gaza War

14 March 2024

To Sir Nick Clegg, President of Global Affairs, Meta

CC: Neil Potts, VP, Public Policy, Trust & Safety
Miranda Sissons, Director of Human Rights
Mazuba Haanyama, Head of Human Rights, Public Policy for AMET

Dear Sir Clegg,

We write to you as a coalition of [19 global and regional human rights organizations](#) to firstly thank you for [speaking with us on February 22](#) to discuss the negative human rights implications of Meta's content moderation policies and actions in response to the ongoing crisis in Israel/Palestine.

As the war continues in the Gaza Strip and its reverberations are felt across the globe, ensuring that Meta upholds its human rights commitments is more crucial than ever. However, as we emphasized in our meeting, we remain concerned by three key issues:

- The systematic censorship and silencing of Palestinian voices and Palestine-related content across Meta's platforms;
- Meta's inconsistent response to different armed conflict situations, including its content policy enforcement; and
- The proliferation of hate speech, dehumanization, genocidal rhetoric, and incitement to violence against Palestinians which exacerbates the likelihood of offline violence.

In light of the above, we are following up with further questions about Meta's current crisis response:

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- **What concrete steps has Meta taken to address and mitigate the overmoderation of Palestine-related content in your current crisis response as previously outlined in your 2022 human rights due diligence report on Meta's content moderation policies and actions in Israel/Palestine?**
 - More specifically, has Meta conducted any heightened human rights due diligence prior to the steps it has taken since October 7, 2023, to assess and mitigate any foreseen human rights risks per its responsibilities under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?
 - If so, can you share with us your findings?
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- **What specific changes or restrictions has Meta made to its recommender systems since October 7, 2023? What measures has Meta taken to assess and mitigate any foreseen negative human rights impacts of such changes/restrictions?**
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- **What resources (human and financial) has Meta committed since October 7, 2023 to account for the risks of offline harm in light of the recent targeting and killing of Palestinians globally?**
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- **Has Meta investigated [recent incidents](#) which resulted in algorithmic anti-Palestinian bias which occurred on Instagram and WhatsApp? If so, what concrete measures has it taken to prevent similar future incidents?**
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- **How many classifiers does Meta employ for Arabic language content moderation? What is their accuracy rate?**
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- **Similarly, how many classifiers does Meta employ for Hebrew language content moderation? What is their accuracy rate?**
 - As previously noted, what other measures have Meta implemented to properly moderate the proliferation of hate speech in Hebrew language in the absence of a fully operational and well trained hate speech Hebrew classifier?
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- **In light of the recent provisional measures order issued by the International Court of Justice and repeated statements by UN experts on “increasing genocidal incitement”, what specific actions is Meta taking to prevent the spread of incitement to genocide on its platforms, particularly from Israeli government officials and politicians?**
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- **Has Meta conducted any heightened human rights due diligence to assess how its current content moderation and curation practices may have impacted conflict dynamics, which have put Palestinians in Gaza at a plausible risk of genocide, or may have contributed to violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and international criminal law by parties to the conflict?**
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- **What is the exact number and nature of requests received by the Israeli authorities, and particularly the Cyber Unit, and any other government since October 7, 2023? How many requests did Meta comply with?**
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- **Which actors beyond law enforcement can send a request for (extended) data retention during crises? If such a request requires providing specific content URLs (instead of geographical scope), how does Meta handle situations in which content has been algorithmically removed before it has been seen by anyone?**

We thank you, once again, for your engagement with us on this very critical issue and we look forward to receiving answers to these questions in writing by **March 28, 2024**.

Sincerely,

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