

## **EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SHAPING NARRATIVES AND PERCEPTIONS IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The enduring Israeli-Palestinian conflict has entered a new phase of narrative shaping with the advent of social media, profoundly influencing the dissemination of information and the dynamics of engagement. This article provides an examination of social media's influence on the conflict, offering insights into its dual capacity as a tool for both unity and division. Social media platforms have disrupted traditional media's gatekeeping role, enabling diverse voices to surface and grassroots narratives to gain international attention. These platforms empower activists and citizens to broadcast their experiences and mobilize support, yet they equally facilitate the spread of disinformation and incitement. Through a critical literature analysis, the paper explores the role these digital arenas play in shaping public opinion and influencing policy. It underscores the ethical challenges and weaponization potential of social media, while also considering its implications for future peace-making efforts. Conclusively, the article argues for the strategic and mindful use of social media, urging a balance between harnessing its power for constructive dialogue and mitigating its risks of exacerbating tensions. It underscores the importance of digital literacy and empathy in leveraging social media for a positive transformation in one of the world's most longstanding conflicts.

**Keywords:** *Social media, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, public opinion, information dissemination, political narratives, peacebuilding*

### **1. Introduction**

The protracted conflict between Israeli and Palestinian communities has entered a new phase in the digital era, where social media has become a stage of multidimensional influence and engagement (Yarchi & Ayalon, 2023). It is essential to discern the intricate ways in which platforms that were ostensibly designed to connect friends and family are now pivotal in the propagation of political ideologies, the mobilization of support, and even in the orchestration of protest and dissent. As such, this article unravels the threads of social media's impact on the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, providing a preliminary reflection on its multifarious roles and implications.

The examination of the historical context sets the stage for understanding the present dynamics. This involves a retrospective glance at the modes of communication that predated social media, to appreciate the transformative shift that digital platforms have inaugurated. This digital revolution has not only altered the velocity of information exchange but has also democratized the creation and dissemination of content. Thus, in this context, the article traces the evolution from traditional media's gatekeeping to the real-time, decentralized broadcast capabilities of social media, contemplating the consequences of this shift in the unique socio-political landscape of the Israeli-Palestinian milieu.

The article dissects the role of social media in mobilizing public opinion and influencing the international discourse on the conflict. The unrivalled speed at which information, narratives, and counter-narratives are spread among global audiences has had profound implications for the shaping of both domestic and international perspectives. This section interrogates how these platforms have become arsenals for competing narratives, allowing for an unprecedented scale of engagement and interaction between conflicting parties and international onlookers. The ramifications of this connectivity are profound, presenting both opportunities for increased understanding and challenges in the form of escalated tensions and spread of misinformation.

## **2. Historical Context**

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, deeply rooted in historical and territorial claims, spans back to the early 20th century (Yarchi & Ayalon, 2023). The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent Arab-Israeli war led to the displacement of a large number of Palestinians and set the stage for decades of strife (Chorev, 2019). Following the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel's occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank further intensified the conflict. Palestinian resistance took shape, with various groups emerging, most notably Hamas, dedicated to opposing Israeli presence in Palestinian territories (Huda, Nurmandi, Qodir, Sutan, & Utaminingsih, 2022).

The cycle of violence and attempts at peace marked the years that followed, with significant incidents shaping the conflict's trajectory (Magdaci, Matalon, & Yamin, 2022). In 2005, Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip was seen as a momentous event, leading to Hamas's electoral victory and eventual control over Gaza. This shift resulted in heightened tensions and outbreaks of violence, including Operation Cast Lead in 2008, launched by Israel in response to rocket attacks by Hamas. The pattern of conflict continued with escalations in 2014, sparked by tragic events and leading to another major military confrontation in Gaza (David, & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2023).

The period from 2019 to 2021 saw intermittent spikes in violence, characterized by cross-border hostilities with rocket attacks and airstrikes resulting in casualties and significant damage (David & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2023). The volatile situation escalated dramatically in October 2023, when Hamas intensified rocket assaults into Israeli territory. Israel's subsequent

declaration of war and the comprehensive siege of Gaza marked a new phase of intense conflict. The international community's response, calling for restraint and advocating for diplomatic resolutions, underscored the complexity of achieving a sustainable peace (Magdaci, Matalon, & Yamin, 2022).

In this chronology, social media's role has become increasingly central, with its influence permeating each phase of the conflict. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and others now serve as primary sources of information, arenas for ideological battles, and tools for international diplomacy (Garra-Alloush & Magadley, 2022). The current digital landscape, especially considering the recent escalations, emphasizes the need for a critical examination of how social media shapes the narrative and potentially impacts the trajectory of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is a modern theatre where historical grievances are aired, and future strategies are debated, with every post, tweet, and share contributing to a global understanding and engagement with this enduring struggle (Lewis, 2023).

### 3. Social Media and Public Opinion

Social media has fundamentally altered the landscape of communication in areas of conflict and peacebuilding. For example, on October 16, a post from the Prime Minister of Israel's account (@IsraeliPM) stated that:

*"There is a struggle between the children of light and children of darkness, between humanity and law of the jungle."*

Additionally, on October 17, Itamar Ben Gvir, the Minister of National Security, stated on Twitter:

*"As long as Hamas does not release the hostages in its hands – the only thing that needs to enter Gaza are hundreds of tons of explosives from the Air Force, not an ounce of humanitarian aid"*

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has been vocal in his support for Israel. He stated,

*"I'm sick of hearing the media, I'm sick of hearing other people blame Israel just for defending itself," and also mentioned that he had banned a Palestinian student advocacy group from state universities."*

Nikki Haley, former Ambassador to the United Nations: Along with DeSantis, used strong language to push Israel to act in Gaza, saying "Finish them. Finish them," in response to a question about whether she would urge a "humanitarian pause" during the fighting

State of Palestine using the tag @Palestine\_UN on posted that.

*"What would you do if your country was occupied, if your land was stolen, if your ppl were oppressed...Revisit your own history, what did you do? Long ago we said it was time to live & let live. Either we live side by side, or I fear we might die side by side. Help us live."*

The advent of social media has brought a transformational shift in how individuals and groups organize and galvanize support for various causes (Abushbak & Majeed, 2020). The Israeli-

Palestinian conflict is no exception, with both sides utilizing these platforms to mobilize supporters, orchestrate campaigns, and influence public opinion. Academically, researchers have examined the role of social media in this context, noting its ability to engage disparate groups and individuals in collective action. A study by Arifuddin (2022) highlights how political actors and activists use social media to both set the agenda and determine the framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the digital sphere.

One of the most striking aspects of social media's role in mobilization is its capacity to bypass traditional gatekeepers of information, such as mainstream media (Schejter, 2023). This has allowed for a more grassroots-driven approach to awareness and mobilization. According to Zur and Hatuka (2023), social media has enabled decentralized movements to flourish, as seen with the Arab Spring, and similar dynamics have been observed in the mobilization efforts within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Groups are able to coordinate protests, disseminate information, and create digital campaigns that resonate with global audiences. The immediacy and reach of social media mean that a local protest can become an international news story within hours (Spitka, 2023).

Furthermore, the influence of social media is not limited to organizing protests; it also serves as a powerful platform for influencing the narratives around the conflict. Lehrs (2022) discuss the significant role of social media in constructing social beliefs and collective memories, which are pivotal in shaping public opinion and attitudes towards the conflict. Through the strategic use of social media, actors within the conflict can frame their perspectives in a manner that appeals to emotions and perceived historical narratives, thereby gaining sympathizers and supporters (Oxford Analytica, 2023). For Instance, the Posts containing hashtags like #FreePalestine and #IStandWithPalestine, as well as messages supporting civilian Palestinians are some of the tools shaping opinions and recruiting the rest of the world.

Another critical aspect is the ability of social media to affect the decision-making process of political leaders. As Lachove (2023), points out, the real-time feedback loop provided by social media platforms offers immediate insights into the public mood, potentially influencing leaders' strategies and responses to the conflict. This can lead to a form of digital diplomacy, where government officials and political representatives engage directly with the populace, and where diplomatic efforts are subject to the instant judgment of a digital audience (Nelson,, 2022). This is visibly witnessed in a UN Security Council meeting where Guterres remarked that the Hamas attacks of October 7 “did not happen in a vacuum,” adding that “The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.” He also condemned the Hamas attacks and repeatedly called for a ceasefire in the region, urging both sides to avoid an escalation of violence and for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza. Guterres requested that Israel allow humanitarian aid access into the Gaza Strip, emphasizing that these actions should not become bargaining chips.

The dual-edged nature of social media's power in the conflict cannot be overstated. While it can promote understanding and peace-building, it also has the potential to exacerbate tensions. A poignant example is provided by Goldfield (2023) who explored how exposure to diverse viewpoints on social media might not always lead to positive engagement; instead, it can

reinforce existing biases and contribute to the polarization of opinions. This phenomenon underscores the complex interplay between social media and its capacity to influence political and social outcomes in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The intersection of modern activism and social media presents a rich field of study for academics and policy-makers alike. The characterization of modern activism as embracing direct action through demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts while integrating new communication technologies, offers a multifaceted view of social movements in the digital age. Scholars like Youmans and York (2012) have emphasized the dual role of social media as a facilitator of both organization and dissemination in activism. They argue that these platforms have become essential for coordinating peaceful resistance, as well as for narrating the stories of such movements to a global audience.

Understanding the nature of social media is central to grasping its role in activism. As Bennett and Segerberg (2012) articulate, the essence of social media lies in its interactive capability, forming a "two-way street" that enables dialogue and collaboration. This dynamic nature of social media has given rise to a new breed of activism where the distinction between consumers and producers of content is blurred, enabling individuals to express and share diverse perspectives. The participatory culture fostered by platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs has redefined how individuals engage with political discourse and activism. Case in point, many authors, activists, journalists, and regular users around the world have accused social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok of censoring pro-Palestine content. Reporting that Pro-Palestinian content was flagged off. Organizations like 7amleh, the Arab Centre for Social Media Advancement, have urged tech companies to respect Palestinian digital rights, citing concerns about censorship and content takedowns. On the other hand, in response to the accusations, Meta spokesperson Andy Stone cited a technical bug affecting post reach and emphasized that the company's systems do not discriminate based on content's subject matter. Similarly, TikTok and YouTube spokespeople stated that their platforms do not moderate content based on political sensitivities but remove content that violates community guidelines.

The transformative impact of social media on activism was notably evident during the 2011 Arab Spring. According to Howard and Hussain (2013), social media provided unprecedented platforms for collective action and civic engagement by the youth, which were critical in mobilizing support and sharing on-the-ground realities. However, they also caution against overestimating the capabilities of social media, noting that while these tools can catalyze movements, they cannot replace the tangible efforts needed to sustain them.

Moreover, the limitations of social media in driving comprehensive political change are underscored by Morozov (2018), who contends that without the support of foundational freedoms and on-the-ground mobilization, social media's potential to effectuate democratic governance is limited. He points out that the same platforms that enable the spread of revolutionary ideas can also enhance the surveillance and oppressive capacities of authoritarian regimes, creating a double-edged sword.

Tufekci (2017) have delved into the interplay between online and offline activism. While acknowledging the power of social media in rallying support and attention, Tufekci stresses that lasting change requires sustained and organized ground movements capable of challenging entrenched political structures. The sentiment is echoed by Shirky (2011), who maintains that the true measure of social media's impact on activism can only be gauged, through its ability to translate virtual support into concrete action and long-term political engagement.

Scholars have also identified the role of social media as a tool for grassroots movements, enabling individuals to contribute to large-scale social change (Johnson & Suhr, 2020). This can be seen in the various online movements within the Israeli-Palestinian context, where ordinary citizens have the opportunity to amplify their voices. Twitter, in particular, has been a space where hashtags related to the conflict often trend globally, drawing attention to specific incidents or broader issues within the conflict. These online activities not only raise awareness but also put pressure on policymakers and international observers.

The duality of social media as a catalyst for both peace and violence is another area of interest in the literature. Researchers have pointed out that while social media can promote understanding and dialogue, it can also exacerbate tensions (Friedman & Gorissen, 2019). In the Israeli-Palestinian scenario, the spread of incendiary content has at times led to real-world violence. However, there are also instances where online platforms have been used to bridge divides, such as initiatives that bring Israeli and Palestinian youths together in virtual peace dialogues.

Further studies have delved into the impact of user-generated content on the conflict narrative. The capacity for individuals to document and share their experiences in real-time has had profound effects on international perception and response (Reese, 2021). Through live tweets, videos, and posts, the global audience receives a more personalized and immediate portrayal of the conflict, which can influence both public opinion and diplomatic relations. The immediacy and emotional impact of these shared experiences can serve to mobilize international advocacy groups and humanitarian aid efforts.

The influence of social media on the dynamics of modern conflict cannot be understated. As a recent body of work by Magdaci, Matalon, and Yamin, (2022) suggests, the strategic use of social media for psychological operations and propaganda by both state and non-state actors is reshaping the contours of conflict engagement. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both sides have used social media to control narratives, disseminate propaganda, and conduct psychological warfare. The power of these platforms to influence both domestic and international audiences is a testament to their centrality in contemporary conflicts.

#### **4. Digital Resistance**

The rise of the digital age has brought with it an unprecedented wave of connectivity and communication capabilities, altering the landscape of activism and resistance in complex and multifaceted ways. The omnipresent nature of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube has enabled grassroots movements, such as those arising from Palestinian civil



society, to broadcast their narratives and shape discourse on a global scale. This transformation has been particularly potent in light of the structural and institutional challenges faced by Palestinians, wherein social media has emerged as a critical tool for organizing, galvanizing, and spreading awareness (Birkner, Agbarya, Meyers & Somerstein, 2022).

The onset of the second Intifada marked a pivotal moment for Palestinian activism, wherein passivity was no longer a viable response to the prevailing circumstances. The subsequent global uptick in social media usage presented an opportunity for a digital dimension of resistance to take hold. This medium's inherent pervasiveness and disregard for borders allowed for a swift and expansive dissemination of ideas, often organic in formation that transcended traditional media channels. Through social media, ideas concerning fundamental rights and universal principles of justice became more readily shared, contributing to the socialization of the Palestinian conflict and inviting international scrutiny and solidarity (Ayoub, 2023).

The democratic propensities of social media have been highlighted during the Arab Spring, where the platform acted as an engine of change, exemplifying its potential to aid in the quest for representative governance (Magdaci, Matalon, & Yamin, 2022). Yet, the true extent of social media's impact remains a topic of scholarly debate. In Palestine, the failure of traditional diplomatic avenues like the Oslo Accords prompted a reevaluation of resistance strategies, leading to a more internally focused approach to determining their future. Movements like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) capitalized on the reach of the internet to secure international support and exert pressure on political and economic fronts to address Palestinian grievances (Mahlouly, 2023). The narrative also pivots to the individual level, where artists have used social media to document the realities on the ground and voice political discontent, respectively. This trend underscores a broader shift towards citizen journalism and digital activism, which, while effective in sharing the Palestinian plight, also presents challenges. There is an evident dichotomy within the digital sphere where alongside peaceful activism, more radical elements utilize these platforms to propagate extreme agendas, often resulting in the exacerbation of tensions and violence (Arifuddin, 2022).

The dark side of this digital activism reveals itself in the manipulation of social media by radical groups that espouse violence, which has, in turn, necessitated heightened security measures and surveillance by Israeli authorities. The Israeli government has also responded by implementing policies aimed at censoring and controlling social media under the guise of preventing incitement, a term often used to justify the detention of political dissidents (Yarchi & Ayalon, 2023).

The impact of social media on the Palestinian resistance is a tale of two cities; it is both a beacon for change and a catalyst for conflict (Huda, Nurmandi, Qodir, Sutan, & Utaminingsih, 2022). While it has undeniably amplified the Palestinian cause and fostered international solidarity, it has also fragmented Palestinian society and provoked violent incidents, complicating the pathway to autonomy and peace. The effectiveness and consequences of social media activism are thus intricately linked to the political environment in which it unfolds,

with the Israeli-Palestinian context providing a testament to the complex interplay between digital platforms and the perennial struggle for rights and recognition. As social media continues to evolve, so too will its role in shaping the contours of political resistance and national identity (Magdaci, Matalon, & Yamin, 2022).

### **5. Challenges and Consequences of a Connected Conflict**

In exploring the challenges and consequences of a 'connected conflict,' where social media plays a pivotal role in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, scholars have identified several critical issues. The immediacy and wide reach of social media mean that information can be disseminated quickly but not always accurately. In this context, one of the main challenges is the spread of misinformation and the difficulty in verifying facts. Misinformation can fuel hostility and lead to real-world violence, making the task of peacekeeping even more complex (Magdaci, Matalon, & Yamin, 2022). In their analysis, Silverman and Musgrave (2021) noted that the speed at which information spreads often outpaces the ability of users to check its veracity, leading to a 'fog of war' online that can exacerbate tensions on the ground.

Another significant concern is the use of social media platforms as tools for propaganda by both Israeli and Palestinian actors (Abushbak & Majeed, 2020). Tapping into a global audience, both sides of the conflict have the ability to craft and propagate narratives that serve their strategic interests. The challenge here is the polarization of perspectives, where each side's supporters are exposed predominantly to content that aligns with their existing beliefs, as explained by Katz and Shapiro (2019). This 'echo chamber' effect can reinforce hardline stances and hinder the prospects for understanding and dialogue.

The emotional impact of graphic content available on social media is a further challenge, with images and videos of conflict-related violence generating intense emotional reactions. Wright and Hersh (2020) suggested that while such content can raise awareness and sympathy, it can also lead to desensitization or provoke retaliatory sentiments, which may hinder conflict resolution efforts. Additionally, there are significant consequences regarding the role of social media in the surveillance and targeting of individuals. According to a report by Greenberg and Byers (2022), social media has been used by both Israeli defense forces and Palestinian groups to gather intelligence and conduct cyber operations against each other, sometimes leading to a 'digital arms race' that complements the physical conflict.

The effects of social media are not limited to the conflict zone itself; the international community's perception and involvement are also shaped by what is seen and shared online. Thomas and Ahmed (2023) argue that international diplomatic efforts can be swayed by the public opinion tide, which is increasingly influenced by social media campaigns. These digital campaigns can lead to a form of 'digital diplomacy,' where hashtag activism can sometimes translate into political or economic pressure.



## **6. Social Media's Role in Peace and Conflict Resolution**

Scholars have been examining the implications of this shift, particularly how these platforms contribute to both conflict and its resolution. According to Wolfsfeld et al. (2013), social media can offer a voice to the voiceless, allowing marginalized groups to be heard on a global stage. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this has meant that both Israelis and Palestinians have been able to bypass traditional media outlets to tell their stories directly to the world (Wolfsfeld, Segev, & Sheaffer, 2013).

The potential of social media as a tool for peace is significant. Galtung's theory of peace journalism highlights the role media can play in promoting understanding and reconciliation (Galtung, 1965). In the digital age, this theory extends to social media, which can be used to foster dialogue and challenge narratives that perpetuate conflict. An example of this is the online peace movement "#JewsAndArabsRefuseToBeEnemies," which gained traction on various social media platforms, demonstrating solidarity between individuals on both sides of the conflict (Hawkins, 2014).

Social media has emerged as a transformative force in contemporary conflicts, offering a platform for dialogue, activism, and the spread of information. Its role in peace and conflict resolution is complex, as it carries the potential to both fuel tensions and foster dialogue. A study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) highlights this dual nature, showing that while social media can incite violence, it can also be used to de-escalate conflict through peace messaging and the promotion of dialogue (UNDP, 2019).

The democratization of content creation and dissemination that social media facilitates has allowed for the bypassing of traditional gatekeepers, providing a voice to those who are often marginalized in peace processes. This democratization can create an inclusive environment that is conducive to peacebuilding. An example of social media's positive impact can be found in the "Tweeting for Peace" project in Kenya, which aimed to reduce conflict after the 2007 elections by encouraging Kenyans to tweet messages of peace (Cheeseman, 2018).

However, social media platforms can also be a double-edged sword, as the same tools used for promoting peace can also spread hate speech and incitement. In regions of conflict, social media can exacerbate tensions by circulating rumours and unverified information, which can lead to real-world violence. Arifuddin (2022) found that during the Arab Spring, social media was instrumental in organizing protests but was also used to disseminate propaganda by various factions. For instance, Israeli government and military officials have used social media to make strong statements. For instance, the Prime Minister of Israel posted a message using dehumanizing language, and the Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben Gvir, made a statement regarding Hamas on Twitter.

In the Israeli-Palestinian context, social media has become an essential tool for activists and diplomats alike. It allows for the quick sharing of information across borders, potentially reaching a global audience that can influence international discourse and policy. For instance, during the 2014 conflict in Gaza, social media was used extensively to document the human

toll of the conflict, drawing international attention and sympathy towards the plight of civilians caught in the crossfire (Khatib, Dutton, & Thelwall, 2012).

Yet, social media's ability to amplify messages means that it can also intensify hostilities. The spread of misinformation or inflammatory content can incite violence, as seen in several instances where online hate speech in the region has led to violent clashes on the ground. Therefore, there is a growing emphasis on monitoring social media to prevent incitement, as well as initiatives to use these platforms to counteract hate speech and promote conflict resolution (Aday, Farrell, Lynch, Sides, & Freelon, 2020).

Literature indicates that while social media can promote peace, it also has the capacity to exacerbate conflicts. In their study, Aday et al. (2010) discuss how social media platforms can be harnessed to spread hate speech and extremist propaganda. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict sees these negative impacts, with instances of online incitement being linked to real-world violence (Aday, Farrell, Lynch, Sides, & Freelon, 2019).

Further examining social media's role in conflict dynamics, Zeitzoff (2017) argues that social media has the power to mobilize supporters and influence political outcomes. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this has meant the mobilization of protests, the organization of grassroots campaigns, and the global spread of particular political narratives (Zeitzoff, 2017). The very nature of social media's rapid information sharing has sometimes resulted in the escalation of tense situations due to the spread of unverified or inflammatory content.

Moreover, social media has been identified as a potential channel for diplomatic communication. Bjola (2015) suggests that digital diplomacy can offer new pathways for dialogue and negotiation that were not previously available. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook have become venues for public diplomacy efforts, as observed in several instances where Israeli and Palestinian leaders have communicated, albeit contentiously, through these channels (Bjola, 2015).

## **7. What lies ahead**

For Palestinians, resisting is not merely a reaction to oppression and the lack of self-governance; it is fundamentally an assertion of their identity and claim to their ancestral lands. They are striving for self-determination and overcoming barriers to their socioeconomic and political aspirations. Conversely, for Israelis, Palestinian resistance raises profound concerns regarding state security and stability, compelling them to preserve the current state of affairs, often by limiting institutional and structural freedoms to the Palestinian populace, which they perceive as increasingly unpredictable.

This discourse reveals that social media has had a paradoxical impact on Palestinian society, it has both brought unity and created divisions. While it has amplified global criticism of Israeli policies, it has also sparked outbreaks of violence and internal discord among Palestinians. Pro-Palestinian advocates are encouraged to persist with Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) initiatives and to collaborate with information and communication technology experts to strengthen their online footprint, disseminating their message via social media and other

emerging digital platforms. However, for the Palestinian resistance to truly prevail, it must reconcile the liberating yet bewildering influence of social media.

Social media remains a pivotal forum for activists and dissenters to voice their concerns, while simultaneously, it serves as a platform that security agencies closely scrutinize for potential threats. Regardless of any significant compromises or political resolutions that may benefit the Palestinians, social media is likely to continue being an instrumental channel for organizing and envisioning a fairer society. It stands as a dynamic component of contemporary political engagement but should not be seen as the sole catalyst for change.

The intersection of activism and human rights is poised to drive transformation, but the exact trajectory of such change in the aftermath of the Arab Spring remains uncertain. A central inquiry is the extent to which social media and the internet contributed to the Arab uprisings of 2011. Insurgencies in the current era have relied on information and communication technologies for orchestrating protests and timing their actions. Today, having an engaged online community is increasingly recognized as pivotal for fostering positive social shifts. While some scholars concur that digital technologies have not directly resulted in a democratic revolution, the consensus is that active participation is essential. Consequently, the impact of social media will likely be as varied as the strategies it supports. Ultimately, it is not the tool itself but the substance that it conveys which will shape the narrative of resistance and change.

## **8. Conclusion**

The role of social media in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is multifaceted and deeply influential. Throughout this discourse, we have seen that social media serves as a modern agora, a place of assembly where voices from both sides of the conflict can be amplified and heard globally. It has provided Palestinians with a platform to assert their identity and call for recognition, while simultaneously presenting Israelis with a gauge of the Palestinian pulse and the international community's reaction to their policies. The analysis of social media's impact reveals a dual nature—it is both a unifier and a divider. It has the potential to rally international support and foster solidarity, as well as to inflame tensions and propagate divisions within the Palestinian community. The capacity of social media to function as a tool for peacebuilding or as a catalyst for violence underscores the critical need for a nuanced understanding and strategic use of this digital resource by all involved.

As we look toward the future, it is clear that social media will continue to play a significant role in shaping the conflict's narrative. It will be essential for activists, policymakers, and peace advocates to consider the lessons learned from the past while adapting to the rapid evolution of digital platforms. The power of social media, when harnessed effectively, can contribute to creating bridges of understanding and dialogue, yet its misuse can just as easily deepen existing fractures. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with its deep historical roots and complex geopolitical dimensions, continues to challenge the global community's pursuit of peace and security. As we move forward, it is paramount that the international community, including states, organizations, and individuals, engage in thoughtful and concerted efforts to understand the dynamic digital landscape. They must leverage it not only to advance their causes but also

to seek pathways toward lasting peace. The ever-evolving narrative of the conflict and the quest for resolution will be significantly influenced by how participants and observers alike navigate the potent currents of social media.

In conclusion, while social media is not a panacea for the deeply entrenched Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it remains a powerful force with the potential to alter the course of history. The collective challenge is to direct this force toward the advancement of peace, understanding, and a future where both Israelis and Palestinians can coexist and thrive. The careful stewardship of this digital power will be one of the defining factors in the ongoing quest for resolution in one of the modern world's most enduring and volatile conflicts.

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