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DIGITAL DIPLOMACY AS A TOOL FOR RESOLVING POLITICAL CONFLICTS: REFLECTION IN HAMAS AND ISRAEL CONFLICT

Sharihan Mamdouh^{1*}

¹Faculty of Business Administration, Afif, Shaqra University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Assiut University, Assiut, Egypt. Shirhen@su.edu.sa, <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0352-3165>

*Received: 28/05/2025**Accepted: 28/08/2025**Corresponding Author: Sharihan Mamdouh
(Shirhen@su.edu.sa)*

ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the impact of digital diplomacy on the global political field in terms of its impact on international relations and even its contribution to political issues. It focuses on the recent conflict between Hamas and Israel by examining how digital diplomacy has influenced this conflict and analyzing the role of social media in shaping digital diplomacy strategies. The findings underscore the transformative potential of digital tools in advancing political and diplomatic objectives, highlighting that digital diplomacy serves as an effective crisis management mechanism that strengthens international positions. The study also finds that Hamas strategically uses social media to promote the Palestinian agenda, and that Arab states and international organizations undertake proactive efforts to enhance advocacy for Palestinian rights. By investigating these aspects, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the nature and implications of digital diplomacy in the context of Hamas and its political objectives.

KEYWORDS: Digital Diplomacy, International Relations, Hamas, Palestinian Case, Social Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

International relations are undergoing an important transformation in light of rapid technological progress and the development of electronic communication. Among the new developments that arose from this progress is the concept of digital diplomacy as a modern and sophisticated model of traditional diplomacy and an advanced tool that affects the nature and dynamics of international relations and political issues (Bjola, 2015). Furthermore, digital diplomacy is a strategy based on the use of digital technology and online communication to enhance communication and information exchange between diplomats, diplomatic representatives, and the international public (Demircioğlu, 2024).

Digital diplomacy has an increasing place in international relations because of its ability to facilitate understanding and communication between states, institutions, diplomatic bodies, and the individual. It provides immediate and effective communication channels (Adesina, 2017) that transcend geographical boundaries and combines the digital and diplomatic dimensions of communication. Digital diplomacy enables states, officials, and decision makers to interact directly with each other and exchange messages and information quickly and easily, which enhances opportunities for mutual understanding and cooperation (Mohammed, 2019).

In the context of international relations, digital diplomacy plays a vital role in enhancing one's ability to manage crises and communicate in light of common global challenges (Bjola, 2015). It provides effective channels for coordination and cooperation between countries in areas such as climate change, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and global health. Thus, diplomats and diplomatic institutions can exchange information, analysis, and expertise in a fast and organized manner, which enhances opportunities for coordinated efforts and effective decision making.

Diplomats can use social media and websites to build trust and promote the image of their country, its culture, and the values they represent to express one of their own cases. Digital diplomacy can also contribute to strengthening democracy, transparency, and community participation by providing platforms for public dialogue and debate on international issues (Younis, 2023). However, digital diplomacy poses new challenges; as the use of digital means of communication increases, states and diplomatic institutions need to deal with issues of cybersecurity, protecting sensitive data, combating

disinformation, and hacking interventions (Adesina, 2017). Additionally, some may face challenges in accessing technology and digital connectivity, exacerbating the digital divide between states.

This study aims to identify the impact of integrating technological and modern techniques in political and diplomatic practices on international relations, as the impact of digital diplomacy on international relations has clearly appeared through the statements of rulers and officials on social networking sites. It focuses on the digital debates surrounding civil war and political issues in relation to Hamas and Palestinian cases. **This study addresses the following research questions**

RQ1: What are the different effects of digital diplomacy on international relations?

RQ2: How has digital diplomacy affected Hamas and the Palestinian case?

RQ3: What are the most important statements made by Arab officials on social media about the Palestinian issue?

These questions are important to several stakeholders and expand our understanding of the role of technology in political issues. Specifically, this study extends previous studies that addressed the importance of social networking sites in the political field and diplomatic dealings between countries and their foreign policies (Demircioğlu, 2024). To the best of the author's knowledge, this study is the first to highlight the digitization method of a specific entity and the impact of this method on the issue of this entity. This study also expands prior studies on the impact of the use of digital diplomacy by different Israeli and Palestinian parties, and how this affects the publicizing of the role of Palestinian resistance represented by Hamas. The current study focuses on Hamas' use of social media in the recent Hamas and Israel conflict to achieve digital diplomacy and publicize the Palestinian case and how this has influenced the Palestinian case. This can reflect recent developments in political conflicts, as digital diplomacy enables conflict parties to shape narratives, counter misinformation, and influence global opinions.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. The next section discusses prior research. Section 3 discusses the research methods. Section 4 reports and discusses results. Finally, Section 5 concludes the study.

2. BACKGROUND, LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Many previous studies have addressed the impact

of development in the technological field on diplomatic practices in different countries and the different effects that digital diplomacy has produced in the political field (e.g., Verrekia 2017; Rashica 2019; Shalash 2023). This is because political and diplomatic integration with modern technical and technological developments has created an easier form of communication between governments and between governments and individual actors, overcoming many of the limitations and challenges faced by traditional diplomatic approaches (Darmastuti and Inayah 2021; Shalash 2023).

A number of studies have found that the digital appearance of global diplomatic activity is a new feature of the twenty-first century, and that it is obvious that the importance of digital diplomatic and political behaviors increases, especially in light of great technological and technical development (Rashica 2019). Although digital diplomatic behavior has many negative and positive effects on the state and its internal and external policies, countries cannot ignore this great boom in the diplomatic field (Verrekia 2017).

Huxley (2014) emphasized that different media and modern digital media have a great influence on societies and their identity and greatly affect international relations, as the digital diplomatic approach of the state directly affects its public policy. Thus, all governmental institutions in countries place great importance on the use of social media to express the different orientations and opinions of the institution.

Darmastuti and Inayah (2021) explained that digital diplomacy has a significant impact on the diplomatic activity of the governments of different countries because the use of social media by government actors clearly helps to promote the state. Barrinha and Renard (2017) reported that the use of social media by citizens has helped increase the opportunity for their participation in the policy and public diplomacy of the state and reduce the communication gap between the individual and the government.

A number of other studies have found the actual application of a number of countries to use digital diplomatic approaches through social networking sites and the impact of this approach on the country's public policy towards a specific issue or another country. For example, Shalash (2023) tracked the digital diplomatic approach of the State of Israel, which is highly interested in exploiting digital diplomacy, through a case study of their Facebook page called (Israel Speaks Arabic). This study reported that this page seeks to address the Arab

audience by employing a religious and peaceful method in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Similarly, Younis (2023) provides another model of diplomacy.

Monshipouri and Prompichai (2018) clarified the digital use and digital diplomacy of Palestinian resistance movements, including Hamas, and its impact on the Palestinian case. They found that after the events of 2011 in the Arab region, which proved the success of technical means in the political and diplomatic field, Palestinian resistance movements realized and sought to use it to serve the goals of the Palestinian case, which was to obtain recognition and autonomy, as the Palestinian resistance used Twitter and Facebook. The study also explains that many Palestinians, including political activists working independently or belonging to Palestinian resistance groups, use social media to convey images of the conflict and the injustice they are exposed to. Furthermore, it reported that they used media to introduce the Palestinian case, as political activists work in this way to digitize the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through Instagram and other social media. Rashid and Tayyaba's (2021) study explored the transfer of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to social media sites, which helped digitize the Palestinian issue, as the study explained the use of Instagram and social media by both sides of the conflict.

Previous literature has shown that the digital diplomatic approach has been able to impose itself on political and diplomatic fields, as various countries of the world have worked to emulate the interconnection between the political and technological fields. It has also shown the importance of employing digital diplomacy and its role in foreign policies and international relations in the current era of governance have been realized. Accordingly, countries that possess a strong digital diplomatic system can impose their own orientations and outlook on many important global issues; however, the literature has paid little attention to digital diplomacy issues in Arab countries.

The connection between the current study and previous studies appears in several points. First, it extends previous studies that addressed the importance of social networking sites in the political field and diplomatic dealings between countries and their foreign policies. The main interest of the current study is to examine the digitization method of a specific entity and the impact of this method on the issue of concern. Second, most prior studies have shown the impact of the use of digital diplomacy by different Israeli and Palestinian parties, and how this affects the publicizing of the role of Palestinian resistance represented by Hamas. The current study

focuses on Hamas' use of social media in the recent Hamas and Israel conflict to achieve digital diplomacy and publicize the Palestinian case, and how this has influenced the Palestinian case.

The current study focuses on the role of technology in the current conflict in Hamas-Israel. As highlighted in the previous discussion, the digital age and the massive expansion of social media and digital technologies are powerful tools for digital diplomacy, such as the use of digital media and modern technology to practice diplomacy and strengthen international relations (Mohammed, 2019). One of the main effects of digital diplomacy is to provide new means of communication and interaction between states, diplomatic institutions, political actors, and people. Social media and digital platforms can expand the scope of public communication and achieve unprecedented interaction, allowing global voices and issues to reach a wider audience. Thus, it is expected that this can affect the Palestinian case and Hamas, as digital diplomacy can contribute to enhancing the global awareness of Palestinian rights and issues, enabling Hamas to communicate with a global audience and spread its vision and demands, thus creating a direct confrontation against the means (Yuonis, 2023).

Moreover, digital diplomacy can play an important role in shaping public opinion and influencing decision-makers. This, in turn, influences the masses and directs them toward their own views. Thus, diplomatic organizations and activist groups, including Hamas, can have a greater influence on policies and decisions related to the Palestinian case, and this influence can strengthen international support for Palestinians and achieve positive changes in international relations. However, digital diplomacy also has challenges. For example, Hamas and the Palestinian case may face censorship challenges and negative responses from opposing parties, as some governments, organizations, and groups may try to maintain the status quo by preventing the spread of information that supports the Palestinian case or strengthens Hamas. Furthermore, some digital activities related to digital diplomacy may be classified as hacking activities or cybersecurity threats, undermining the efforts of Hamas and pro-Palestinian groups. Digital diplomacy is ultimately a set of algorithms that work and can be controlled in a controlled manner (Sharma, 2022).

In general, the impact of digital diplomacy on international relations, the Hamas case, and the Palestinian case depends on the effective and strategic use of each party. Hamas and relevant

actors must understand the challenges and opportunities available, and employ digital diplomacy to achieve their goals and promote their interests. Digital diplomacy should be used as an additional tool that works alongside traditional diplomatic efforts and fieldwork to achieve the desired change in international relations and in the Palestinian case, especially with the recent use of social media by world leaders and officials.

Based on the above discussion and related research, **this study develops the following research questions**

RQ1: What are the different effects of digital diplomacy on international relations?

RQ2: How has digital diplomacy affected Hamas and the Palestinian case?

RQ3: What are the most important statements made by Arab officials on social media about the Palestinian issue?

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Population and Sample Selection

This study focuses on digital diplomacy practices related to the Hamas and Palestinian cases. The population includes social media platforms, official statements, and digital campaigns by Hamas and other actors. A sample of significant posts, digital campaigns, and statements from 2020-2024 is analyzed to ensure relevance and recency.

3.2. Data Collection

Data is collected using content analysis from different sources. These sources include social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) with a focus on official Hamas accounts and affiliated pages, official statements by Arab leaders and diplomats regarding the Palestinian issue, reports, and case studies on digital diplomacy strategies related to Hamas and the broader Palestinian case. The collection was conducted using these sources. For example, posts and statements will be retrieved using specific keywords, such as "Hamas digital diplomacy," "Palestinian case online," and "Arab leaders on Palestine." Furthermore, digital campaigns are also identified through hashtags and social media trend analysis, focusing on their reach, engagement, and narrative impact.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

A qualitative approach is used to analyze the collected data. Themes will be identified to understand how digital tools influence narratives, mobilize international support, and counter misinformation. To ensure reliability, triangulation is

applied by cross-referencing data from multiple sources, such as social media analytics, scholarly articles, and official reports. This methodological framework enable this study to comprehensively evaluate the role of digital diplomacy in the Palestinian issue and answer the outlined research questions.

4.1. Palestinian Issue and Development in Light of Digital Transformation in Diplomatic Relations

In light of the great development of technology and the emergence of digital diplomacy, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked to employ social media in a large and clear manner, especially in the Arab world. This is to work on wooing and changing the opinions and orientations of future generations towards Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel not only paid attention to the Arab side, but also provided many channels speaking many languages.

In light of the availability of great technological and digital capabilities on the Israeli side, it was necessary for the Palestinian side to work to exploit social networking sites and various means of digital diplomacy to clarify the Palestinian side of the Palestinian issue. Indeed, it has worked on this, and Palestinian digital diplomacy has witnessed great developments in recent years, although these developments have not risen to the level of Israeli digital diplomacy, as they have an impact on the Palestinian issue and its development clearly (Monshipouri, 2018).

Before highlighting Palestine's digital diplomacy, it is important to discuss the troubled situation of the Palestinian side in traditional diplomacy. From a diplomatic perspective, the Palestinian situation is very confusing; on the one hand, it was recognized as an independent state by the United Nations General Assembly and, on the other hand, it does not have full membership in the United Nations. Therefore, in some countries, we may find offices working to manage Palestinian interests instead of embassies. Therefore, the level of diplomatic representation for Palestine varied according to whether countries recognized Palestine as an independent or semi-independent entity. In addition, representation is not necessarily performed for Palestine.

All these different factors were important motivations for the Palestinian side to work on migrating its diplomacy towards the Internet. Accordingly, the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to work through social media sites and manage a set of pages at the embassy level to increase the scope and capacity of Palestinian diplomacy through

electronic digitization. Thus, the Palestinian side worked to achieve a set of goals through a series of digital steps on social media (Zahoor, Sadiq, 2021).

4.1.1. Social Media

The use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram has become common for Palestinians and activists, supporting them in communicating and publishing information and stories related to the Palestinian case. These platforms have contributed to enhancing global awareness and attracting the attention of the international community regarding the issues faced by Palestinians. The most important platforms for Palestine on these sites are a group of pages, such as the page of the Palestinian Ministry in Zimbabwe, Tokyo, Kuwait, and others and the page of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the United States of America (Huda, Qodir, 2022).

4.1.2. Digital Publishing and Visual Content

Digital publishing and visual content have been widely used to publish Palestinian stories and illustrations of events related to the Palestinian case. They were also used to publish content affirming the full Palestinian authority and sovereignty of the state. This was reflected in a number of publications published by various pages representing Palestine, and the use of international organizations that support the Palestinian case as a means of communicating with various international bodies and promoting the Palestinian position and trends (Peoples dispatch, 2023).

4.1.3. Digital Campaigns and Online Activities

These campaigns appear more through active individuals, supporting the Palestinian case around the world. These campaigns provide support to the Palestinian side in light of a set of crises and important stations in the history of the Palestinian case. Intensive digital campaigns have been organized to support the Palestinian case, including awareness campaigns and calls for solidarity, boycotts, and sanctions. Through digital means, a group of active individuals poses great pressure and threat at the level of governments and official institutions within different countries, including electronic petition-signing campaigns. By tracking the ministry's approach to social media, it is clear that Palestinian digital diplomacy is based on three main aspects (Manor, 2016).

4.1.4. Working to Show International Recognition of Palestinian Sovereignty

Palestine has worked through its digital

embassies to show and encourage the international recognition of its national sovereignty over the geographical territories designated for it. This appeared through many digital means, such as the statement of the Palestine Liberation Organization delegation in the United States of America that Algerian geography books were withdrawn because they failed to name Palestine in the curriculum maps. This is a clear indication from the Palestinian side of the need to show international recognition of Palestinian sovereignty, while the page of the Palestinian Embassy in Zimbabwe appeared by raising the Palestinian flag on the page and raising the Palestinian flag on the page (Quiquivix, 2012).

4.1.5. Working to Gain Digital Recognition of Palestinian Diplomacy

The various platforms that represent the State of Palestine on social media have worked to emphasize Palestinian sovereignty and obtain digital recognition of national sovereignty. This is because the Palestinian side worked to encourage many international organizations and companies to seek and include Palestinian territories in a clear expression of the independence and sovereignty of these territories. For example, the tweet in which the PLO called on paypal to include the Palestinian territories, the same content that the PLO mission in the United States called for (Monshipouri, 2018).

4.1.6. Presenting Palestine as a State in the Making

Another approach of the Palestinian side of social media was to portray Palestine as a state in the process of formation, meaning that it is a state that has established the necessary institutions to establish a modern state that works to gather Palestinian nationals. Therefore, the Palestinian Embassy in Japan worked on posting on the embassy's website on social media, such as Facebook, to inform many followers about the various investment opportunities available in the Palestinian interior. Similarly, much information regarding investments within Palestinian territories was prepared by the Palestinian Investment Promotion Authority, which represents the Palestinian Investment Promotion Authority (Ibaid, 2021).

4.1.7. Employing Social Media Influencers and Ordinary Individuals to Support the Palestinian Case and Sovereignty

This strategy is not a systematic strategy on the part of the Palestinian leadership, but is based on large human masses that have many direct ties and

connections between them and the Palestinian people, such as religious ties, language, and common history. Much support has emerged from individuals and influencers in the Arab world in introducing the Palestinian case in many crises and challenges, and these forces are working on a set of different campaigns that started with a series of videos, tweets, and posts (Egypt-independent, 2023).

4.2. Statements of Some Arab Diplomats and Rulers on Social Media towards the Palestinian Case

Many statements on the Palestinian issue were made by many Arab rulers and diplomats, and these statements have increased significantly, especially in light of recent developments in the Palestinian issue. These statements are an important means of direct diplomatic expression of the ruling and non-ruling political and diplomatic forces within Arab countries towards the recent crisis of the Palestinian issue. These statements highlight many opinions and trends in Arab political thought, **the most important of which is evident in the following**

4.2.1. Statements of the Egyptian President "Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi" Beginning with the Development of the Conflict within the Palestinian Issue Since October 7

The Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi has made successive statements in which he followed up all developments that have occurred in the Palestinian issue. He expressed different trends and opinions of the Egyptian state on various settlement proposals or solutions put forward by the Israeli side. **The most important statements of the Egyptian President are as follows**

A. The official spokesman for the Egyptian President of the Republic said that President Sisi expressed his complete rejection of what was happening in Palestine. The statement is "Egypt categorically rejects the liquidation of the Palestinian case without a just solution by displacing Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Egypt, and emphasized that the international community must act seriously and effectively to protect Palestinian civilians and work to stop the policies of collective punishment pursued by Israel towards the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip" (AFP, 2024).

The president continued his statements in the face of Israeli moves to liquidate the Palestinian issue at the expense of the Egyptian state. The most important statement made by the Egyptian presidency in this aspect is that "the Egyptian presidency warns of the danger of liquidation regarding the Palestinian issue,

because we see that what is happening in Gaza now is not only Israel's keenness to direct a military action against Hamas, but also an attempt to push the civilian population to resort to migration to Egypt. President Sisi continued during his joint press conference with the German chancellor saying that "Egypt is a sovereign state that has been careful during the past years since the signing of my agreement." The Egyptian president added that "Egypt is a sovereign state (Egypt state Information Service, 2023).

From these statements by the Egyptian president, it is clear that the Egyptian state is fully and explicitly committed to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and does not intend to violate it under any circumstances. In addition, it clarifies the need to settle the Israeli-Palestinian issue through the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and away from unrewarding temporary solutions.

B. In his statements, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi addressed pushing the Palestinians towards forced displacement, as the president said, "The idea of displacing the Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Egypt simply means a similar thing, which is the displacement of the Palestinians from the West Bank to Jordan. Therefore, the idea of a Palestinian state that has been proposed many times to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be unimplementable because the land exists but the people do not, and therefore warns of the danger of this step. This is what I explained to the German chancellor, as the idea of transferring Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Sinai is simply a transfer of the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Egypt state Information Service, 2024).

This statement by the Egyptian president made it clear that Egyptian lands are not a permissible field for settling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and that the Egyptian state is a pure and complete sovereign state and cannot be left to be a field for military threats to its neighbors or for military conflict on its lands. This is to preserve Egyptian borders and protect its national sovereignty, in addition to preserving the rights of its neighbors to obtain a special state from the Palestinian people and land. The Egyptian president continued his statements regarding the displacement of Palestinians, saying, "If there is any idea for displacement, let it be in the Negev Desert in Israel, as Israel can move the Palestinians until it is finished (Ahram Online, 2023).

4.2.2. King Abdullah II of Jordan Stated in Statements Expressing the Jordanian Position towards the Developments in the Palestinian Issue

The various displacement solutions proposed by

the Israeli side, as the Jordanian monarch expressed "There will be no solution to the Palestinian issue at the expense of Jordan, and it is necessary to stop the war in Gaza immediately. He added that the Jordanian army had great readiness to defend the homeland in case of any danger, and King Abdullah II stressed the need to immediately stop the war on Gaza. It is important to protect civilians and to deliver sufficient and sustainable aid to the people of Gaza in order to alleviate the tragic situation" (Reuters, 2023).

The Jordanian monarch continued his remarks, saying, "It is necessary to intensify Arab efforts to press for a ceasefire in Gaza, and to work on finding a political horizon to resolve the Palestinian issue on the basis of the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state." He added that "Jordan has been wary from day one of the displacement of Palestinians because this displacement is tantamount to liquidating the Palestinian case."

It is clear from the Jordanian monarch's statements that he fully agrees with the position of the Egyptian state in dealing with the displacement of Palestinians in light of developments related to the issue. Jordan is fully committed to sovereignty over its territory and is not capable of displacing Palestinians in Jordan or Egypt. As Jordanian statements emphasized the position of the Egyptian state, it is also clear from the statements of both sides that the Egyptian and Jordanian states believe that the best solution to the Palestinian issue is the establishment of an independent Palestinian state (Huaxia, 2023).

4.2.3. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Has Made Relatively Few Statements Compared to the Egyptian and Jordanian Sides Regarding Developments in the Palestinian Issue

As Saudi Arabia's statements came out, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia affirmed that there will be no diplomatic relations with the Israeli side unless the independent state of Palestine is recognized on the 1967 borders, and the need to stop Israeli aggression on Gaza. Thus, the idea of officially normalizing relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia has been under discussion since the quiet approval of the UAE and Bahrain to establish relations with Israel in 2020" (Weissert, 2023).

This statement by Saudi Arabia showed that the Palestinian issue still holds a large core position in Saudi foreign policy and that the statement about not normalizing relations between the two countries in light of the ongoing war between the Palestinian side

and Israel.

In another statement by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince Al-Assoudi emphasizes his support for the Palestinian people in order to work to achieve their legitimate rights to a decent and independent life and work to achieve their hopes and aspirations and a just and lasting peace. In a call between the Saudi Crown Prince and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, during which the Crown Prince emphasized that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would seek to exert all possible efforts to achieve effective communication with various international and regional parties to stop the ongoing escalation between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and to adhere to

4.2.4. The Statements of the United Arab Emirates

Where largely supportive of the Palestinian side, as the UAE condemned the statements of the Israeli Minister of Finance and the Israeli Minister of National Security, they called for the expulsion of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, the reoccupation of the Gaza Strip, and the construction of settlements in it. The UAE Foreign Ministry expressed in this statement that "the UAE categorically rejects the offensive statements and all practices and procedures that violate international legitimate resolutions, which carry a threat of further escalations and push the region towards instability."

The UAE also continued its statements by calling for an urgent humanitarian ceasefire to end the bloodshed and to facilitate the immediate, safe, sustainable, and unhindered delivery of relief and humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip. It emphasized the importance of the full and urgent implementation of Security Council resolutions 2712 and 2720 of 2023. (United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024).

In fact, the UAE's statements carry a great deal of solidarity with the Palestinian side, but the UAE's diplomacy on the ground carries a great deal of bias towards the Israeli side more than the Palestinian side. This is because the UAE's material and military solidarity with the Israeli side appeared in contrast to the case of Emirati aid, which faced great obstacles on its way to the Gaza Strip.

4.2.5. The Statements of the Emir of Qatar, "Sheikh Tamim"

Emphasized the importance and status of the Palestinian case in the Qatari political thought, as Prince Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani stated that "Palestine is a matter of principle and honor". He

continued that "The killing and displacement of Palestinians is a line that cannot be crossed or accepted." In light of the meeting of the Emir of Qatar with the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, he stated that "it is necessary to work for an immediate and necessary ceasefire and to protect civilians in the Gaza Strip. He also directly called for work to ensure adequate and sustainable humanitarian aid to all areas of the Strip, and clearly to de-escalate the situation in order to ensure security and stability in the region" (Asharq al-awsat, 2023).

This great interest of the State of Qatar in reality and in all its statements on the Palestinian side, as the Qatari state emphasizes the importance of the Palestinian issue in Qatari political thought and in all its relations with various countries. This later appeared in the Qatari role of reaching a settlement between the Israeli and Palestinian sides (Mills, 2023.)

4.3. The Reactions of Some Countries to These Statements

The statements of Arab rulers and diplomats did not receive clear and direct reactions to their statements, but the reactions of the various states and powers were generally based on the full Arab position on the Palestinian issue. The reactions varied between supporters and opponents according to the political and religious affiliations of these states, **and the reactions can be divided as follows**

4.3.1. Arab and Islamic Countries

The Palestinian case enjoys wide popular support within Arab and Islamic countries, and the Palestinian case is considered a just and historical case. There are strong feelings of solidarity with Palestinians and support their legitimate rights to establish an independent Palestinian state. For example, the Arab side, including presidents, diplomats, and people, showed clear and explicit solidarity with all statements made by Arab officials about Arab support for the Palestinian side in this issue, which appeared in the Arab summit meeting, as well as Qatari-Egyptian mediation to resolve the crisis and others (Sallon, 2023).

4.3.2. Other Muslim Countries

The Islamic world is vast, but Islamic groups and countries consider the Arab world to be the center of Islamic religion. Thus, many other Islamic countries express their support for the Palestinian case and condemn violations against the Palestinian people, while others take political and economic measures to support the Palestinians and provide humanitarian

and financial aid, as evidenced by the Indonesian and Iranian positions on the recent developments of the Palestinian case (Khokhar, 2023).

4.3.3. Non-Arab and Non-Muslim Countries

Reactions in these countries vary based on many factors including political, economic, and cultural relations. Some countries express support for the Palestinian case and call for a peaceful solution to the conflict and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, whereas others show less support and consider the issue a bilateral matter. For example, the position of one country in recent developments has varied from time to time, between condemnation and support for the Palestinian side or the Israeli side, and a set of international interests and pressures that change the position of countries according to them (Heine, 2023).

Arab and Islamic countries seek to support the Palestinian case in order to preserve their security, stability, and sovereignty over their territories. The basis for the intervention of many Arab countries and the permanent interest in this issue is their borders and national security, as Arab efforts to normalize with the Israeli side have lost the importance of the Palestinian issue in Arab collective politics for a long time. The basis now is for Arab countries to ensure their peace from an international perspective from any condemnation they may bear in the event of their silence or non-intervention in the crisis.

4.4. The Position of Some International and Arab Organizations on the Palestinian Issue and the Role of Hamas

Many statements on the Palestinian issue have been made by a number of regional and international organizations. These statements have increased significantly, particularly in light of recent developments in the Palestinian issue. These statements are an important means of direct diplomatic expression of the ruling political and diplomatic forces within Arab and non-Arab countries regarding the recent crisis of the Palestinian issue. These statements highlight many opinions and trends in Arab and international political thought, **the most important of which is evident in the following**

4.4.1. The Statements of the Arab League

The statements and position of the Arab foreign ministers towards the recent events in Gaza came quickly, as the Arab foreign ministers came out in an extraordinary session of the Arab League on October 11, 2023, a few days after the outbreak of the events

of October 7, to address the current events after the attacks launched by Hamas and the escalation of Israeli response to them. This extraordinary session came out with a number of statements, **which were represented by the following** "It is necessary to immediately stop the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip, stop the escalation in and around it, and call on all parties to the conflict to exercise self-restraint. Thus, the statements of the Arab foreign ministers in this session came with a full condemnation of the killing or targeting of innocent civilians on both sides of the conflict and the condemnation of various acts, contrary to international public and humanitarian law. The ministers' statements were completed by stressing the importance and necessity of lifting the siege on the Gaza Strip and allowing the flow of humanitarian and medical aid sent by international organizations, such as the United Nations (Diplomat, 2023).

The Arab League's statements on the crisis continued, with the Arab states affirming their full support for the Palestinian people and issuing warnings about the displacement of the people from their land, which may transfer the conflict to the entire region and exacerbate the refugee issue. The Arab League Council also emphasized the importance of Israel complying with various international laws and norms in its administration of the Gaza Strip and the need to stop displacement and military operations against civilians. However, a number of statements came from Arab foreign ministers within the Arab League, emphasizing the need to adhere to peaceful means and the approach of negotiations between the two sides of the conflict. This is to ensure stability and achieve peace and security on both sides (WAFA, 2023).

4.4.2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and Its First Representative in Official Forums

António Guterres made several statements to the United Nations, and the Secretary-General's statements came in the closed consultations of the Council. The Secretary-General expressed that the situation in Gaza is dangerous, and he expressed that the attacks carried out by Hamas on Israel are horrific terrorist attacks. He also added that the idea of Israel moving a million people inside the Gaza Strip is dangerous, as the hospitals and health system in southern Gaza are at maximum capacity. The Secretary-General added that the general health situation in the Gaza Strip is on the verge of complete collapse as well as the water crisis in the Gaza Strip (United Nations, 2023).

The UN Secretary-General continued that "war

has rules." He stated that communication with leaders around the world is ongoing to alleviate suffering and prevent the situation from escalating in the West Bank and emphasized the need for a ceasefire and the immediate release of the hostages. It is stated that "It is time for the international community to come together to protect the rights of civilians and find a strong and lasting solution to this cycle of death and destruction" (United Nations, 2023).

The Security Council has final, strong statements and authority regarding these conflicts. The Security Council's statements recommended the need to increase and expand the scope of humanitarian aid sent and flowing to the Gaza Strip. This is in accordance with the multiple statements of the United Nations that warned of the danger of famine in the Gaza Strip under Israeli bombing. The Security Council resolution on expanding aid that reached the Gaza Strip won the support of 13 members with the abstention of both Russia and the United States. This was represented in Security Council Resolution No. 2720, and the Security Council made several statements regarding the need for a ceasefire in Gaza. However, over the course of a month of events in Gaza, it was not possible to pass a final resolution to establish a truce between the two sides of the conflict or ceasefire. This is due to objections from the US, which has veto power in the Security Council and has blocked the ceasefire resolution several times (United Nations, 2023).

It is worth noting that Security Council Resolution No. 2728 called for the immediate unconditional release of all hostages and the flow and delivery of various humanitarian aids in the Gaza Strip. In addition, an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip was proposed, and this resolution was voted on by 14 countries in favor, with the United States abstaining and not using its veto power to oppose the resolution (United Nations, 2024).

4.4.3. Legal Analysis of the Positions of Regional and International Organizations towards the Events in Gaza

Before addressing the legal analysis of the positions of the organizations, we will put forward a position that should have been taken by the international community towards the events in Gaza 2023. Under international law and international humanitarian law, an immediate ceasefire and the release of hostages without any conditions and quickly in order to protect civilians and resolve conflicts peacefully. The set of actual sanctions should have been taken on the side that objects to

comply with this decision, as is the case in world wars such as the Russian-Ukrainian War. The legal analysis of the positions of regional and international organizations comes as international humanitarian law requires parties to war to distinguish between civilians who must be protected and combatants and military personnel who represent legitimate targets. The Fourth Geneva Convention in Volume II, Chapter 17, Section C, Rule 55 on international armed conflicts states "the importance of allowing the free passage of various convoys of essential food and shelters for children, women, and others, and the importance of providing rapid passage for various convoys without any obstruction" (ICRC, N.D., 2024).

According to these international and humanitarian laws that mention the importance of protecting civilians, the passage of all means of relief, and the non-targeting of civilians in wars, we see that all the statements made by the Arab League are balanced legal statements towards both sides of the conflict. All statements emphasized the importance of protecting civilians on both sides and the need for humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip, while the statements of the UN Secretary General were also consistent with international humanitarian law. However, the main dilemma is the behavior of the Security Council towards this conflict, as it became clear that there is a major loophole within the Security Council system, namely the veto right, which can fundamentally contradict international laws. This occurred in the United States of America to block the ceasefire resolution (The Independent Record, 2023).

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the pivotal role of digital diplomacy in shaping international perceptions of the Palestinian case, highlighting its effectiveness in mobilizing global support and managing narratives. It also emphasized Hamas's strategic use of social media to promote the Palestinian agenda, despite facing challenges such as censorship and misinformation. It also underscores the importance of proactive efforts by Arab states and international organizations to enhance advocacy for Palestinian rights. This analysis demonstrates the transformative potential of digital tools for advancing political and diplomatic objectives.

This study found that digital diplomacy has become a key tool for mobilizing international support. Hamas effectively utilized social media platforms to disseminate political stances and enhance global awareness of the Palestinian case, thereby improving the understanding of

international communities. The findings also reveal that digital diplomacy serves as an effective mechanism for crisis management and narrative control, particularly during conflicts. Hamas leveraged digital tools to counter opposing narratives and to maintain international engagement with the Palestinian issue. Despite its potential, this study highlighted significant challenges in the application of digital diplomacy, including censorship, misinformation, and technological inequalities. These factors limit the reach and effectiveness of Palestinian narratives on global platforms. The study also reported that the responses of Arab states demonstrate a consistent alignment with international laws, emphasizing peaceful resolution and the rights of Palestinians. However, this study noted a gap in proactive measures at the global diplomatic level to ensure impactful outcomes.

Based on the above analysis, the most important recommendations are as follows First, Palestinian officials and resistance groups should adopt a well-defined strategy for social media that includes multilingual platforms, highlighting Palestinian culture, history, and achievements to strengthen international engagement and foster empathy in the Palestinian case. Second, establish partnerships with international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), human rights organizations, and influential social media figures to amplify the Palestinian

narrative and ensure consistent advocacy across global platforms. Third, Arab states need to transition from passive diplomatic support to active measures such as initiating legal proceedings in international courts against violations and engaging in more dynamic digital campaigns to support the Palestinian position. Fourth, addressing the challenges of censorship and limited access by developing alternative digital tools and platforms resilient to restrictions can ensure that the Palestinian voice effectively reaches a broader international audience.

While our study sheds light on the important aspects of digital diplomacy in governing political conflicts, there are several limitations. First, digital diplomacy is still evolving, and there is no universally accepted framework or set of best practices leading to inconsistencies in how digital tools are used for diplomatic purposes. Second, not all states or diplomatic actors have equal access to the digital infrastructure or social media platforms. This inequality can hamper the effectiveness of digital diplomacy, particularly in smaller or less-developed countries. Third, the speed and scale with which information is shared online can facilitate the rapid spread of false or manipulated content. Finally, while digital diplomacy has enhanced transparency, efficiency, and global connectivity, it still complements the traditional diplomatic methods. Future research should consider these issues.

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