



Policy Advisory Opinion 2025-02-13

Regarding New Cases Involving Symbols Adopted by Dangerous Organizations

Comments Submitted February 27, 2025 by Tal-Or Cohen Montemayor on behalf of CyberWell Ltd. (CC)

Executive Summary

CyberWell submits this public comment to the Oversight Board to address the misuse and abuse of seemingly innocuous symbols. We analyze the inverted red triangle as a key example of a symbol on Meta that has been weaponized to incite violence against Jews and Israelis. Additionally, we offer suggestions on how Meta should treat symbols with different meanings when moderating at scale, where expert review is limited. Furthermore, we call on Meta to recognize that, even when a symbol associated with a DOI is used in an acceptable manner, related comments should automatically be flagged for review to detect potential glorification or support for terrorism. Strengthening these enforcement mechanisms is crucial to preventing symbols, like the red triangle, from being used to incite harm.

Introduction

As a nonprofit organization committed to eradicating online Jew-hatred through driving the enforcement and improvement of community guidelines and safety policies of digital platforms, it is important for CyberWell to provide guidance on the subject of seemingly innocuous symbols adopted by Dangerous Organizations. According to the Board's statement, the Board "prioritizes cases that have the potential to affect lots of users around the world". Similar to the Board's cases regarding extremist and neo-Nazi symbols, CyberWell would like to contribute our knowledge by using the **inverted red triangle**, a symbol that can be classified as DOI, as an illustrative example.

Since October 2023, the inverted red triangle is frequently used as a mobilization cry in various flashpoints of antisemitic and violent attacks against Jewish communities, in public spaces, online, and against Jewish institutions worldwide.



We seek to offer solutions rooted in content moderation best practices that balance freedom of expression with Meta's obligation to protect their users with adequate responses and protocol to prevent the spread of additional violence against Jews.

Inverted Red Triangle: History & Terrorist Ties

Since the Israel-Hamas war broke out in October 2023, CyberWell has detected a significant increase in the use of the inverted red triangle on social media platforms, especially on Meta. Today, the [inverted red triangle](#) is a known **Hamas propaganda symbol** used to identify [Jewish and Israeli targets](#) for **execution and attack**. In addition to its modern connotations, it is critical to recognize that the inverted red triangle was [historically used in Nazi concentration camps](#) to dehumanize and categorize prisoners, specifically political prisoners, during the **Holocaust**. Especially following the October 7 Hamas terror attacks, its use to promote and glorify violence cannot be overlooked. It has been employed to mark Israeli targets for elimination, incite demonstrations advocating for harm against Jews, and facilitate real-world antisemitic hate crimes.

Importantly, Hamas was designated by the US State Department as a [Foreign Terrorist Organization](#) (FTO) in 1997. According to Meta's [Dangerous Organizations and Individuals Tier 1 Policy](#), which encompasses entities listed on the aforementioned FTO list, Meta removes content that glorifies, supports, or represents Tier 1 entities, their leaders, founders, or prominent members.

The red triangle highlights the challenge Meta faces in moderating symbols with dual meanings at scale, as it can represent Palestinian support, serve as a Hamas propaganda tool for targeting Jews and Israelis, or simply be used to point something out. CyberWell urges Meta to adopt a **context-driven approach** when reviewing posts featuring this symbol, particularly when expert review is limited. To support this, we are providing evidence of how the inverted red triangle can incite antisemitism on Meta and offering recommendations to address such cases.



Examples of the Red Triangle on Meta

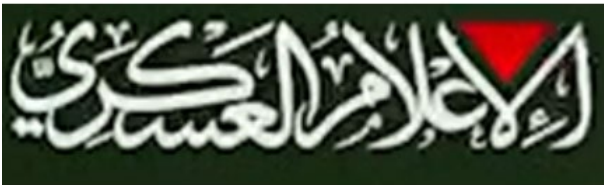
Hamas Propaganda

As of October 12, 2024, CyberWell identified that Hamas videos feature a modified version of their 'Military Media' logo, directly incorporating the inverted red triangle.

Before:



After:



Example 1: This video was recently removed from Facebook following CyberWell's report requesting it be taken down. The video, which spread **Hamas propaganda**, showed the step-by-step [execution of 23-year-old Jewish Israeli citizen Yonatan Deutch](#). Below, we have included a screenshot showing the red triangle symbol being used to mark the civilian before he was fatally shot. The use of the red triangle in this context not only **incites violence** against Jews and Israelis, but also serves to **glorify Hamas-perpetrated killings**, directly violating Meta's Dangerous Individuals and Organizations (DOI) policy.



Red Triangle Used to Incite Violence & Endorse Hamas

CyberWell also identified users who use the red triangle to advocate for or glorify violence against Jews and to express support for Hamas.

Example 1: This Instagram post features the red triangle symbol in both the image and the user's description and further mentions the word [Intifada](#), a term historically referring to violent uprisings targeting Jewish and Israeli civilians. By glorifying violence, this post encourages hostility toward Jews and Israelis and aligns with rhetoric that has historically incited real-world violence.





Example 2: In this Instagram post, the user praises the “resistance”, portraying it as justified. In this context, “resistance” refers to Hamas and its leaders, as indicated by the photo frame featuring former Hamas leader, [Yahya Sinwar](#), who is known as the orchestrator of the [October 7 terrorist attacks](#) in Israel. The user also includes the red triangle in their description. Together, these elements glorify Hamas' violent actions.



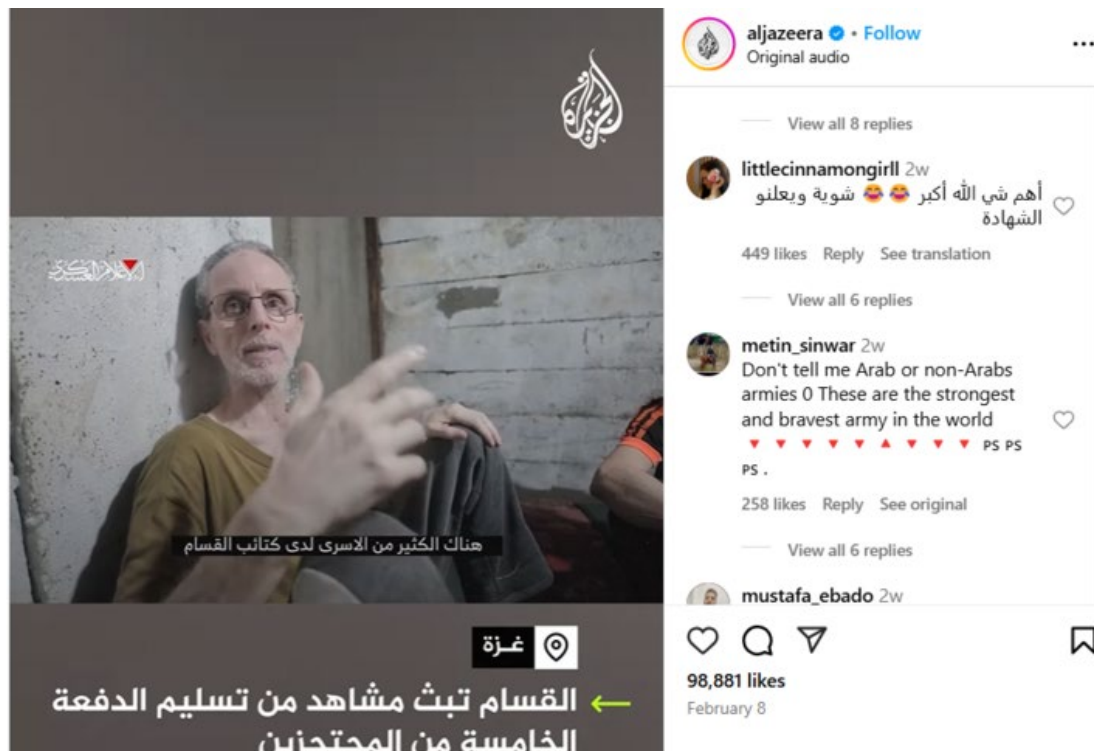
Red Triangle Used in Comment Sections

The presence of red triangles in the comment sections can serve as a coded signal of support for Hamas that violates policies without typed words. As such, the red triangle in comment sections is often purposefully used in social media posts in order to escalate and promote violence.

Example 1: In this Instagram post, a user comments “bulls eye” followed by multiple red triangles. CyberWell frequently detects similar comments. This comment indicates support for Hamas’ actions depicted in the video, which includes footage of terrorists shooting Israeli soldiers.



Example 2: This Instagram post includes a Hamas propaganda video depicting a former Israeli hostage. In the comments section, a user suggests that a Hamas military wing is the bravest army in the world, accompanied by multiple red triangles. The combination of this comment and the video's content demonstrates clear support for and glorification of Hamas' actions, including the kidnapping of Israeli civilians.



Coded Language and News Coverage on Meta

CyberWell identified several tactics used by extremists to bypass content moderation, sometimes employed simultaneously. One widely used tactic involves **coded language** to conceal extremist and neo-Nazi content from detection on social media. CyberWell aims to highlight specific examples to further illustrate how this is being employed.

A common tactic used to evade content moderation is the insertion of dots or special characters within the names of designated terrorist organizations, making them harder for automated detection systems to recognize. For example, the Al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, is written in Arabic as كتائب القسام. To bypass detection, users alter the text by adding dots, resulting in ك.ت.ب.ا.ئ.ب. الق.س.ا.م. Similarly, the military wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), known in Arabic as سرايا القدس, is manipulated to appear as س.س.ر.ا.ي.ا. الق.ب.د.س. to avoid moderation. These minor text modifications enable extremist content to circulate undetected by automated systems.

While coded language helps content bypass detection by moderation systems, presenting DOI-related material under the pretense of **news coverage** exploits a significant policy loophole. Meta's DOI policy categorizes "support" in various ways, one of which is defined as "Channeling information or resources, including official communications, on



behalf of a designated entity or event. E.g., Directly quoting a designated entity without a caption that condemns, neutrally discusses, or is a part of news reporting”.

The lack of a clear definition of what qualifies as legitimate news reporting within the DOI policy creates an opportunity for DOI supporters to promote extremist content while evading enforcement. CyberWell observed that some media accounts on Instagram share hundreds of videos produced and distributed by registered FTOs directly, without including any editorial context or condemnation. Instead, these posts are often framed with vague captions such as: “Scenes published by [DOI name] of the attack on...”, allowing terrorist propaganda to circulate unchecked.

To illustrate the scale of this issue, CyberWell reported 60 incidents of violative content through the trusted partner channel on Meta. However, only 18 were removed, despite being appealed. This demonstrates a critical gap in enforcement, where content that directly amplifies the messaging of designated terrorist organizations remains accessible due to policy loopholes.

The following examples contain posts from news accounts:

Example 1: In this Instagram post, the user writes the name of the al-Qassam in a distorted manner in the post description, with dots between the letters, to avoid detection by the platform. The videos show former Israeli hostages prior to their release in Gaza.



Example 2: This Instagram post promotes Palestinian Islamic Jihad propaganda. This video of a sniper attack was shared by the user unedited and without any condemnation under the title: “Al-Quds Brigades shows footage they say is of their fighters shooting an Israeli soldier east of Gaza City before the ceasefire agreement went into effect”. In addition, in the post description, the user writes the name of the Al-Quds Brigades in a distorted manner, with dots between the letters, to avoid detection by the platform.



Red Triangle Use in Real-World Events

Importantly, the red triangle has spread beyond Meta, appearing in antisemitic rhetoric on [other social media platforms](#) as well, raising ongoing concerns about the reach of harmful content on Meta featuring this symbol.

But beyond the digital space, this symbol has also been used in real-world attacks against Jewish homes and synagogues, and in calls for violence, as depicted below.

Example 1: A photo showing the vandalized home of Anne Pasternak, the Jewish director of the Brooklyn Museum in New York, marked with the red triangle in [June 2024](#).



Example 2: This [photo](#) captures a pro-Palestinian protester vandalizing a monument in Washington, D.C., in July 2024. The graffiti includes the phrase “*Hamas is coming*”, which can be interpreted as a threat, and is accompanied by the red triangle symbol.





Example 3: During a [protest](#) at the University of Minnesota, pro-Palestinian demonstrators wrote “Victory to Al-Aqsa Flood” on the ground as part of a campus encampment, alongside the red triangle symbol. This phrase promotes antisemitic rhetoric by glorifying the killing of Jews and Israelis, as it directly references Hamas' October 7 attacks, which were code-named [Operation Al-Aqsa Flood](#). When paired with the red triangle, a known Hamas propaganda symbol used to target Jewish individuals, the message serves as an endorsement of Hamas and a call for further violence against Jewish communities.



CyberWell's Response to Meta's Decision on the Presented Cases

CyberWell recognizes Meta's reasoning for removing two of the three cases while leaving the third online. All three contain symbols and rhetoric linked to extremist ideologies, but the key distinction appears to be the presence of explicit incitement. The first two



cases included calls to action, such as “wake up” and “Defend Europe”, along with references to assault weapons or designated hate groups, signaling a forward-looking intent to incite violence. The third case, which Meta allowed to remain, seemed focused on distorting historical narratives rather than promoting immediate action.

CyberWell suggests the Board consider an approach similar to its past ruling on the term “[Shaheed](#)”, where content was removed only if it met at least one of three conditions: a weapon depiction, advocacy for weapons use, or reference to a designated event. Since at least one case in this review meets the weapon depiction standard, we recommend expanding these criteria to include explicit **calls to action, references to extremist groups, or clear incitement to violence**. By refining enforcement based on context and intent, Meta can better distinguish between neutral discussion of symbols and extremist content, ensuring consistent moderation while mitigating potential harm.

In conclusion, by adopting the suggested enforcement strategies, Meta can effectively curb the use of multi-meaning symbols to promote violent extremism, ensuring that hate speech and terrorist propaganda are swiftly removed from its platforms.

Recommendations

CyberWell recognizes that the symbols referenced in the Board’s cases share similarities with those used by DOI-affiliated groups. In addition to the symbols highlighted by the Board, a key example is the inverted red triangle, which has been heavily promoted by Hamas to promote terror. While we acknowledge that this symbol can have various interpretations, it has been widely used to express support for Hamas and their violent actions.

We further offer several specific recommendations in relation to the **Board’s questions**:

I. Flagging Hateful Symbols with an Additional DOI Name/Symbol/Thematic Context

CyberWell strongly encourages Meta to flag and remove cases where a DOI’s name appears in a post alongside the red triangle, as this demonstrates a clear pattern of support for a designated terrorist organization. The same principle should apply to other symbols linked to extremist or terrorist groups. Users frequently post single symbols as a tactic to signal support for extremist entities while avoiding detection.



In addition, to effectively detect when a symbol is being used in a harmful context, we recommend that Meta implement a context-based approach combined with layered symbol analysis. This method involves assessing whether a specific symbol appears alongside another symbol or within a particular thematic context. For instance, if the red inverted triangle is used in a post related to the Israel-Hamas conflict, the post should be removed at scale. Since determining context can sometimes be challenging without subject matter experts, CyberWell can provide guidance to help enforce these measures effectively while ensuring that free speech is not excessively restricted.

Example 1: Red Inverted Triangle (▼) and Ninja Emoji (🥷)

Although traditionally linked to themes of stealth, secrecy, or cultural identity, CyberWell has identified that this emoji has been repurposed to spread Hamas propaganda. This is likely because it visually resembles Hamas operatives and spokespeople, including [Abu Obeida](#), who is commonly known as the “masked one”. When these two symbols appear together in a Meta post, they provide a clearer indication of harmful intent, helping to identify and mitigate extremist content. While each symbol may have independent meanings, CyberWell has found that, when used in combination, they consistently signify explicit support for Hamas.

Example 2: Othala Rune and Kolovrat and/or paired with weapon symbols

The forementioned example was taken from the Board’s announcement of their [latest cases](#). When these two symbols are used together in a post, it is highly likely that the content expresses support for an extremist ideology or group.

II. Flagging Comments on Meta’s Posts

CyberWell recommends that, even when a symbol associated with a DOI is used in a seemingly legitimate or neutral context, the comments containing such symbols should be automatically flagged for review to detect any expressions of support or glorification of terrorism. CyberWell has identified numerous instances where users have used the red triangle in comment sections to express support for Hamas and target openly Jewish users.

III. Issue of Bypassing Neo-Nazi and Other Extremist Content

Coded Language: Many social media users use coded language to alter speech that can violate DOI policies. We urge Meta to address and develop effective solutions for these



evasion techniques. It is crucial to ensure that extremist content is accurately identified and removed from social media lest it promote real world harm.

News Coverage: CyberWell urges Meta's policy team to establish specific criteria for what qualifies as legitimate news coverage to prevent DOI supporters from exploiting this loophole. Such criteria may include an elaborate framework of what constitutes sufficient editorial changes by the user.