



January 31, 2024

Dear Ms. Kaplina,

Thank you for your email dated December 22, 2023, regarding TikTok's response to the conflict in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank. We appreciate the opportunity to provide information about the steps TikTok has taken to protect our community during the conflict, and our ongoing commitment to upholding human rights. We would be happy to continue this dialogue as we constantly work to strengthen our policies and practices.

Content Moderation and Preventing the Spread of Harmful Content

In the aftermath of October 7, 2023, TikTok immediately mobilized significant resources and personnel to help maintain the safety of the TikTok community and integrity of the TikTok platform. TikTok has more than 40,000 safety professionals around the world working to keep the platform safe, moderating content in more than 70 languages. TikTok quickly launched a command center and stepped up additional dedicated resources from within our global teams to help prevent violent, hateful, or misleading content from spreading. Along with launching the command center, TikTok deployed additional Arabic- and Hebrew-speaking moderators in order to augment existing content moderation teams in reviewing content, checking for new keywords, and assisting with translations in relation to the Israel-Hamas conflict.

TikTok [does not allow](#) hateful behavior, hate speech, or promotion of hateful ideologies on the platform, including antisemitism and Islamophobia. TikTok regularly reviews and updates its [Community Guidelines](#) to evolve alongside new behaviors and risks with the goal of creating a safe and entertaining experience for its diverse community. Throughout the conflict, our focus has been on continuing to enforce our policies against violence, hate, and harmful misinformation by taking action to remove violative content and accounts. For example, consistent with our policies, TikTok removes content that supports violent attacks or mocks victims affected by the violence. If TikTok identifies content that is posted depicting a person who has been taken hostage, we will do everything we can to protect that individual's dignity and remove content that violates the Community Guidelines.

TikTok does not tolerate attempts to incite violence or spread hateful ideologies. TikTok has a zero-tolerance policy for content praising violent and hateful organizations and individuals, and those organizations and individuals are not allowed on the platform. TikTok also blocks hashtags that promote violence or otherwise violate the Community Guidelines.

Specifically regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict, TikTok works with 17 IFCN-accredited factchecking organizations that support over 50 languages, including Arabic and Hebrew, to identify and prevent the spread of misleading content. TikTok's fact-checking partners do not moderate content, but their assessments help TikTok's own moderators accurately apply and uphold TikTok's misinformation policies.

TikTok removes violative content proactively using both automated and manual processes, as well as removing violative content reported by users. Videos uploaded to

TikTok are initially reviewed by TikTok's automated moderation technology, which aims to identify content that violates the Community Guidelines before it is distributed across the TikTok platform and displayed to users. These automated technology systems look at a variety of signals across content, including keywords, images, titles, descriptions, and audio. They continuously learn and adapt based on the data in each video as well as the moderation decisions that TikTok's human moderators ultimately make based on TikTok's Community Guidelines and related policies. We are continuing to evolve our proactive automated detection systems in real-time as we identify new threats.

In response to the conflict, TikTok has made temporary adjustments to policies that govern TikTok features in an effort to proactively prevent them from being used for hateful or violent behavior in the region. For example, TikTok is adding additional restrictions on the ability to livestream as a temporary measure given the heightened safety risk in the context of the current hostage situation. We have also added opt-in screens over content that could be shocking or graphic and which falls within public interest exceptions, to help prevent unexpected viewing of such content. TikTok recognizes that some content that may otherwise violate the Community Guidelines can be in the [public interest](#), and TikTok allows this content to remain on the platform for documentary, educational, and counterspeech purposes.

From the start of the war through to the end of last year, TikTok has removed more than 1.5 million videos and suspended more than 46,000 livestreams in Israel and Palestine for violating our Community Guidelines, including content promoting Hamas, hate speech, terrorism and misinformation. Globally, in the same time period, we have removed tens of millions of pieces of content. We remain vigilant against deceptive behaviors, too. From October 7 through to the end of last year, we have removed more than 169 million fake accounts globally, and we have removed about 1.2 million bot comments on content tagged with hashtags related to the conflict.

TikTok's Commitment to Human Rights

TikTok is committed to adhering to international human rights standards and respecting the human rights of all people impacted by our platform. Our commitment to human rights, available on our [website](#), is informed by several international human rights frameworks which we have pledged to uphold. These include the International Bill of Human Rights (which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR], the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR], and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ICESCR]), (2) the International Labour Organization [ILO] Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, (3) the Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC], and (4) the United Nations [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) [UNGPs]. Our Community Principles, also available on our [website](#), embody our commitment to human rights. These eight guiding community principles shape our day-to-day work and guide how we approach difficult enforcement decisions.

TikTok has taken a number of steps to enhance our human rights due diligence in the context of armed conflict. We have conducted an internal review and identified short, medium and long-term best practices to guide our heightened human rights due diligence as we continue to address the unfolding conflict. This includes reviewing and making changes to how we moderate certain types of content, including content

depicting hostages, to align with international humanitarian law standards and addressing opportunities to prevent bias through human rights due diligence in our policy guidance approaches.

TikTok consults with a range of stakeholders to inform our human rights due diligence. We have embedded a human rights approach across our Community Guidelines and have advisory councils around the globe, as well as a Youth Council. Specifically regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict, we have consulted with a range of additional stakeholders including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Anti-Defamation League, World Jewish Congress, Tech Against Terrorism, SMEX and more.

As the events and global reaction continue to unfold, the role TikTok plays as a trusted place to share information is a responsibility that we take very seriously. Fulfilling our responsibility involves upholding our [commitment to human rights](#) and to the [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) which point to our dual responsibility: first, to continue to respect freedom of opinion and expression, including the right to information, and second, to comply with international humanitarian law. In adhering to international humanitarian law, we are guided by [Article 13 of Geneva Convention III](#) (on protecting prisoners of war (PoWs)) along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Articles on protecting the individual right to dignity (UDHR 1) and right to safety and security (UDHR 3) as it applies to any victims of hostage activity.

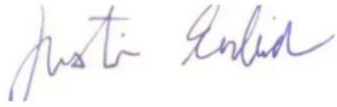
Transparency

TikTok cooperates with law enforcement agencies globally consistent with our [Law Enforcement Guidelines](#), which are informed by legal and human rights standards and have been developed in a way that seeks to limit adverse human rights impacts, while enabling TikTok to comply with legitimate, valid legal requests from law enforcement to disclose user data. We publish a [Government Removal Requests Report](#) twice each year, which provides data on the volume of government removal or restriction requests we receive and the nature of TikTok's response.

TikTok's [Transparency Center](#) contains additional reports and resources, including our biannual [Community Guidelines Enforcement Reports](#), which provide additional removal data by policy category for the 50 markets with the highest volumes of removed content in a downloadable data file. Our Research API enables academic researchers from non-profit universities in the U.S. and Europe to study public data about TikTok content and accounts. We're working to provide increased access to the Research API in the future.

As the conflict continues, TikTok will remain focused on enforcing our rules against hate, harmful misinformation and other violative content. We will also continue to adapt our safeguards to protect our community and uphold our human rights commitments. We thank you again for the opportunity to provide more information around our practices and welcome a continued dialogue with your offices regarding our shared priority of maintaining a safe platform and respecting human rights.'

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Justin Erlich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Erlich
Global Head of Issue Policy, Trust and Safety, TikTok