



24 May 2020

Mr. Jack Dorsey

CEO of Twitter

1355 Market St #900,

San Francisco, CA 94103

United States of America

Dear Mr. Dorsey,

I am writing to you as Israel's Minister of Strategic Affairs, which entails the responsibilities of combatting incitement and calls for genocide against Israel and the Jewish People.

As such, and as a member of the National Security Cabinet in the Middle East's sole democracy, I appreciate Twitter's role as a premier outlet in providing its millions of users the freedom of expression. It is paramount such a platform continues to serve as a place which enables the free flow of ideas and opinions, but not of those which call for violence, antisemitism or hate-speech against a nation or its people. It is for this reason I am reaching out to you today.

Twitter's own Hateful Conduct Policy clearly stipulates that a user "may not promote violence against, or directly attack, or threaten other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin or religious affiliation... or calls for mass murder".

However, the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (@khamenei_ir), is unremittingly abusing your platform by doing just that – without any enforcement or repercussions. For far too long he has been allowed to spread calls for physical violence and antisemitism on Twitter.

Over the past few days has Khamenei released a series of antisemitic tweets calling for the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. This cannot be ignored. He avowed for the "elimination" of the "Zionist entity" while asserting the "Zionist regime is a deadly, **cancerous growth**", which must "be uprooted and destroyed" (<https://bit.ly/2TzAa8H>). Khamenei even compared Israel to the deadly coronavirus, "the Zionist regime is a reality that the region must come to terms with. Today the #Covid_19 is a reality; should it be accepted or fought?!... Zionism will be uprooted."



Not surprisingly, these statements were harshly condemned by senior officials worldwide as antisemitism in its purest form. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called them, “disgusting and hateful antisemitic remarks”, while EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell declared, “The EU condemns the threatening remarks of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei bringing into question Israel’s legitimacy. Such statements are totally unacceptable.” UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, noted, “Dangerous calls for the destruction of Israel should be condemned by all. Such inciteful rhetoric is a modern form of antisemitism.”

Khamenei has a storied past on Twitter rife with antisemitism and spreading of violence. He has gone so far as to support Holocaust-denial (<https://bit.ly/2A9PstN>) last year, and even spread the age-old conspiracy theories of Jews controlling the world’s financial markets when stating, “Westerners & Jewish corporation owners’ main goal by fabricating the Zionist regime & this cancerous tumor was to build a stronghold to influence & dominate” (<https://bit.ly/2Xoaux1>).

He also praised internationally-designated terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, in strict violation of Twitter’s policy which states, “There is no place on Twitter for terrorist organizations...and individuals who affiliate with and promote their illicit activities.”

Khamenei’s Twitter account was recently blocked in March of this year, but he is already back on Twitter spreading incitement. I call on Twitter to act in haste and uphold its own Hateful Conduct Policy by immediately suspending Khamenei’s account, and ensure Twitter’s users will no longer be subjected to his hate-speech or calls for violence against them on your platform. Specifically, I demand the immediate deletion of his recent antisemitic tweets.

As Twitter correctly noted in its September 25, 2018 post, Creating New Policies Together, “Language that makes someone less than human can have repercussions off the service, including normalizing serious violence.” Indeed, such dehumanization and demonization has led to death when left unchecked, and further signifies why action against Khamenei’s account must be taken.

My staff and I are at your disposal for any further information or assistance which you may need. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

MK Orit Farkash-Hacohen
Minister of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy