



The General Secretariat
Media and Communication Sector

The address of His Excellency Ambassador Ahmed Rashid Khattabi
Assistant Secretary-General
Head of the Media and Communication Sector

At the Forum on "Arab Media in the Face of the False Israeli
Narrative"

Cairo, 26 October 2023

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

Distinguished guests,

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you at the headquarters of the League of Arab States on the occasion of this forum on Arab Media in the Face of the False Israeli Narrative. This event is being organised through the collaborative efforts of the Media and Communication Sector and the Arab Media Forum. I wish to acknowledge the commendable initiative of our esteemed colleague, Mr. Madi Al-Khamis, Secretary-General of the Forum, who holds observer status at the Council of Arab Information Ministers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The destructive Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip have plunged the Palestinian-Israeli conflict into an extremely perilous state. These attacks have underscored the urgent need to seek a political solution for this bitter conflict, aimed at achieving a fair and sustainable resolution within the framework of internationally recognised

resolutions, the two-state solution, and the Arab Peace Initiative. Any delay or inaction in addressing the escalating tensions poses a significant threat to the security and stability of the Middle East region and global peace.

Beneath the tragic images of these brutal attacks on the Gaza Strip, a region already suffering from a severe blockade and ongoing Israeli incursions into the West Bank and occupied Jerusalem, we are witnessing a media war, or more accurately, a propaganda battle waged through social media networks. This campaign is designed to perpetuate the falsehoods of the Israeli narrative, often resorting to tactics such as blocking pages and suspending accounts. It also suppresses posts that express opposition to the catastrophic situation and the bombing of the Gaza Strip without considering the provisions of international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, which strictly prohibits attacks on the lives and physical well-being of civilians, including "murder in all its forms, cruel treatment, and torture."

Furthermore, Israel's utilisation of algorithms and application software to suppress Palestinian content and hinder its dissemination in digital spaces is noteworthy. These efforts extend to elements within Western media that support Israel at the expense of freedoms and rights, including the sacred rights of belief and freedom of expression. This has resulted in the imposition of sanctions or warnings against media figures, influencers, athletes, and artists who sought to make the Palestinian voice heard and condemn policies involving collective punishment, violence against civilians, forced displacement, deprivation of basic necessities, and the targeting of buildings, public facilities, medical institutions, and places of worship.

I cannot overstate the importance of enhancing Arab efforts to counter the Israeli narrative and bolstering media support for the Palestinian cause, particularly in light of the increasing proliferation of inflammatory speeches that incite hatred and ideological extremism. At this juncture, I commend the unwavering dedication of journalists and media professionals who tirelessly report on the developments and realities of this devastating war. Tragically, some of these journalists have paid the ultimate price, alongside thousands of

women, children, healthcare and relief workers, and defenseless civilians.

I also want to underscore the significance of the initiative to formulate a cohesive strategy for engaging with international media companies. Central to this strategy is the defence of Palestinian content on social media platforms. I'd like to highlight that the Council of Arab Information Ministers has recently established a committee, with the State of Palestine at its helm, to support Palestinian content with the utmost credibility and persuasive power when dealing with international public opinion.

In conclusion, I extend my gratitude to the Arab Media Forum and all the participants, including diplomats, media personalities, academics, and experts, in this vital forum. I wish your endeavours every success and prosperity.

May peace, mercy, and blessings from God be upon you.