

For the last two weeks, the global news coverage is showing a continuous flow of violence and human suffering in the Middle East. A hellish cycle has been put in motion by terror attacks against civilians, civilians being taken hostage, and retaliatory strikes that cause more civilian casualties.

In situations like these, media leaders and brand safety experts invariably need to make judgment calls. Similar to our guidance on the [War on Ukraine](#), ad buyers and sellers may want to consider how to position themselves.

Based on learnings from previous regional conflicts and the War on Ukraine, here is some suggested guidance that GARM members may consider on a voluntary basis:

<p>As an ad seller:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Platforms 2. Ad tech providers 	<p>Consider ensuring that services aren't weaponized for misinformation and terror propaganda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Platforms should work with existing infrastructures like GIFCT to prevent the circulation of terrorist propaganda - Many platforms and ad tech providers have and may want to continue to resource their platforms with language and topic experts. On the spot decisions may need to be made and then scaled via AI and ML - Platforms will need to be vigilant in areas that have been weaknesses before – specifically emojis, language specific hashtags, and behavior such as brigading - Accounts of kidnapped civilians should be locked down to prevent them becoming weaponized by their hostage takers - Terrorists have said they intend to use Livestream services and features for propaganda including hostage executions. As an industry, we note that platforms need to remain vigilant, and reinforce user requirements to use Livestream and consider bolstering monitoring and moderation services. We are already hearing of a platform that is bolstering the hurdle requirements (documented user history, live analysis) and is creating ways to delay and analyze livestreams from the directly impacted area to avoid platform weaponization - Finally, platforms must be aware of their role in helping collect evidence – content deemed as illegal and illicit for law enforcement and appropriate future human rights investigations, and also consider ways to create friction via click-thrus so that users aren't in view of high-risk content without consent <p>Consider providing ad buyers with enhanced controls to avoid the twin dangers of over- and-under monetization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Platforms and ad tech providers should consider reviewing and potentially scrutinizing monetization categorization of topics that touch on the ongoing conflict – whether Death, Injury, Military Conflict or Hate Speech and Acts of Aggression and communicate any changes via GARM on a voluntary basis - Platforms and ad tech providers should consider reviewing monetization systems inclusive of controls and policies to empower advertiser choice and consider making decisions if they want to continue to run ads in news, and support journalistic coverage of the conflict - Platforms may want to consider reliability of sources whether professional entities or user generation from accounts with good standing as a means of bolstering ad support for the topic
<p>As an ad buyer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agencies 2. Advertisers 	<p>Consider establishing a crisis response position and clarifying a position in news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertisers and agencies should be checking partners' and their steps to avoid weaponization based on the guidance above - Advertisers and agencies should consider activating existing crisis response positions that include campaign placement review inclusive of ad seller policies and settings to make decisions on platform selection and ad tech partner selection - Advertisers and agencies should consider reviewing the incident management response framework shared by GARM in the Brand Safety and Suitability Bootcamp – this should link appropriate functions and organizations inclusive of media, marketing, corporate affairs, general management, media investors, and platform partners - Advertisers should consider specific areas where they are more likely to be exposed – specific formats on specific platforms (which historically include chat, comments,

	<p>search, profile, livestream) and advertisers should request assurances from ad sellers on how these areas are being bolstered or not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertisers should consider asking for an update from ad sellers on enhanced resourcing (topic and language) will allow for the free flow of content normally suitable for monetization to be available
	<p>Consider calibrating suitability based on clear principles relative to real world events</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertisers and agencies should consider reviewing and potentially scrutinizing selections for monetization categorization of topics that touch on the ongoing conflict – whether Death, Injury, Military Conflict or Hate Speech and Acts of Aggression and consider making decisions based on the organizations’ respective sensitivities - Advertisers and agencies may want to consider ad stock and determine if tone or messages should be moderated based on campaign objectives; brands may need to consider consumer audiences and communities impacted and potential for ‘ad collision’ and how the marketing team may react