



## Media Diplomacy of the Israel Regarding Iran After the Al-Aqsa Storm

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## Abstract

## Introduction

Following the Al-Aqsa Storm and the escalation of direct and indirect confrontations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Israel in 2024, the conflict has expanded beyond the military realm, reaching into the media and information spheres. This has led to the emergence of a complex hybrid war, with both sides and their allies strategically utilizing media tools to shape public perception, influence international opinion, and achieve their geopolitical objectives. One of the most significant components of this media battle is Israel's media diplomacy, which is specifically designed to target the Iranian public and Persian-speaking populations. Through its media outlets, Israel aims to not only influence the perception of its policies but also to craft a favorable narrative in the global arena, challenge Iran's regional influence, and solidify its legitimacy. This study focuses on the *Times of Israel's* Persian-language edition, analyzing its headlines over the one-year period from October 2023 to October 2024. The aim is to understand the thematic trends and propaganda patterns employed by the Israeli media to advance its strategic goals in the context of this ongoing hybrid war.

## Methodology

This study uses qualitative content analysis as the primary research method, focusing on the headlines and content published in the Persian-language edition of the *Times of Israel*. The

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analysis covers a one-year period, beginning in October 2023 and ending in October 2024. The study aims to identify recurring themes, narratives, and rhetorical strategies that reflect Israel's media diplomacy toward Iran and Persian-speaking audiences. Specifically, it examines how Israel uses emotional language, the creation of common enemies, adversarial labeling, and threats to construct national identity, promote its security policies, and enhance its legitimacy. The analysis also considers how Israel's media shapes both domestic and international perceptions of Iran, portraying the country as a major threat to regional stability and international security. Through this, the study seeks to uncover the key strategies Israel uses to justify its actions and garner support for its geopolitical objectives.

### **Results and Discussion:**

The results of the analysis reveal several key themes in the *Times of Israel* Persian-language edition that highlight the strategic role of media in shaping public opinion and advancing Israeli policies. The most prominent of these strategies is the use of emotional language to frame Israel as a victim of Iranian aggression and to cast Iran as the primary destabilizing force in the Middle East. Headlines often depict Iran's regional activities and its nuclear ambitions in alarmist terms, emphasizing the existential threat posed to Israel and its allies. By framing Israel as the target of Iranian hostility, the media outlets aim to justify Israel's security measures and military actions as necessary responses to an imminent threat. This use of emotionally charged language serves to rally both domestic and international support for Israel's policies, while simultaneously vilifying Iran and portraying it as a dangerous, irrational actor on the global stage.

Another critical element of Israel's media strategy is the creation of common enemies. The *Times of Israel* frequently highlights the shared threat posed by Iran not only to Israel but also to Western countries, particularly the United States and European powers. By positioning Israel and the West as united in their opposition to Iran, the media reinforces the idea of a broader, unified front against a common enemy. This approach not only seeks to justify Israel's security policies but also aims to

strengthen alliances with Western nations. Through such framing, Israel attempts to frame its own security measures as part of a larger global effort to counter an authoritarian, expansionist regime. This narrative serves to build solidarity among Israel's allies while presenting Iran as a destabilizing force that threatens both regional and global security.

The *Times of Israel* also employs adversarial labeling as a key propaganda tool. Iran is often described as a "rogue state" or a "state sponsor of terrorism," with its actions framed as part of a broader effort to destabilize the region and undermine global peace. These labels create a clear distinction between the "civilized" world, represented by Israel and its allies, and the "barbaric" world, embodied by Iran and its supporters. Such binary oppositions simplify the complex geopolitical realities of the Middle East and reduce Iran's actions to a series of negative stereotypes. These labels are also designed to strengthen Israel's legitimacy in the eyes of its domestic and international audiences by portraying it as a defender of peace and stability, in contrast to Iran's perceived role as a source of violence and disruption.

In addition to emotional language and adversarial labeling, threats play a significant role in Israel's media strategy. Many headlines in the *Times of Israel* include implicit or explicit threats toward Iran, often emphasizing Israel's preparedness to defend itself against any potential Iranian aggression. This rhetoric serves multiple purposes: it acts as a deterrent, signaling to Iran that Israel will not tolerate any threats to its security; it reinforces the image of Israel as a strong and capable military power; and it bolsters domestic support by reassuring the Israeli public that their government is committed to safeguarding national security. Moreover, these threats are often framed within the context of Israel's technological superiority, particularly its advanced missile defense systems, which are presented as an insurmountable obstacle for any adversary, including Iran.

The media also highlights Iran's involvement in regional conflicts, particularly its support for militant groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas. Israel's media frequently portrays Iran as

the mastermind behind these groups, which are depicted as proxies used to further Iran's destabilizing agenda in the Middle East. By framing Iran as the primary architect of regional violence, Israel positions itself as the defender of regional peace and stability. This framing is central to Israel's narrative of self-defense, as it justifies Israeli military actions against Iranian-backed groups and portrays Israel's interventions as necessary steps to protect both itself and its allies from Iranian expansionism.

Additionally, the analysis suggests that Israel's media strategy also targets the broader Persian-speaking public, not only the Iranian regime. By appealing to shared values of security, peace, and stability, Israel aims to influence public opinion in Iran and among the Persian-speaking diaspora. This effort is evident in the emotional tone of many headlines, which often seek to elicit empathy for Israel's security concerns while emphasizing the dangers posed by Iran's policies. Through this approach, Israel attempts to frame itself as a rational actor in a volatile region, seeking peace and security, while casting Iran as the irrational and dangerous force that threatens both the region and the world.

### Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate the crucial role of media in shaping the discourse around the Israeli-Iranian conflict and in advancing Israel's geopolitical objectives. The *Times of Israel* Persian-language edition employs a sophisticated combination of emotional language, adversarial labeling, and threats to promote Israel's security policies and to influence both domestic and international perceptions. Through its media diplomacy, Israel aims to enhance its legitimacy, justify its actions, and secure support from its allies. The study highlights the importance of media as a tool of propaganda in modern hybrid warfare, where the battle for public opinion is as significant as the physical confrontations on the ground. Ultimately, Israel's media strategy reflects its broader efforts to maintain its security, assert its regional dominance, and garner global support for its political and military objectives in the face of ongoing regional tensions.

**Keywords:** Propaganda; Media Diplomacy; Iran; Israel; Al-Aqsa Storm.

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