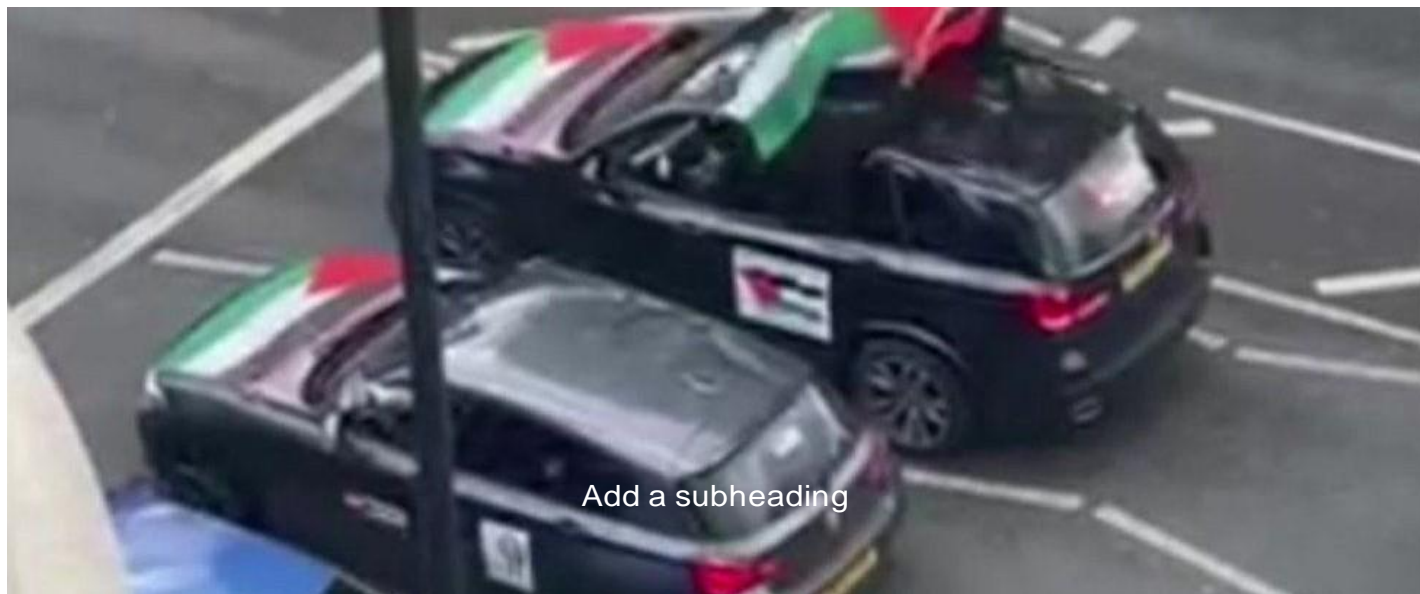


# DEFUSE NEWS

*A weekly update of relevant issues*



## Anti-Semitism surge deeply disturbing

The recent conflict in Gaza has understandably created global headlines. Having studied the terrorist group Hamas during my MSc, I am only too aware that the situation is far more complicated than is often reported. That said, I can't help feeling that Israel mismanaged this recent escalation. One of the challenges is that for many, Israel represents the Jewish people, and therefore, in their eyes Jewish people must support or be blamed for the Israeli response. This latest escalation has precipitated a global rise in anti-Semitism.

In the UK some reports suggest a 500% increase in the past 2 weeks. Anti-Semitism, like any hate crime is abhorrent and yet for some reasons, for many it is acceptable.

The position really should be quite clear, all hate crime should be treated equally.

An interesting legal point is that Judaism is the only culture treated as both a race and a religion. Therefore, anti-Semitic behaviour is racist.

DEFUSE

FEEL SAFER IN PUBLIC LIFE

+44 (0) 2072930932

[enqs@defuseglobal.com](mailto:enqs@defuseglobal.com)

[www.defuseglobal.com](http://www.defuseglobal.com)

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## Gender-based cyberviolence: The new face of an old enemy



Crimes that are a form of gender-based cyberviolence include: online hate speech, trolling, cyber harassment, cyberstalking, sharing content without consent, hacking, identity theft, cyberbullying, and image-based sexual abuse. However, the attempts to make such a list exhaustive are pointless. For anyone involved in the investigation of social media abuse, the above statement will come as no surprise. It is an uncomfortable truth that women and girls are more likely than men and boys to be subjected to harassment, stalking and sexual assault.

In July 2020, the World Wide Web Foundation found that we face a parallel pandemic of cyberviolence, with 52 percent of women and girls reporting having experienced some form of online abuse, and 87 percent of the belief that the problem of cyberviolence is getting worse.

The type of abuse that women receive online is very different to those which men receive. In my experience, it is far more personal, sexually violent, and harmful.

As we slowly return to what was our normality, we do have the opportunity to make some significant changes. While we have all been in lockdown, we have experienced the explosion of #MeToo. So far, it has been widely reported within the entertainment industry, but it would be naive to believe that that is isolated to that industry.

So how do we change? I believe any change must include men. We must be more vocal in our support of women's rights and equality. We must call it out when we experience it, rather than laughing it off as banter. Personally, I don't know of any of my friends and family who would accept such behaviour being directed at one of their loved ones. Imagine if we treated everyone as if they were a loved one!

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