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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الخـــــارجيـــــــة
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STRATEGIC NARRATIVE REPORT
Friday, March 21, 2025

UAE-SUDAN COUNTER-NARRATIVE PLAN

Executive Summary *(pg.1-3)*

Product Purpose
This report provides a comprehensive narrative intelligence analysis of current global media coverage related to the UAE-Sudan situation. It also contains an actionable communication strategy intended to counter critical narratives targeting the UAE but also reframe the situation into a more UAE-aligned conversation.

Recommendations Summary

The recommended strategic, multi-faceted approach to countering the critical narratives against the UAE in the context of Sudan is as follows. *These recommendations are expanded on in pg.8-13.*

Countering Critical Sudan Narratives *(pg.8)*
- **Regional Media Outreach** - Grant opinion articles, interviews, and exclusive access pieces to media outlets catering to specific target audiences, including Western policy makers, Pan-African and Asian media, Think Tanks, and entities from the Global South.
- **Social Media Campaign** - Launch a coordinated social media campaign using a dedicated hashtag (e.g. **#UAEForSudanPeace**), employing a multi-channel approach to share a variety of content formats, shared at high-traffic times
  - General Messaging Cadence: 15-20 daily posts across platforms. Peak posting times: 9-11am and 7-9pm GMT (matching 83% of critical content posting patterns)
  - Languages: Arabic (primary - 68% of critical content), English (secondary - 22%), French (tertiary - 10%)
- **Content Formats & Frequency** - Mix up content types to keep the narrative fresh and engaging. Short-form videos (1–2 minute clips), infographics and fact-sheets distilling key metrics, Op-eds and thought leadership pieces
- **Influencer & Grassroots Engagement** - Identify and collaborate with influencers who carry credibility in target communities, such as respected journalists, academics, or pan-African youth influencers. In parallel, engage with humanitarian NGOs or diaspora leaders who have seen UAE's aid on the ground, as they can add authentic third-party validation of the UAE's positive role. Utilize UAE embassies to issue statements and engage with policymakers to clarify facts.
- **Initial Capacity Building for 24/7 Rapid Response** - Establish narrative intelligence/ disinformation monitoring dedicated to Sudan content, including alerting and reporting thresholds. Assign a dedicated team to swiftly respond to misinformation on traditional and social media. Consider also setting up an independent fact-checking NGO.
- **Aggressive Deflection Campaign** - Target top influencers attacking UAE by deploying community notes, asserting counter-messaging in comment responses, and reduce influence through technical methods such as shadow-banning, take-down requests, etc.

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Strategic Counter-Narrative Messaging Framework *(pg.10)*

Highlight the following core themes in the immediate counter-narrative campaign:

- **Humanitarian Leadership** - Portray the UAE as a compassionate leader aiding the Sudanese people. Highlight the UAE's substantial humanitarian engagement, exemplified by over $600 million in humanitarian assistance provided to Sudan since 2023.
- **Proactive Peace Advocacy** - Stress the UAE's role in seeking peace and stability in Sudan and the UAE's proactive diplomatic endeavors, including mediation efforts and advocacy for ceasefires.
- **Global South Solidarity** - A clear articulation of Global South solidarity, emphasizing regional collaboration and peace-building. Frame the UAE as standing in solidarity with African and Asian nations in upholding stability and sovereignty.
- **Economic Partnerships** - Remind audiences of the UAE's long-term investments in Sudan's stability and prosperity. Constructive economic initiatives, notably a $6 billion infrastructure investment aimed at fostering Sudanese socioeconomic development.
- **Rejection of Baseless Allegations** - Refute the harmful claims against the UAE by emphasizing the lack of direct evidence, while also highlighting the short fallings of the Sudanese government
- **Negative/Deflection Messaging -** Reflect the narrative back onto the severe human rights violations the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have been accused of.

Timeline *(pg.21)*

Immediate (0–1 Month) - Seize control of the narrative's direction during the critical initial aftermath.
- Roll out official statements and rebuttals
- Deploy senior officials for interviews
- Push an aggressive social media blitz
- Engage embassies to communicate with host country media in Africa and Asia

Short Term (2-3 months) - Introduce and solidify the counter-narrative themes in the public domain.
- Execute planned op-eds, influencer collaborations, and regional media placements
- Deeper content
- Host a high-profile press conference or panel.

Medium Term (4-6) - Normalize a balanced narrative and demonstrate tangible proof of the UAE's positive role.
- Maintain regular communications, but pivot to showcasing outcomes
- Continue engaging Sudan's neighbors and the AU
- Begin subtle reputation repair in Western circles

Long Term (6+ months) - Sustain and cement the UAE's rehabilitated image and be prepared for the ICJ case's evolution.
- Integration of the narrative campaign into broader public diplomacy.
- Continue periodic updates on humanitarian aid
- Leverage global events e.g. UAE's participation in UNGA or Expo

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- If the ICJ case progresses to substantive stages, mount a communications push around legal victories or expert opinions favoring the UAE.

Priority Platforms and Audiences

Platform	Reasons for Usage
Twitter/X	• Measures 85.8% negative content within the platform, with 82.8% of all critical content across all platform, therefore the largest opportunity to shift conversation sentiment. • Moderate engagement metrics for critical attacking posts, which can be • Critical content spreads rapidly due to retweet functionality, making establishing positive counter-narratives crucial. • User base includes an influential audience, making sentiment change here disproportionately valuable.
Instagram	• Highest engagement efficiency for content creation in general. • A favorable 62% positive basis of UAE-Sudan specific content, providing a receptive audience. • Allows for compelling visual evidence of humanitarian efforts, which is more persuasive than text-based claims. • **H**igher visibility potential for counter-narratives due to low critical posts on UAE-Sudan context (62 critical posts vs 4,434 on Twitter)
TikTok	• More supporting than critical content regarding UAE-Sudan, the only major platform where this currently occurs. • Highest engagement efficiency for supporting content, outperforming Twitter by 7.7x. • Supporting content averages 5,866 views per video, creating significant organic reach. • Provides access to younger audiences (18-34) not heavily consuming content on Twitter. • TikTok's algorithm favors content quality over account size.
Facebook	• Significant content gap with 963 critical posts versus only 205 supporting posts. • Supporting content generates 9.2x more comments than critical content, indicating audience willingness to engage with UAE-positive messaging. • Reaches older (35+) and more established professional audiences. • Facebook Groups allow for precise community targeting. • Facebook dominates in Africa and Middle East markets.
Telegram	• Zero identified supporting content creates a 100% opportunity to introduce counter-narratives • Critical content averages 17x higher than Facebook, 5.8x higher than Twitter, indicating highly responsive audience. • Allows creation of dedicated information channels that audiences actively subscribe to • Particularly influential in Russia, Eastern Europe, and parts of MENA • Content is easily accessible in channels without algorithm interference • Less public scrutiny of messaging strategies compared to open platforms

Audience	Why
Western Policymakers	Influence diplomatic relations, arms sales, and sanctions.
AU and Arab League	that African countries are the most at risk from turning against the UAE
Sudanese Public	Winning over Sudanese civilians weakens the Sudanese government's anti-UAE propaganda
Humanitarian Organizations	Strengthens the argument that the UAE is focused on helping civilians
Global Business and Investment Leaders	The Sudan war affects regional economic stability and trust in institutions for investment.
Think Tanks and Policy Institutes	Can steer geopolitical analysis and discourse and they provide policy recommendations to governments and international bodies.
BRICS Countries	Significant diplomatic, economic, and security influence
G20 Countries	The UAE has strong economic and political ties with many G20 nations

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Situation in Detail

Understanding the Conversation

The Sudanese government has routinely accused the UAE of supporting the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the ongoing civil war, alleging complicity in genocide. These accusations escalated beyond their traditional volume and audiences in March 2025, when Sudan filed a lawsuit in the International Court of Justice, claiming the UAE provided weapons and funding to the RSF, who have been implicated in severe human rights violations, including attacks against the Masalit people in Darfur.

Over the past three months, coverage of the UAE-Sudan situation has been overwhelmingly negative:

- Out of 92K total mentions captured, **87% were negative**, **11% neutral**, and **only 2% positive**. This indicates an extremely unfavorable narrative environment.
- The term "genocide" appears in over half of all mentions (51k+ instances), underscoring that the discourse is dominated by the gravest accusations.
- By contrast, favorable themes (e.g., humanitarian or peace efforts) are scarcely present – for instance, "humanitarian" appears in only 2.8% of mentions. The sentiment gap is stark, highlighting the urgent need for narrative correction.
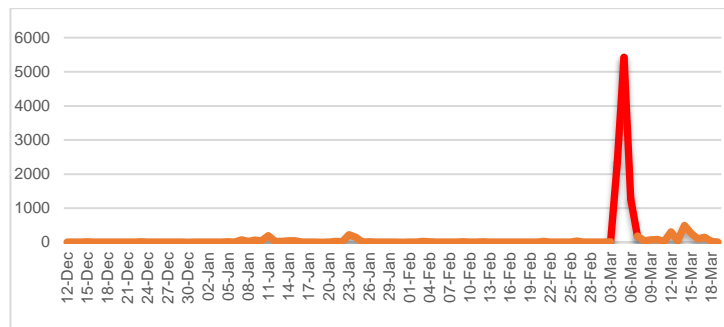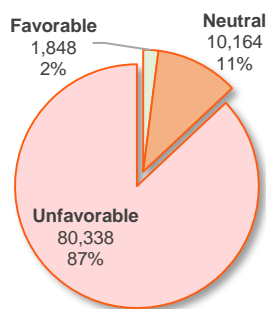
(Left) Past three-month analysis of conversation favorability and (Right) volume mentions of "UAE-Sudan ICJ Topics" Clear spike and drop off around the 6 March 2025 ICJ case announcement.

Overall, the current situation in Sudan and surrounding news and media conversation is not dynamic and has largely been driven by single new stories, or events, such as the ICJ case filing. The majority of conversations that persist are from people/groups who are invested in the conflict due to a concern (i.e. people who are opposed to the UAEs intervention and humanitarian organizations), or those who have high degree of interest (i.e. Sudanese diasporas, political agencies). Most people who are engaging with the conversation are not aligned the UAEs position, and because of this the conversation is largely unfavorable. While this is a major story for the UAE, data shows that this is not necessarily a high-profile affair on the world stage.

Analysis of coverage over the past 30 days shows how the legal action by Sudan against the UAE in the ICJ temporarily elevated the issue to wider international awareness, generating increased engagement:

- Attacking content dominated X (Twitter) and Telegram, accounting for 74% and 89% of all views, respectively.
- 73% of traditional media articles shared on social media either attacked the UAE or portrayed it negatively with regard to its involvement in the region, the remainder were neutral.
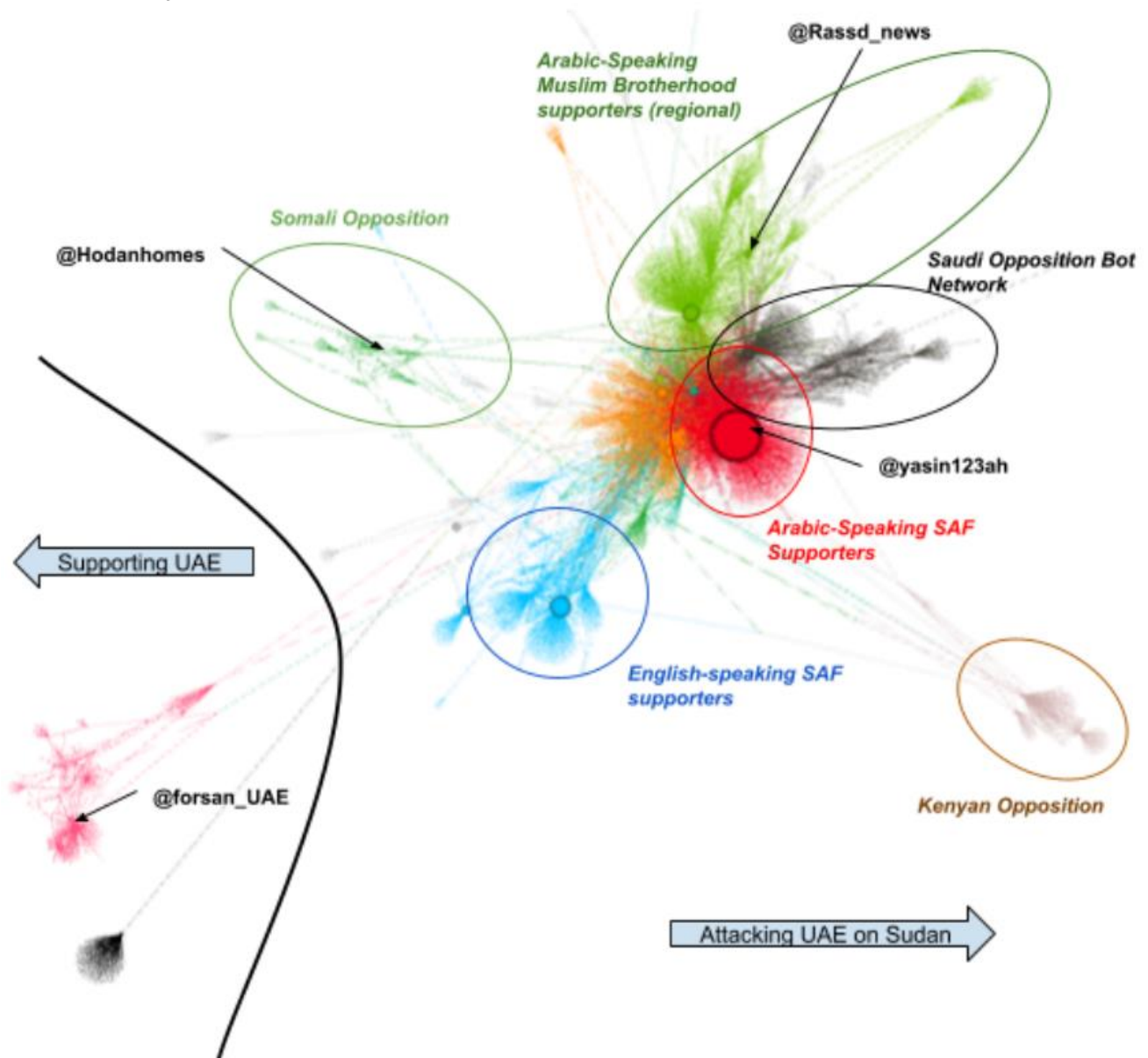
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- Over 24% of accounts attacking the UAE were flagged for exhibiting bot-like behavior, with attacking posts received on average 77% reposts/shares and other amplification from bot-like accounts.
- Data from major news outlets following the legal action shows two notable surges: an initial spike on March 7–8 (~6,919 mentions on Mar 8 alone), and a second spike on March 16 (~7,569 mentions on Mar 16). Coverage spans multiple regions and languages from African and Middle Eastern press, to South Asian media and even Chinese-language reports indicating truly global reach.
- Conversations on social media skewed negative and peaked immediately after the ICJ filing (Mar 6–7), driven by influential Sudanese and activist accounts. Amplification rates were high – content from relatively small accounts was magnified through retweets and shares (e.g., one user with 400 followers achieved 4k retweets), indicating that the accusatory narrative resonated and spread organically.

Network Analysis

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The above network analysis indicates communities and influencers who are discussing the UAE's involvement in Sudan over the past 30 days. Each node is an account that has posted on the topic at least twice, and each line (edge) is an influence path, in the form of a repost, engagement, or view (also at least twice). This network analysis indicates the following:

- Pro-UAE communities/influencers *(bottom Left, pink)* are a significant minority of the conversation. This community is almost **disconnected from the other communities and therefore unable to influence them.**

- The attacking communities/influencers, while forming the majority of the conversation, are limited to Sudanese communities and Islamist/Muslim Brotherhood networks elsewhere in the Arab world- **suggesting that currently, the attacking conversation on social media remains by-in-large contained to the region. Only when the ICJ lawsuit announcement was revealed on March 6, 2025, did the narrative spread beyond the region** to an international audience, albeit for a limited time. No major new international attacking communities have been formed at the time of writing. This is liable to change without a significant response.

- There is a concerning formation of new communities among Sudan's neighbors, who are influenced by the discussion, primarily in Kenya and Somalia.

Top Narratives Promoted by Attackers

The following are the top narratives identified across all major social media platforms in all major languages from the past 30 days. With the exception of the ICJ lawsuit, many of these narratives have consistently ranked among the top-ten most critical narratives in the global UAE discourse for the past several months.

1. **RSF Funding**: As Sudan burns, the UAE writes checks to the Rapid Support Forces, fueling a deadly conflict while claiming innocence on the world stage. *(685 posts) (124,362 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

2. **ICJ Lawsuit**: In a dramatic showdown at The Hague, Sudan points an accusing finger at the UAE, charging them with bankrolling genocide while the world watches in silence, particularly with regard to African nations who backed South Africa's ICJ lawsuit against Israel. *(214 posts) (91,769 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

3. **Palestine Connection**: Critics draw a bloody parallel between UAE's actions in Sudan and Israel's in Gaza, painting UAE as a shadowy accomplice in multiple humanitarian disasters. *(131 posts) (61,636 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

4. **Military Arms Supply**: While Dubai's skyscrapers glitter, UAE weapons quietly flow into Sudan, arming militias who terrorize civilians far from the Emirates' luxurious resorts. *(113 posts) (58,602 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

5. **War Crimes**: Human rights advocates document atrocities across Sudan, tracing the bloody fingerprints back to UAE military aid and financial support. *(129 posts) (36,373 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

6. **Kenya UAE Connection**: A tangled web connects Kenya's leadership with UAE and Sudanese warlords, forming a gold-smuggling corridor that finances bloodshed for profit. *(175 posts) (35,626 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

7. **Refugee Crisis**: As millions flee their homes in Sudan, social media erupts with accusations that UAE money created the refugee exodus that's tearing families apart. *(66 posts) (26,379 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

8. **Darfur Crisis**: Twenty years after the world said "Never Again" to Darfur's suffering, critics accuse the UAE of reigniting genocide in the same scarred region. *(116 posts) (23,907 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

9. **UAE PR Distraction**: Behind glossy tourism campaigns and influencer posts, activists claim UAE is desperately diverting attention from its role in Sudan's tragedy. *(3 posts) (15,652 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

10. **Dubai Luxury Contrast**: While tourists sip cocktails in Dubai's seven-star hotels, critics point to the stark contrast of Sudanese children starving because of UAE-funded conflict. *(6 posts) (15,281 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

11. **Genocide Complicity**: Legal experts build a case that the UAE isn't merely funding conflict but knowingly enabling the systematic destruction of ethnic Masalit people. *(8 posts) (14,517 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

12. **Gold Mining Interests**: Beneath the horror of Sudan's war lies a simple truth, critics say: UAE's thirst for Sudan's gold is worth more to them than Sudanese lives. *(12 posts) (4,601 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

13. **UAE Mercenaries**: Not content with merely financing violence, posts claim UAE actively recruits mercenaries to fight alongside the RSF, bringing death to Sudanese villages. *(51 posts) (3,304 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

14. **US UAE Relations**: As the Biden administration had designated UAE a "major defense partner," activists highlight the hypocrisy of embracing a nation simultaneously accused of enabling genocide. *(15 posts) (2,182 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

15. **UN Response**: In dramatic United Nations sessions, Sudan's representatives detail UAE's alleged role in their country's destruction while demanding international action. *(21 posts) (2,132 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

16. **Western Hypocrisy**: While Western powers sanction some nations for human rights abuses, critics point to their silence on UAE's actions as evidence of cynical double standards. *(20 posts) (937 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

17. **Muslim Brotherhood Claims**: UAE officials attempt to dismiss criticism by claiming their opponents are linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, adding a sectarian dimension to the conflict narrative. *(17 posts) (881 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

18. **UAE Regional Ambitions**: Behind Sudan's tragedy, analysts see UAE's calculated move to expand regional influence by controlling strategic resources and trade routes. *(6 posts) (416 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

19. **Calls for Boycott**: Activists urge global citizens to hit UAE where it hurts—tourism and luxury brands—by boycotting everything from Emirates flights to Dubai chocolates. *(6 posts) (293 engagements) (Primary Language: English)*

20. **Ethnic Cleansing**: Social media posts document RSF's targeted attacks against specific ethnic groups, claiming these systematic atrocities are made possible by UAE support. *(18 posts) (212 engagements) (Primary Language: Arabic)*

Action Plan for Countering Critical Sudan Narratives

Recommendations outline several steps to be implemented in a strategic, multi-faceted approach to countering the critical narratives against the UAE in the context of Sudan. The UAE must carefully balance firmly refuting false narratives and discrediting the negative campaign without inadvertently giving more visibility to the damaging allegations themselves. This delicate communications strategy requires a unified command structure and consistent coordination among stakeholders, potentially necessitating enhanced organizational capabilities and resources.
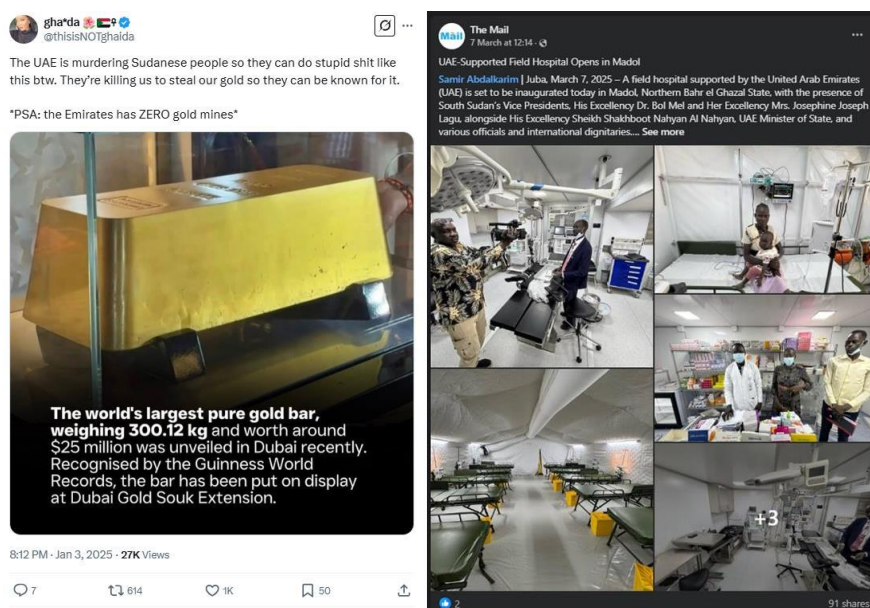
(Left) Blatant disinformation is being spread without evidence on the UAE's involvement in the conflict by Sudanese and regional actors. (Right) Content supporting the UAE, such as coverage of various UAE field hospitals and humanitarian initiatives, can be significantly amplified

Regional Media Outreach:
- Opinion articles, interviews, and exclusive access pieces should be granted to media outlets that cater to Target Audiences:
    - Western Policy Makers: Washington Post, Politico, the Hill, Foreign Policy
    - Pan-Africa and regional African audiences: The Nation, BBC Africa, Mail, Guardian, The Africa Report
    - Asian media: South China Morning Post, Indian Express
    - Key Arab press: Al Arabiya, Gulf News
    - Humanitarian Community: Reliefweb
    - Think Tank Collaboration: Council on Foreign Relations, Brookings, Chatham House

- Tailor the angle to each region – for African media, emphasize solidarity and humanitarian aid to fellow Africans; for Asian media, draw parallels to non-interference and development; for GCC media, underscore regional unity and the UAE's leadership role.
- Ensure press releases highlighting UAE's aid figures and peace efforts are disseminated in multiple languages (English, Arabic, French, Chinese) to maximize pickup.

Social Media Campaign:
- Launch a coordinated social media campaign using a dedicated hashtag (e.g. **#UAEForSudanPeace**). Use X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and regional platforms popular in Africa (such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups) to share infographics and short videos. Utilization of metrics such as hashtags is vital to ensure there is an ability to build in measurement of effect, but also allows unity behind one 'brand/tag' for which to consolidate a force of effort.
- Feature compelling visuals – e.g. Sudanese families receiving UAE aid, or UAE doctors helping refugees – with captions reinforcing humanitarian leadership.
- Engage official accounts and diplomats to share consistent messaging. Also, actively monitor and respond on social channels: promptly refute viral false allegations with fact-check threads, and amplify positive stories (e.g. a Sudanese student thanking UAE aid) to humanize the narrative.
- Schedule content at high-traffic times and maintain a daily posting frequency (at least 1-2 key posts per day in the immediate term, then taper to a few per week as needed to sustain).
- Produce preemptive content by publishing regular success stories, testimonials, and reports to build credibility before misinformation spreads. Drown out the noise to dominate the narrative.

Content Formats & Frequency:
- Mix up content types to keep the narrative fresh and engaging. Short-form videos (1–2 minute clips) highlighting UAE's humanitarian missions in Sudan can perform well on social media – plan a series of these, released weekly. Infographics and fact-sheets distilling key metrics (e.g., timeline of UAE aid deliveries, comparison of narratives) can be shared with journalists and on LinkedIn for the policy audience.
- Op-eds and thought leadership pieces (aim for 4-5 placed over the next 2 months across different regions) allow a deeper narrative – for example, a piece by a Sudanese community leader praising UAE's refugee assistance would reinforce humanitarian leadership.
- Maintain a consistent frequency: in the immediate term, push out some form of content daily (across combined channels). In the short-term (next 2-3 months), plan for a steady drumbeat (several pieces of content per week) to ensure sustained presence. Over time (4-6 months+), shift to a regular cadence (e.g. biweekly major updates or features) to keep reinforcing the narrative without fatigue.

Influencer & Grassroots Engagement:
- Identify and collaborate with influencers who carry credibility in target communities. For Africa, this could be respected journalists, academics, or pan-African youth influencers who can speak to Sudan's situation. Brief them with factual talking points (aid figures, peace initiatives) and encourage them to share their own perspective in support of the UAE's narrative themes (organically, to avoid appearing as propaganda).
- Similarly, work with humanitarian NGOs or diaspora leaders who have seen UAE's aid on the ground; their testimonials (via blog posts, webinars, or community forums) can add

authentic third-party validation of the UAE's positive role. In GCC, leverage local opinion leaders and think-tank experts to pen commentary reinforcing the UAE's stance.

- Engage diplomatic advocacy through UAE embassies by issuing statements and engaging with policymakers to clarify facts. Similarly, collaborate with think tanks in Washington, London and Brussels (Appendix B) with sponsored events promoting the agenda and key messages of the UAE surrounding this issue.
- Tactically, use a mix of content formats – from X or Facebook Live discussions featuring these influencers, to short endorsement videos – to distribute the counter-narrative through trusted voices.

Initial Capacity Building for 24/7 Rapid Response:
- Establish narrative intelligence/disinformation monitoring dedicated for the Sudan file. This includes dedicated alerting and reporting cadences and thresholds, to be staffed 24/7. Outputs from this team will activate all other components of the plan.
- Assign a dedicated team of spokespersons, subject matter experts and digital communicators to swiftly respond to misinformation on social media and traditional media (both official and unofficial digital media assets) in a dedicated nerve-center within the ministry, coordinating the campaign.
- Launch several dedicated online pages (and social media channels) for verifying facts, debunking rumors, and providing evidence-based responses, including for community notes. This should be done both by official channels and unofficial surrogates/supporters. Consider also setting up an independent fact-checking NGO (*see Appendix C*).

Aggressive Deflection Campaign
- Specifically target top 30 influencers attacking the UAE on Sudan *(see Appendix A)*
  - Deploy community notes which leverage fact-checking websites.
  - Counter-messaging (negative messaging) in comment responses/reports debunking and exposing their hypocrisy.
  - Utilize available technical methods to reduce influence (shadow-banning, take-down requests, etc.)
- Leverage new/existing assets to expose suspected bot-networks, including:
  - "Expose" networks on fact-checking hub/media monitoring NGO websites
  - Submit networks to independent fact checkers, pushing social platforms to take action
  - Publish articles and analyses with partner think-tanks and earned media

Strategic Counter-Narrative Messaging Framework

The core themes to emphasize in a messaging campaign when seeking to counteract the top narratives attacking the UAE are as follows:

Humanitarian Leadership
Portray the UAE as a compassionate leader aiding the Sudanese people. Highlight concrete contributions, and emphasize ongoing relief efforts (food, medical aid, refugee support) and stories of how UAE aid is alleviating suffering. This positions the UAE as part of the solution, not the problem.
- *Example messages:*
  - UAE has delivered over $600 million in humanitarian assistance to Sudan since 2023, as part of $3.5 billion in support over the past decade – supporting hospitals, refugee

camps, and food security programs. Humanitarian relief remains our priority. **#UAEForSudanPeace**. *(Recommended Languages: Arabic, English, French)*

- o The UAE has delivered thousands of tons of humanitarian aid to Sudanese refugees, including airlifting supplies to Chad and South Sudan, where displaced Sudanese populations seek shelter. The UAE's Red Crescent and Khalifa Bin Zayed Foundation have also provided medical aid and food packages directly to affected communities, reinforcing our aim in helping the Sudanese people.

- *Target Audiences:*
  - o Broad international community & Humanitarian Organizations (Red Cross, UNHCR, WFP): To showcase UAE's positive contributions and generate credibility.
  - o Sudanese Refugees and Affected Populations: To build goodwill among those suffering from the conflict.
- *Counter-narrative goal:* Undermine the accusation by showing UAE saves lives in Sudan, not harms them.

Proactive Peace Advocacy

Stress the UAE's role in seeking peace and stability in Sudan. Leverage recent examples: e.g. UAE officials calling for a humanitarian ceasefire during Ramadan and convening international partners to support peace talks. Mention the UAE's support for mediation (welcoming efforts by Turkey and the African Union) and its public exhortations for a halt to hostilities. This narrative casts the UAE as a peacemaker working to end the war.

- *Example messages:*
  - o Peace in Sudan is achievable through diplomacy, not division. UAE continues urging for immediate ceasefires and supports all diplomatic efforts towards lasting peace. **#DiplomacyFirst #SudanPeace** *(Recommended Languages: Arabic, English, French)*
  - o The UAE has actively been advocating for peace and stability in Sudan through participating in international peace efforts, including supporting the Jeddah Talks on Sudan and working with the United Nations, African Union, and Arab League to push for ceasefires and negotiations between the SAF and the RSF. The UAE has financially supported and endorsed African Union and Arab League peace processes, working closely with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Ethiopia to de-escalate tensions in Sudan. It has also advocated for a regional-led peace framework rather than external interventions.
- *Target Audiences:*
  - o International Diplomatic Community (UN, AU, Arab League, Western Governments): To reinforce the UAE's role as a mediator and counter diplomatic pressure and calls for arms embargoes.
  - o Sudanese Civil Society and Diaspora: To demonstrate that the UAE is a stabilizing force rather than a destabilizing one.
  - o African and Arab Leaders: To reinforce the UAE's alignment with regional peace initiatives and counter Sudanese claims.
- *Counter-narrative goal:* Rebut the idea that the UAE wants the conflict to continue; show instead that it has been actively pushing or peace.

Global South Solidarity

Frame the UAE as standing in solidarity with African and Asian nations in upholding stability and sovereignty. Emphasize shared interests and south-south cooperation – "the UAE, as a fellow

member of the Global South, supports African-led solutions and unity against disinformation." Highlight instances where the UAE worked with the African Union or regional organizations to help Sudan (for example, participating in multilateral humanitarian initiatives). By invoking Global South unity, the narrative appeals to mutual respect and counters any attempts to isolate the UAE from its regional partners.

- *Example message:*
  - As a proud partner in the Global South, the UAE stands shoulder-to-shoulder with African and Asian nations – supporting solutions driven by mutual respect, solidarity, and shared prosperity. Unity is our strength. "**#SouthSouthSolidarity #UAEGlobalSouth**" *(Include images from international summits, joint UAE-African/Asian projects, or partnerships.) (Recommended Languages: Arabic, English, French, Hindi, Swahili)*
- *Target Audiences:*
  - African and Asian Nations: To reinforce the UAE's image of upholding stability in the Global South, and supporting African-led solutions to the conflict
- *Counter-narrative goal:* Prevent Sudan's government from monopolizing Global South sympathy; instead, position UAE as an ally of the Global South, not an adversary.

Foreign Policy March 17, 2025, by Amgad Fareid Eltayeb, a former assistant chief of staff to Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

Economic Partnerships

Remind audiences of the UAE's long-term investments in Sudan's stability and prosperity. Reference major development initiatives – for example, a $6 billion UAE investment package announced in 2022 to develop Sudanese infrastructure (port, free trade zone, agriculture). Underscore that the UAE's intent has been to spur economic growth and jobs for Sudanese, consistent with a partner nation mindset. By showcasing projects (past and future) that benefit Sudan's economy, frame the UAE as a builder of Sudan's future.

- *Example message:*
  - Did you know? UAE has invested $6 billion in infrastructure projects across Africa, boosting local economies and creating thousands of jobs. Our commitment: lasting

growth, shared prosperity. **#UAEAfricaPartnership #SustainableGrowth** *(Recommended Languages: English, Arabic, French)*
  - o UAE partnerships in Africa and Asia are creating opportunities—not conflicts. From agriculture to healthcare, our mission remains sustainable economic growth and regional stability. Let's build a prosperous future together. **#UAEforDevelopment #PartnershipNotConflict** *(Recommended Languages: English, Arabic, French, Hindi)*
- *Target Audiences:*
  - o Sudanese Government and Businesses: To reinforce the financial support provided by the UAE in supporting economic growth and jobs for Sudanese populations
  - o Broader international community: To demonstrate the successful long-term investments by the UAE in Sudan's stability
- *Counter-narrative goal:* Challenge any portrayal of the UAE as a destabilizer by highlighting its tangible contributions to Sudan's development.

Rejection of Baseless Allegations

Refute the harmful claims against the UAE by emphasizing the lack of direct evidence, while also highlighting the short fallings of the Sudanese government and other actors amplifying the critical narratives against the UAE.

- *Example messages:*
  - o The UAE has publicly and categorically denied allegations of military support to the RSF and has even called for independent investigations by credible third-party organizations. Recent satellite imagery analysis and flight records show ZERO direct evidence of UAE weapon shipments to Sudanese factions. Furthermore, the genocidal Sudanese government and bad actors in the region such as Qatar, continue to promote and spread fake news to cover up their own crimes in the country.
- *Target Audiences:*
  - o Western Policymakers and Think Tanks (US Congress, EU, UK Parliament): To counter lobbying efforts that could lead to sanctions or diplomatic consequences.
  - o Regional Arab and African Governments: To prevent strained relations and maintain economic and security ties.
- *Counter-narrative goal*: Reframe the narratives to reflect back on other actors in the region guilty of crimes similar to that which the UAE has been accused of.

Negative/Deflection Messaging

Negative messaging should be used at MoFA's discretion and deployed by **primarily unofficial assets** focused on the undeniable claims leveraged against the Sudanese government and the SAF. The SAF is in the heart of one of the most violent and cruel wars of our time and all mouthpieces - **official and unofficial** - should be shining the spotlight on the perpetrators.

SAF have been accused of severe human rights violations during the ongoing civil war, including:

- **Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians**: The SAF have conducted attacks without distinguishing between military targets and civilians, leading to numerous civilian casualties. (Amnesty International)
- **Arbitrary Arrests and Torture**: Reports indicate that the SAF has arbitrarily arrested civilians, including health workers, subjecting them to incommunicado detention and mistreatment, with instances of torture reported. (HRW)

- **Recruitment of Child Soldiers**: The conflict has seen the conscription of children into armed forces, a practice violating international laws and norms. ([UN](#))
- **Sexual Violence**: There have been documented cases of sexual violence perpetrated by both the SAF and RSF, contributing to a climate of fear and impunity. ([Amnesty International](#))

Priority Platforms

A multi-channel approach incorporating coordinated, high-frequency social media engagement is strongly recommended when seeking to counter malicious narratives targeting the UAE.

Platform	Content Format	Frequency	Timing (GMT)	Language Priority	Strategic Approach
Twitter/X	• Short-form facts (40%) • Quote graphics (15%) • Short video clips (20-30 sec) (25%) • Thread format (15%) • Link sharing with commentary (5%)	8 – 10 daily posts	• 9-11am • 7-9pm • News response: within 2 hours	• Arabic (60%) • English (30%) • French (10%)	• Focus on evidence-based rebuttals • Quick response to emerging allegations • Thread format for complex explanations • Strategic hashtag usage
Instagram	• High-quality photo carousels (40%) • Short Reels (15-30 sec) (25%) • Infographics (20%) • Behind-the-scenes humanitarian content (10%) • Quote cards (5%)	3 – 5 daily posts	• 12-2pm • 8-10pm	• Arabic (50%) • English (40%) • French (10%)	• Emphasize visual documentation of aid • Human interest stories with emotional impact • Before/after visuals of assistance impact • Carousel format for multi-faceted evidence
TikTok	• Authentic-feeling humanitarian clips (35%) • Expert interviews (20%) • Data visualization animations (15%) • "Day in the life" aid worker content (20%) • Response videos to misinformation (10%)	2 – 3 daily posts	• 2-4pm • 7-9pm	• Arabic (65%) • English (30%) • French (5%)	• Leverage high engagement • Humanize aid workers and diplomats • Use trending sounds strategically • Create "myth vs fact" format videos • Optimize for vertical full-screen viewing
Facebook	• Longer video content (3-5 minutes) (30%) • Discussion - prompting posts (20%) • Photo albums with detailed captions (25%) • Live videos of events/aid distribution (15%) • Shareable infographics (10%)	3 – 4 daily posts	• 10am - 12pm • 6 - 8pm	• Arabic (70%) • English (20%) • French (10%)	• Target community-building content • Optimize for comment engagement • Utilize Groups for targeted outreach • Leverage longer video format • Implement strategic post boosting
Telegram	• Comprehensive info packages (30%) • Document collections (25%) • Forward-friendly message cards (15%)	4 – 6 daily posts	• 11am-1pm • 5-7pm	• Arabic (75%) • English (15%) • French (10%)	• Create dedicated channels by theme • Utilize file-sharing for detailed reports • Build content archives for reference

	• Audio/podcasts (10%) • Curated news items (20%)				• Optimize for message forwarding

Twitter/X (High Priority)

- **Highest critical content vacuum**: Twitter has 85.8% negative content, creating the largest opportunity to shift conversation sentiment with new positive/supporting content on all of the UAE's stabilizing and humanitarian activities.
- **Volume dominance:** With 82.8% of all critical content (4.4K posts), Twitter is where the UAE's reputation on Sudan issues is most actively being damaged.
- **Engagement rates:** Twitter has moderate engagement metrics for critical attacking posts, (posts attacking the UAE gain over 100 engagements on avg). This makes it the second highest platform, although the volume of posts attacking the UAE mean that the total engagements for these attacks dwarf other platforms. Twitter has the lowest engagement rate for supporting content (56 engagements on avg), although post volumes can offset this.
- **Narrative amplification and impact:** With retweet functionality, critical content spreads rapidly beyond original audiences, making establishing positive counter-narratives within the same ecosystem crucial. On average, attacking posts received 5K views, while supporting posts reached 4.1K views, indicating a significant reach/impact.
- **Influential audience:** Twitter's user base includes journalists, policymakers, and opinion leaders who shape broader media narratives, making sentiment change here disproportionately valuable.

Instagram (Second Priority)

- **Highest engagement efficiency:** With 939.2K engagements per post, Instagram offers the best ROI for content creation, delivering nearly 8X more engagements per post than Twitter.
- **Positive sentiment foundation:** Instagram already has a favorable 62% positive content basis, providing a receptive audience for building on existing positive momentum.
- **Visual storytelling advantage:** The platform's format allows for compelling visual evidence of humanitarian efforts, which is more persuasive than text-based claims.
- **Lower content saturation:** With only 62 critical posts compared to Twitter's 4,434, supporting content faces less competition and has higher visibility potential.
- **Content longevity**: Instagram posts typically have a longer effective lifespan than tweets, providing sustained messaging impact with fewer required posts.

TikTok (Second Priority)

While TikTok scores high, or highest, across all raw engagement or view metrics, it does not necessarily cater to the correct audience for ICJ related issues. That said, this further emphasizes the need for a multi-channel approach.

- **Strongest audience receptivity:** TikTok has a positive ratio with more supporting (148) than critical content (136), making it the only major platform where positive narratives already outnumber negative ones.
- **Highest engagement efficiency for supporting content:** Supporting posts on TikTok generate 443.4 average engagements (380.9 likes, 39.8 comments, 22.7 shares), dramatically outperforming supporting content on Twitter by 7.7x.
- **Superior video performance:** Supporting content averages 5,866 views per video, creating significant organic reach potential for minimal investment.
- **Demographic advantage:** Reaches younger audiences (18-34) not heavily consuming content on Twitter or traditional media, providing access to next-generation opinion leaders.

- **Algorithmic advantage:** TikTok's algorithm favors content quality over account size, allowing new narratives to gain traction without requiring established accounts.
- **Authentic testimonial opportunity:** Platform excels for first-person humanitarian impact stories that feel authentic rather than institutional messaging.

Facebook (Third Priority)

- **Significant content gap:** With 963 critical posts versus only 205 supporting posts, Facebook represents the second-largest platform opportunity to counter critical narratives.
- **Superior commenting dynamics:** Supporting content generates 9.2x more comments than critical content (52.9 vs 5.7 comments per post), indicating audience willingness to engage deeply with UAE-positive messaging.
- **Demographic complementarity:** Reaches older (35+) and more established professional audiences less active on TikTok/Instagram, including policy stakeholders.
- **Group-based targeting:** Facebook Groups allow for precise community targeting, particularly reaching Sudanese diaspora communities and regional stakeholders through existing interest groups.
- **Cross-regional impact:** Facebook dominates in Africa and Middle East markets where sentiment about Sudan matters most, with 88% higher penetration than Twitter.

Telegram (Niche Strategic Opportunity)

- **Complete narrative vacuum:** 26 critical posts with zero identified supporting content creates a 100% opportunity to introduce counter-narratives without competition.
- **Exceptional engagement metrics:** Critical content averages 712.8 engagement per post (17x higher than Facebook, 5.8x higher than Twitter), indicating highly responsive audience.
- **Video performance:** Critical content averages 11,139 views per video, suggesting significant reach potential.
- **Channel-based architecture:** Allows creation of dedicated information channels that audiences actively subscribe to, creating sustained communication pathways.
- **Regional significance:** Particularly influential in Russia, Eastern Europe, and parts of MENA where alternative perspectives on UAE-Sudan have particular geopolitical relevance.
- **Information persistence:** Content is easily accessible in channels without algorithm interference, making it valuable for reference materials and narrative building.
- **Closed ecosystem advantage:** Less public scrutiny of messaging strategies compared to open platforms, allowing more flexible communication approaches.

Entities and Officials to Push Messages

Leveraging UAE official websites and social media handles to introduce and solidify the counter-narrative themes in the public domain ensures a widespread dissemination of the messages, while also reinforcing the legitimacy of the counter-narratives.

Key websites for messaging integration include:
Mofa.gov.ae

- **Official Statements & Press Releases**: Regularly publish detailed responses and clarifications on ICJ allegations, ensuring visibility to international diplomatic audiences.

- **Multilingual Resources**: Provide FAQs, fact sheets, infographics, and evidence-based content demonstrating UAE's humanitarian and peace efforts in Arabic, English, French, and other strategic languages.

Sca.gov.ae

- **Investor Relations & Economic Partnership Content:** Highlight economic stability, partnership success stories, and UAE's constructive economic involvement in Africa and the Global South to reassure international investors and stakeholders.

Dmi.gov.ae

- **Multimedia Storytelling:** Host short-form videos, documentaries, and human-interest stories emphasizing UAE's humanitarian and economic partnerships.
- **Rapid Response Platform:** Utilize DMI channels for swift responses to misinformation or viral negative content.

Accounts of key individuals or officials recommended to take part in messaging campaign include:

Entity/Official	Recommended Usage
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Regularly disseminate official statements, real-time updates, and infographics highlighting humanitarian aid and diplomatic efforts. Coordinate multilingual messaging.
Ministry of Economy	Reinforce narratives around mutually beneficial economic investments in Africa and Asia. Highlight specific projects benefiting host countries.
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Showcase infrastructure projects funded by UAE in Global South, reinforcing development and stability narratives.
Ministry of Health and Prevention	Share stories and metrics of healthcare aid to Sudan and other humanitarian efforts; emphasizes genuine care and direct impact.
H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed	High-impact messaging; amplify UAE's humanitarian contributions, statements on peace and regional stability. Utilize high follower counts for broad reach.
H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid	Promote UAE's global development initiatives, regional solidarity, and economic partnerships to counteract negative narratives effectively.
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Personal diplomatic outreach; direct messaging reinforcing humanitarian leadership, proactive peace efforts, and countering allegations directly from ministerial level.
Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	High-impact, policy-level messaging; active responses and clarification regarding UAE's diplomatic stance, humanitarian policy, and proactive crisis management.

A full list of traditional media outlets for engagement is listed in Appendix D.

Target Audiences

The following audiences are organized according to strategic importance for the UAE (Western policy makers/trade partners), audiences who are the most engaged with the content (Sudan/ African audiences), and audiences who can be affected.

Audience	Why	Message Agenda
Western Policymakers	Western governments influence diplomatic relations, arms sales, and sanctions that could impact the UAE's national security interests. Prevent	Rebuttal with facts, cooperation with the ICJ and investigations, rather than to aggressively push emotional narratives.

	Western narrative from hardening against the UAE	
African Union and Arab League Officials	that African countries are the most at risk from turning against the UAE as a result of Sudan disinformation, mainly in Kenya and Somalia. Regional backing is a key legitimizer for the UAEs counter narrative	Regional camaraderie and the falsehood of the allegations. The UAE's proven track record of helping Arab and Muslim brothers in need.
Sudanese Public	Winning over Sudanese civilians weakens the Sudanese government's anti-UAE propaganda	African and UAE partnerships are helping Sudanese civilians, showcasing stories like UAE-funded clinics in Chad for Sudanese refugees. Aim
Humanitarian Organizations	If humanitarian actors publicly acknowledge the UAE's support, it strengthens the argument that the UAE is focused on helping civilians, not fueling war.	Reinforcing the UAEs history of humanitarian actions, and transparency in the conflict as a force for good.
Global Business and Investment Leaders	The Sudan war affects regional economic stability and trust in institutions for investment (weary of ESG and legal changes to the landscape from sanctions)	Reassure investors and business networks that the UAE remains committed to economic partnerships, infrastructure development and long-term stability in Sudan and Africa.
Think Tanks and Policy Institutes	These institutions provide policy recommendations to governments and international bodies. Global geopolitical analysis and discourse can be generated, or affected by these institutions. *(See Appendix B)*	The UAE is a contributor to peacekeeping and development. The conflict is immensely complex, not a simple 'victim and aggressor', the SAF is not a victim.
BRICS Countries	BRICS members hold significant diplomatic, economic, and security influence	A 'Western-Centralized' UN looking to discredit BRICS nations by undercutting worthwhile peacekeeping pursuits
G20 Countries	The UAE has strong economic and political ties with many G20 nations, making them vital for diplomatic support and trade relations	Reassure the UAE remains committed to economic partnerships, infrastructure development and long-term stability.

Western Policymakers (US, UK, EU, UN Security Council Members)

- *Why?* Western governments influence diplomatic relations, arms sales, and sanctions that could impact the UAE's national security interests. Sudan has been lobbying for international action against the UAE, so it's critical to ensure key decision-makers in Washington, Brussels, and London hear the UAE's perspective first.

- Western media and governments will be attentive to the genocide allegation due to human rights norms, but the UAE has less sway here and should tread carefully. The strategy in Western outlets should therefore be to ensure the UAE's rebuttal and facts are on record rather than to aggressively push emotional narratives.

- Facilitate factual pieces in reputable publications (e.g. a piece in Foreign Policy or Financial Times from a legal expert questioning the merit of Sudan's case, citing lack of evidence and political motives). Engage Western PR firms or legal spokespeople to brief journalists on the UAE's official position and highlight any inconsistencies in Sudan's claims. While keeping a lower profile publicly, also conduct quiet diplomatic outreach in Washington, Brussels, London, etc., to share the UAE's side of the story with policymakers (so that behind the scenes, Western governments see the UAE is taking the issue seriously and has a strong counter-argument).

- The key is to prevent Western narrative from hardening against the UAE: ensure every news story or analysis in the West at least notes the UAE's extensive humanitarian aid and its charge that the Sudanese Army itself has culpability in atrocities. Over time, this can mitigate the risk of Western official censure while the primary battle for hearts and minds is waged in the Global South.

-

African Union and Arab League Officials

- *Why?* These regional bodies mediate conflicts and influence diplomatic resolutions. By securing their support, the UAE can prevent Sudan from using these platforms to escalate pressure. The UAE's engagement must highlight its role in regional stability, aid efforts, and diplomatic mediation. Regional backing across the GCC and Arab world is a key legitimizer for the UAEs counter narrative and aids countering any perception that the UAE is a 'new colonizer' of Africa.
- The data further shows that African countries are the most at risk from turning against the UAE as a result of Sudan disinformation, mainly in Kenya and Somalia.
- In African countries and Pan-African forums, emphasize solidarity and support. Many Africans view Sudan's conflict with deep concern; position the UAE as committed to African stability. Tactics: Engage African Union channels – e.g. seek to have UAE's humanitarian contribution acknowledged in AU humanitarian reports or meetings. Tailor messages to resonate with African values of unity and mutual aid.
- Within the GCC and broader Middle East, leverage regional camaraderie and the UAE's reputation. Messages here can be more direct in defending the UAE – stress the falsehood of the allegations and the UAE's proven track record of helping Arab and Muslim brothers in need. Recent operations in Gaza such as 'Gallant Knight 3' have gained traction, albeit short lived, that the UAE is a major contributor of aid to Gaza, providing over 40% of international assistance.
- Highlight also how the UAE airlifted relief to Sudan at the height of the conflict and has hosted Sudanese ex-officials in safety. Use Arabic-language media heavily (Al Arabiya, Sky News Arabia, Asharq al-Awsat) to ensure the narrative is understood in local context. Also coordinate with friendly governments in the GCC to issue statements of support or at least skepticism toward Sudan's claims (a unified GCC stance will strongly bolster the counter-narrative in the region). The goal is to make the UAE's stance the prevailing narrative across the GCC, portraying the lawsuit as an unjust attack on a nation known for aiding its neighbors.

Sudanese Public (Civilians, Refugees, Business Leaders, Community Groups)

- *Why?* Winning over Sudanese civilians weakens the Sudanese government's anti-UAE propaganda. The UAE should amplify stories of its humanitarian aid, medical assistance, and economic investments in Sudanese communities to maintain goodwill and prevent hostility.
- The data shows that Sudanese users are the core of the discourse, providing their own original content but also amplifying disinformation narratives. Appealing to this audience will work to deny disinformation actors of their central "core" of supporting users.
- Stress how African and UAE partnerships are helping Sudanese civilians, showcasing stories like UAE-funded clinics in Chad for Sudanese refugees. Aim to get positive coverage in influential African media (such as BBC Africa, AfricaNews, Nation Media Group outlets) by providing ready-to-publish human-interest stories. By doing so, build an alliance of narratives where African opinion leaders echo UAE's points (perhaps out of appreciation for its aid) rather than Sudan's accusations.

Humanitarian Organizations (UNHCR, Red Cross, WFP, NGOs in Sudan and Chad)
- *Why?* These groups are trusted voices in conflict zones and can validate the UAE's aid contributions. If humanitarian actors publicly acknowledge the UAE's support, it strengthens the argument that the UAE is focused on helping civilians, not fueling war.
- The data shows that attackers often look to amplify seemingly objective posts by international organizations (malinformation). Ensuring a more balanced outlook by these organizations will deny attackers a crucial pipeline of primary-source, seemingly credible material with which to hurt the UAE's image

Global Business and Investment Leaders (Sovereign Wealth Funds, Multinational Corporations, UAE Investors in Africa)
- *Why?* The Sudan war affects regional economic stability. The UAE must reassure investors and Gulf-African business networks that it remains committed to economic partnerships, infrastructure development, and long-term stability in Sudan and Africa.

Think Tanks and Policy Institutes (Chatham House, Brookings, CSIS, Carnegie Endowment, African Policy Centers)
- *Why?* These institutions provide policy recommendations to governments and international bodies. Influencing think tanks with briefings, exclusive insights, and UAE-backed independent reports can shape how decision-makers and media view the UAE's role in Sudan. *(Appendix B)*

BRICS Countries (China, Russia, India, Brazil, South Africa, and New Members like Egypt and Saudi Arabia)
- *Why?* BRICS members hold significant diplomatic, economic, and security influence, and some have strategic relations with both the UAE and Sudan. And this is a power dynamic that is developing in global importance, not only to the UAE, but also the BRICS members. By ensuring BRICS countries do not align with Sudan's claims, the UAE protects its standing in emerging global power structures.
  - China & Russia: Both supply arms in the region and have major economic interests.
  - India & Brazil: Key voices in the Global South, influencing UN narratives.
  - South Africa & Egypt: Regional influencers in Africa.

G20 Countries (Including Indonesia, Turkey, Mexico, and Argentina)
- *Why?* The UAE has strong economic and political ties with many G20 nations, making them vital for diplomatic support and trade relations. Engaging G20 leaders ensures international backing at forums like the G20 Summit and UN General Assembly.
  - Turkey & Saudi Arabia: Regional powers involved in Sudan diplomacy.
  - Indonesia: Leader in the Muslim world, influencing Islamic narratives.
  - Mexico & Argentina: Important in shaping Latin America's stance on international conflicts.

Many Asian countries (e.g. India, Vietnam, Pakistan, Indonesia) who are split between the BRICS / G20 groups and who may be classified as part of the "Global South" audience have no direct stake in the Sudan-UAE dispute. Here, the narrative should be framed as an issue around principles: non-interference, respect for sovereignty, and skepticism of politically motivated claims. For instance, in Indian media, an op-ed could draw parallels to how false narratives can undermine international cooperation, implicitly cautioning against Sudan's move. These audiences might not follow Sudan

closely, so the aim is to prevent a one-sided story from taking root; by proactively supplying a balanced or pro-UAE narrative, we fill the vacuum before the Sudanese perspective dominates. Within each audience breakdown there may by specific states/groups that belong to more than one audience, also some may require more measured or unique approaches. For example, Qatar and Turkey may not respond to messaging activity that is directed towards the GCC or the G20 specifically.

Timeline

A phased approach will allow the UAE to contain the immediate damage and steadily improve its reputation. Below is a roadmap with objectives, actions, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each phase:

Immediate (0–1 Month) - Seize control of the narrative's direction during the critical initial aftermath.
Roll out official statements and rebuttals through every major channel within days. Deploy senior officials for interviews (to reiterate messages of humanitarian commitment and denial of allegations) on high-impact platforms. Simultaneously, push an aggressive social media blitz (daily content as outlined) to drown out the initial wave of negativity. Engage embassies to communicate with host country media in Africa and Asia, ensuring local language statements reach grassroots audiences.

Short Term (2-3 months) - Introduce and solidify the counter-narrative themes in the public domain.
Execute the planned op-eds, influencer collaborations, and regional media placements focusing on the four key message themes. At this stage, create deeper content (e.g. a 5-minute mini-documentary on UAE's aid to Sudan) and pitch it to news channels or circulate on YouTube. Host a high-profile press conference or panel (perhaps on the sidelines of a global forum) with UAE officials and African partners speaking on Sudan humanitarian efforts – generating newsworthy soundbites that reinforce positive narratives.

Medium Term (4-6) - Normalize a balanced narrative and demonstrate tangible proof of the UAE's positive role
Maintain regular communications, but pivot to showcasing outcomes: for example, by this time the UAE could organize a major humanitarian initiative (e.g. a donor conference or a new aid airlift) and make it a media event to refresh the news cycle with positivity. Continue engaging Sudan's neighbors and the AU – if a peace negotiation is underway by then (which is possible given talks of mediation), ensure the UAE is visibly supportive of it. Begin subtle reputation repair in Western circles by having independent analysts publish reports debunking the genocide support claims (e.g. leveraging think tanks).

Long Term (6+ months) - Sustain and cement the UAE's rehabilitated image and be prepared for the ICJ case's evolution.
Over the long run, integrate the narrative campaign into UAE's broader public diplomacy. Continue periodic updates on humanitarian aid (for instance, if the war continues, the UAE could announce additional aid packages at intervals – each can be an opportunity for positive press). Leverage global events e.g. UAE's participation in UNGA or Expo to reiterate messages of peace and solidarity in a larger context, which indirectly reinforce the Sudan narrative. If the ICJ case progresses to substantive stages, mount a communications push around legal victories or expert opinions favoring the UAE.

BEACON RED

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الخـــــارجـيـــــــة
مكـــتـب الــوزيـــــر

STRATEGIC NARRATIVE REPORT
Friday, March 21, 2025

Measuring Success

Success KPIs for Social Media

Immediate (0–1 Month) - **Seize control of the narrative's direction during the critical initial aftermath.**
- Within 4 weeks, aim for at least 50% of new media articles to include the UAE's perspective or balancing context, up from ~20% in initial coverage (baseline).
- Negative sentiment in daily coverage should start to tick down – track a drop in negative share from 87% to 70% by month's end.
- On social media, achieve >1 million impressions on the **#UAEForSudanPeace** hashtag and at least 25% positive or neutral mentions in the conversation (currently only 13% are non-negative).
- Ensure zero unanswered viral claims – any tweet or post gaining traction with false info should have a prompt counter-post from an official or influencer (>90% of significant claims addressed within 24 hours).

Short Term (2-3 months) - Introduce and solidify the counter-narrative themes in the public domain.
- Increase favorable/neutral coverage to 40% of total (meaning negative coverage falls to 60%) – a significant shift from the initial 87% negative.
- Aim for 3–5 positive feature stories in respected outlets (e.g. an African paper praising UAE's role in refugee relief, or a profile on a beneficiary of UAE aid) – these can be measured via media placement tracking.
- On social media, grow the reach of positive content: e.g. ensure UAE's humanitarian stories videos get a cumulative 100,000+ views and that the engagement (likes/shares) on pro-UAE posts is at least double that of the initial virality of the accusatory posts (baselining the 4k retweets as a figure to surpass).
- Monitor audience sentiment via polls in key countries – target a 10% increase in favorable opinion of the UAE in Sudan-related matters among populations in at least 3 African countries (measured by polling or social sentiment analysis, if available).

Medium Term (4-6) - Normalize a balanced narrative and demonstrate tangible proof of the UAE's positive role
- Neutral or positive sentiment should consistently exceed negative in global south media – aim for <50% negative sentiment in coverage (meaning the majority is neutral/favorable).
- Track this via sentiment analytics on news articles. UAE-specific favorability metrics (perhaps via surveys or social media sentiment in Africa/GCC) should show marked improvement e.g. a 20% rise in positive sentiment about the UAE's role in Sudan compared to baseline.
- Another metric: the narrative "share of voice" – ensure that in any ongoing discussion of the ICJ case, the UAE's counter-narrative (humanitarian/peace angle) is mentioned almost as often as Sudan's accusation.
- Quantitatively, strive for a 2:1 ratio of counter-narrative mentions to accusation-only mentions in media by 6 months (so for every article purely about "UAE accused of X," we get two that talk about "UAE aids/denies and says Y").
- By this stage, any official proceedings (ICJ hearings) may start – measure success by the tone of their coverage: e.g. major outlets headlining the UAE's defense and efforts rather than just the allegations.

Long Term (6+ months) - Sustain and cement the UAE's rehabilitated image and be prepared for the ICJ case's evolution.

- Within a year or more, the goal is for the initial crisis narrative to be largely neutralized. Quantitatively, achieve net positive sentiment overall i.e. more positive than negative commentary on the UAE in context of Sudan.
- The volume of discussion will likely drop over time (which is a success in itself if the inflammatory narrative dies down), but whenever Sudan-UAE is mentioned, it should be contextualized by UAE's good works (track this in random samples of articles/tweets by 1 year, 8 out of 10 mentions should pair the accusation with UAE's counterpoints or focus on the UAE's aid contributions, rather than repeating the claim alone).
- Secure endorsements or validations from respected third parties: for example, by this time a statement from the African Union recognizing UAE's support to Sudan, or positive references by UN officials. Such indicators would demonstrate that the UAE's narrative has not only countered the immediate issue but actually built a reserve of goodwill that can endure beyond the current crisis.

Appendix A - Top Attackers

The following accounts show the highest influence in terms of average post virality when posting toxic/disinformation content against the UAE on the topic of Sudan. These accounts should be prioritized for deflection/mitigation purposes.

- YASIR_MOS91 (Twitter)
  - Sudanese political commentator sharing graphic documentation of violence in Sudan. 10 posts, 1,276 average engagement, Arabic language
- EmiratiMinister (Twitter)
  - Pseudonymous account claiming to expose UAE government actions in Sudan despite low follower count. 15 posts, 1,160 average engagement, Arabic language
- yasin123ah (Twitter)
  - Most prolific poster with 221 posts about UAE-Sudan relations. Verified Sudanese activist with 371,840 followers, 449 average engagement, Arabic language
- drhossamsamy65 (Twitter)
  - Claimed Academic with PhD credentials focusing on UAE's regional interventions beyond Sudan- Muslim Brotherhood Aligned. 25 posts, 366 average engagement, 694,911 followers, Arabic language
- McLad84 (Twitter)
  - Sudanese doctor (Ahmed Maglad) focusing on Kenya-UAE connections in the conflict. 21 posts, 332 average engagement, Arabic language
- thisisNOTghaida (Twitter)
  - English-language activist providing historical context on UAE's formation and regional role. 19 posts, 327 average engagement, English language
- Mo_elmalik (Twitter)
  - Investigative voice promising to reveal "UAE secrets in militia funding". 47 posts, 233 average engagement, Arabic language
- shukrisudani (Twitter)
  - Sudanese activist calling for pan-Arab response to UAE actions in Sudan. 62 posts, 210 average engagement, Arabic language
- Bit_Khalifa1417 (Twitter)
  - Account promoting religious-themed criticism and prayers against UAE leadership. 17 posts, 193 average engagement, Arabic language
- theafroaussie (Twitter)
  - African-Australian activist drawing parallels between propaganda techniques and UAE messaging. 10 posts, 188 average engagement, English language
- Darfurunionuk (Twitter)
  - UK-based Darfuri activist organization highlighting ethnic dimensions of the conflict. 10 posts, 187 average engagement, English language
- ahmadshomokh (Twitter)
  - Amplifier of Sudanese military statements against UAE involvement. 28 posts, 174 average engagement, Arabic language
- SudanTrends (Twitter)
  - Social media analysis account tracking coordinated campaigns about the conflict. 14 posts, 172 average engagement, Arabic language.
- walaaelsadig (Twitter)
  - Sudanese doctor mobilizing around the hashtag #UAE_kills_Sudanese. 44 posts, 161 average engagement, Arabic language
- SudanPlusNews (Twitter)

- o Sudanese news aggregator highlighting alleged mercenary involvement. 11 posts, 140 average engagement, Arabic language
- AL_70o0T_ (Twitter)
  - o Sudanese commenter focusing on diplomatic confrontations between Sudan and UAE. 28 posts, 139 average engagement, Arabic language
- Apollo_Hak (Twitter)
  - o Social media activist organizing hashtag campaigns against UAE arms sales. 10 posts, 132 average engagement, Arabic language
- ziyadalsudani (Twitter)
  - o English-language Sudanese documenter of alleged war crimes with content warnings. 12 posts, 82 average engagement, English language
- OfficalOsman (Twitter)
  - o Sudanese activist using religious appeals against UAE leadership.30 posts, 80 average engagement, Arabic language
- abdo_Elgni (Twitter)
  - o One of the most consistent posters (88 posts) covering Sudanese Army victories. 72 average engagement, Arabic language
- MALHACHIMI (Twitter)
  - o Influential Arab commenter linking UAE policies in Sudan to broader regional issues 22 posts, 69 average engagement, 495,229 followers, Arabic language
- AbbasMo77873890 (Twitter)
  - o Focuses on alleged media censorship of Sudan's UN statements about UAE. 36 posts, 64 average engagement, Arabic language
- Mustafa_sdm1 (Twitter)
  - o Mobilizes support for Sudanese diplomatic statements at the UN. 11 posts, 58 average engagement, Arabic language
- omarali.249 (TikTok)
  - o Only TikTok account in top 30, focusing on Sudanese sovereignty messaging. 14 posts, 57 average engagement, Arabic language
- SudaneseEcho (Twitter)
  - o English-language platform amplifying Sudan's diplomatic confrontations with UAE. 19 posts, 56 average engagement, English language
- watanserb_news (Twitter)
  - o Pan-Arab news outlet connecting UAE actions in Sudan to other regional intervention. 12 posts, 52 average engagement, 235,122 followers, Arabic language
- Alnazeirabusai1 (Twitter)
  - o Consistent promoter of #UAE_kills_Sudanese hashtag campaigns. 38 posts, 43 average engagement, Arabic language
- TheLensPost (Twitter)
  - o News outlet focusing on the ICJ case filed by Sudan against UAE. 14 posts, 42 average engagement, Arabic language
- Shasholiqa (Twitter)
  - o Leader of Saudi-opposition style bot-network with critical commentary on UAE's regional allies. 26 posts, 40 average engagement, Arabic language
- AbedaMoham6183 (Twitter)
  - o Second most prolific poster (175 posts) focusing on human stories from the conflict 40 average engagement, Arabic language

Appendix B - Think-Tank Outreach & Partnerships

- Engage regional and global think tanks such as the Emirates Policy Center, Atlantic Council, and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy to publish research and analysis on UAE humanitarian diplomacy.

- Organize expert roundtables with leading analysts focusing on the UAE's impact in Sudan.

- Facilitate white papers and research briefings on the effectiveness of UAE humanitarian strategies.

United States:
1. **Council on Foreign Relations** (CFR): An independent, nonpartisan organization specializing in U.S. foreign policy and international affairs.
2. **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**: A global network of policy research centers dedicated to advancing peace through analysis and development of new policy ideas.
3. **Center for Strategic and International Studies** (CSIS): A bipartisan think tank focusing on defense and security; regional stability; and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global health and economic integration.
4. **Brookings Institution**: Conducts in-depth research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national, and global levels.
5. **Atlantic Council**: Promotes constructive leadership and engagement in international affairs based on the central role of the Atlantic community in meeting global challenges.

United Kingdom:
1. **Chatham House** (Royal Institute of International Affairs): An independent policy institute based in London, focusing on international affairs and global policy.
2. **International Institute for Strategic Studies** (IISS): A world-leading authority on global security, political risk, and military conflict.
3. **Overseas Development Institute** (ODI): An independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.
4. **Royal United Services Institute** (RUSI): A defense and security think tank offering analysis of global defense and security issues.

Centre for the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa (MENAF) Cambridge University: Based at the University of Cambridge, MENAF conducts research and analysis on the political, economic, and security dynamics of the Middle East and North Africa region, with a strong focus on international relations.

Appendix C - Guidelines for Establishment of Fact-Checking NGO

Example Fact-Checking & Counter-Disinformation Think Tank

Name: Global Information Integrity Institute (GIII)
Mission: To combat misinformation and disinformation by providing fact-based, non-partisan analysis, real-time verification, and educational initiatives to promote information literacy.

1. **Organizational Structure & Governance**
   a. Leadership & Advisory Board
      i. Director/CEO: Expert in media, journalism, or international relations.
      ii. Editorial & Research Team: Fact-checkers, analysts, and policy researchers specializing in disinformation.
      iii. Technology Team: Developers and cybersecurity experts to create verification tools.
      iv. Legal & Ethics Team: Specialists ensuring adherence to journalistic ethics and legal compliance.
      v. Advisory Board: Experts from journalism, academia, government, and technology sectors.
   b. Operational Model
      i. Non-partisan approach: GIII will work independently, with funding from reputable sources such as grants, foundations, and partnerships with media organizations.
      ii. Transparency policy: Clear documentation of methodology and funding sources to ensure credibility.

2. **Core Functions & Services**
   a. Real-Time Fact-Checking
      i. Rapid Response Unit: A team dedicated to debunking viral misinformation within hours.
      ii. Verification Database: A publicly accessible archive of verified and debunked claims.
   b. Investigative Research on Disinformation Campaigns
      i. Misinformation Trends Report: Monthly reports analyzing emerging disinformation tactics.
      ii. Deep-Dive Case Studies: Research on influence operations, bot networks, and media manipulation.
      iii. Disinformation Mapping Tool: An interactive digital map tracking major disinformation narratives by region.
   c. Public Education & Media Literacy
      i. Workshops & Webinars: Training journalists, students, and policymakers in recognizing disinformation.
      ii. Digital Literacy Campaigns: Social media initiatives to educate the public on fact-checking.
      iii. Open-Source Tools: Free tools for journalists and the public to verify information.
   d. Collaboration & Advocacy
      i. Partnerships with Tech Platforms: Work with social media companies to reduce the spread of misinformation.
      ii. Government & Policy Engagement: Provide recommendations to policymakers on combating disinformation.

   iii. Cross-Border Network: Build partnerships with international fact-checking organizations.

3. **Online Presence & Digital Platforms**
  a. Website Domain: www.giii.org
  b. Key Features:
   i. Live Fact-Checking Feed: Real-time updates on misinformation trends.
   ii. Fact-Check Archive: A searchable database of verified news and debunked claims.
   iii. Resources & Reports: Downloadable guides on digital literacy and countering disinformation.
  c. Social Media & Digital Engagement
   i. Telegram Channel & Groups.
    1. Channel Name: GIII Fact-Check Hub
    2. Purpose: Quick updates, verified news alerts, and discussions on misinformation trends.
    3. Engagement Strategy: Encourage user submissions of questionable content for verification.
   ii. Twitter (X) & LinkedIn
    1. Handle: @GIII_FactCheck
    2. Purpose: Rapid response fact-checking, engagement with journalists and policymakers, dissemination of research reports.
   iii. Facebook & Instagram
    1. Handle: @GIII_FactCheck
    2. Purpose: Public education, awareness campaigns, and media literacy initiatives.
   iv. YouTube & TikTok
    1. Channel Name: GIII Fact-Check
    2. Purpose: Short explainer videos, myth-busting content, and expert interviews on disinformation.

4. **Launch Strategy**
  a. Phase 1: Establishing the Organization (Months 1-3)
   i. Secure funding from grants, international organizations, and partnerships.
   ii. Hire key staff (fact-checkers, analysts, developers, and social media managers).
   iii. Develop website and AI-based fact-checking tool.
   iv. Establish initial social media presence and Telegram channel.
  b. Phase 2: Public Launch & Initial Content Rollout (Months 4-6)
   i. Official launch event with media coverage.
   ii. Release first research report on global misinformation trends.
   iii. Launch weekly fact-checking newsletter & Telegram updates.
  c. Phase 3: Expansion & Community Engagement (Months 7-12)
   i. Collaborate with universities and media outlets for digital literacy programs.
   ii. Develop partnerships with social media platforms and policymakers.
   iii. Launch an interactive misinformation tracker on the website.

5. **Long-Term Vision & Expansion**
  a. Expand regional fact-checking hubs in key areas affected by disinformation.
  b. Develop AI-powered verification tools for journalists and social media users.
  c. Build an international coalition of counter-disinformation think tanks.

Appendix D - Recommended Media Outlets for Engagement - Per Audience

US Policy Maker Audience

- **Tier 1: Direct Policy Influence**
  - **Foreign Policy**
    - Viewership: 1.2M monthly visitors
    - Demographic: 65% govt./policy, 58% senior mgmt.
    - Reach: ~70% State Dept. senior staff
  - **Politico**
    - Viewership: 26M monthly visitors
    - Demographic: 54% congressional staffers daily
    - Newsletter: 200K+ Politico Playbook subscribers
  - **The Hill**
    - Viewership: 24M monthly visitors
    - Demographic: 62% Capitol Hill staff required reading
    - Digital Reach: 100M+ monthly page views
  - **Foreign Affairs**
    - Viewership: 400K+ print, 2.5M monthly site visitors
    - Demographic: 31% govt./diplomats, 28% academics
    - Retention: 72% save issues for future reference
  - **Defense One**
    - Viewership: 1.3M monthly visitors
    - Demographic: 41% defense/security pros
    - Newsletter: 150K+ subscribers

- **Tier 2: Opinion Shaping**
  - **Washington Post**
    - Viewership: 96M monthly visitors
    - Audience: 78% Beltway professionals
    - Digital Subscribers: 3M+
  - **Axios**
    - Viewership: 23M monthly visitors
    - Newsletter Audience: 2.5M+ subscribers
    - Quality: 84% college-educated, 32% senior mgmt.
  - **The Atlantic**
    - Viewership: 800K print, 30M digital monthly visitors
    - Demographic: 37% policy influencers, 62% postgrad
    - Engagement: Avg. 7.2 mins/article
  - **Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)**
    - Viewership: 580K monthly visitors
    - Members: 5K+ influential officials
    - Distribution: Foreign Affairs + briefings
  - **Brookings Institution**
    - Viewership: 4.2M monthly visitors
    - Social Reach: 2.3M followers
    - Distribution: 7.5M annual downloads

BEACON RED

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الخــــــارجيـــــة
مكـــتـــب الـــوزيـــر

STRATEGIC NARRATIVE REPORT

Friday, March 21, 2025

Africa Public Opinion Audience

- **Tier 1: Pan-African Reach**
  - **AllAfrica**
    - Viewership: 7M monthly visitors
    - Reach: Distributed to 140+ African outlets
  - **BBC Africa**
    - Viewership: 125M weekly
    - Radio: 93M weekly listeners
    - Digital: 32M monthly visitors
  - **France24 (Africa)**
    - Viewership: 26.4M weekly viewers
    - Dominant: Francophone West/Central Africa
    - Digital: 8.5M monthly video views
  - **The Africa Report**
    - Viewership: 450K monthly readers, 1.2M site visitors
    - Business: 72% African C-suite
    - Political Influence: 65% govt. officials

- **Tier 2: Regional Influence**
  - **Nation Media Group (Kenya)**
    - Viewership: 30M+ monthly
    - Print: 170K daily circulation
    - Digital: 12M monthly visitors
  - **Premium Times (Nigeria)**
    - Viewership: 7M monthly visitors
    - Primary source: 38% Nigerian professionals
  - **Mail & Guardian (South Africa)**
    - Viewership: 2.3M monthly visitors
    - Quality: 73% tertiary education, 48% decision-makers
  - **RFI Afrique**
    - Viewership: 40M weekly listeners
    - Digital: 6.2M monthly views
    - Audience: 70% urban educated Francophone

EU Policy Maker Audience

- **Tier 1: Brussels Ecosystem**
  - **Politico Europe**
    - Viewership: 1.5M monthly visitors
    - Brussels Reach: 92% EU staff
    - Newsletter: 100K+ subscribers
  - **Euractiv**
    - Viewership: 1.25M monthly visitors
    - Languages: 12 European languages
    - Institutional Reach: 80% EU Parliament
  - **EU Observer**
    - Viewership: 900K monthly visitors
    - Subscribers: 30K paid
    - Quality: 76% EU diplomats/staff
  - **Financial Times (Europe)**
    - Circulation: 1.1M global, 25% Europe

- Brussels Reach: 89% EU Commissioners
- Digital Subscribers: 1M+ (40% Europe)
  - **European Council on Foreign Relations**
    - Viewership: 520K monthly visitors
    - Network: 3K+ EU policymakers
    - Distribution: 60K+ decision-makers

- **Tier 2: National Influencers**
  - **Le Monde Diplomatique**
    - Viewership: 2.5M global, 1.3M European readers
    - Diplomatic Reach: 25 languages, 80% EU missions
  - **Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung**
    - Circulation: 225K print, 25M digital
    - Audience: 82% German MPs
  - **El País**
    - Viewership: 65M monthly global
    - EU Readers: 15M across Europe
  - **The Economist**
    - Circulation: 1.6M global, 45% Europe
    - Audience: 95% college-educated, 65% senior positions
  - **Chatham House**
    - Viewership: 2.8M annual visitors
    - Downloads: 1.2M annual reports

Humanitarian Community Audience

- **Tier 1: Sector-Specific**
  - **ReliefWeb**
    - Viewership: 15M annual visitors
    - Content: 720K humanitarian docs
  - **UN Dispatch**
    - Viewership: 420K monthly visitors
    - Newsletter: 35K subscribers
  - **Humanitarian Practice Network**
    - Viewership: 350K quarterly visitors
    - Subscribers: 30K print/digital

BRICS Audience

- **Tier 1: Major National Outlets**
  - **Times of India/Economic Times**
    - Readers: 15.4M daily, 242M digital monthly
  - **Globo (Brazil)**
    - Readers: 5.5M daily, 25M monthly digital
  - **The BRICS Post**
    - Viewership: 1.2M monthly visitors
  - **RT (Russia)**
    - Viewership: 100M weekly, 42M BRICS viewers
  - **Global Times (China)**
    - Circulation: 2M print, 30M digital readers

- **Tier 2: Cross-BRICS Influence**
    - **South China Morning Post**
        - Viewership: 50M monthly visitors
    - **The Hindu**
        - Circulation: 6.5M daily, 170M digital monthly
    - **Sputnik News**
        - Viewership: 60M monthly, 22M BRICS visitors
    - **Brazil-China Business Council**
        - Subscribers: 120K direct
    - **CGTN Africa**
        - Viewership: 30M households, 85M monthly video views