

Telegram Messaging App Restricts Access to Hamas Channels

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Michael Bihlmayer / IMAGO / TACC

The popular messaging app Telegram, founded by Russian-born tech entrepreneur Pavel Durov, has partially restricted access to the accounts of Hamas militants and their affiliates, Russian media [reported](#) Tuesday.

Android users have been notified that they are no longer able to access the channels of Hamas and its military wing, the al-Qassam Brigades, in line with Google Play rules, according to the state-run news agency TASS.

Those restrictions reportedly did not impact access to the accounts of Izzat al-Rishq, who is a member of Hamas' political bureau, Palestine's Sunni militants Islamic Jihad and the Lebanese Shiite militants Hezbollah, all of which remain accessible to Apple users.

Telegram founder Durov earlier this month [refused](#) to remove the Hamas account from Telegram, saying his subscription-based platform serves as a “unique source of first-hand information” and does not “amplify propaganda.”

“While it would be easy for us to destroy this source of information, doing so risks exacerbating an already dire situation,” Durov wrote in an Oct. 13 post.

Related article: [Telegram Surpasses WhatsApp Traffic Volume in Russia](#)

Google, which runs the open-source operating system Android, has not commented on the restrictions.

According to TASS, Telegram offers Android users the option to download a “special client” that restores access to “all blocked channels” on the platform.

Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing more than 1,400 people, kidnapping over 200 people and triggering retaliatory Israeli strikes that have so far killed more than 5,000 people in the Gaza Strip.

Israel has threatened to launch a ground offensive in Gaza to eradicate Hamas.

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