

# When Solidarity Becomes Dissent: Gaza War Slogans and Regime Red Lines in Egypt and Jordan

Asif Mohiuddin

Department of Moral Studies, Civics and Character Building, Faculty of Human Sciences, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100800051>

Received: 14 August 2026; Accepted: 19 August 2026; Published: 25 August 2026

## ABSTRACT

The war in Gaza created a political dilemma for Egypt and Jordan. Both governments publicly supported Palestinians and rejected forced displacement, while maintaining peace treaties with Israel, security partnerships, and strong executive control over foreign policy. This article examines how the two states managed this tension through a source-audited corpus of 45 verbal and written protest formulations—11 from Egypt and 34 from Jordan—organised into ten analytical protest episodes between October 2023 and June 2025. The corpus is not used to measure protest frequency or ideological diversity. State responses are assessed at the episode level through documented dispersal, route blocking, arrests, prosecution, official reclassification and restrictions on organisational continuation. The article develops the concept of licensed solidarity to describe conditional permission for public support of an external cause within discursive, organisational, spatial and institutional limits. It defines political convertibility as the process through which protest expression develops an independent political afterlife by generating representative claims, durable organisations, territorial movement, or institutional demands. This concept differs from framing, mobilisation, repression, co-optation and political opportunity structures because it focuses on the shift from permitted expression to independent political capacity. The comparison shows that rhetorical militancy alone did not determine state intervention. Egypt imposed stronger restrictions when solidarity moved beyond presidential framing, developed autonomous organisation, or approached Tahrir Square and Rafah. Jordan tolerated a broader protest repertoire through recognised intermediaries but restricted movement towards sensitive sites and claims outside controlled channels. The article explains when transnational solidarity becomes domestic dissent under authoritarian rule politically.

**Keywords:** Gaza war; protest slogans; licensed solidarity; political convertibility; authoritarian rule

## INTRODUCTION

The attacks in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war in Gaza generated a major wave of Palestine solidarity mobilisation across the Arab region. In Egypt and Jordan, however, Gaza was not simply an external foreign-policy issue. Egypt shares a border with Gaza, controls the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing, maintains the 1979 peace treaty with Israel, and has long played a mediating role between Israel and Palestinian organisations. Jordan borders Israel and the West Bank, maintains the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, has a population with deep Palestinian ties, and holds custodial responsibilities for Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem (United Nations, 1979, 1994). In both countries, official statements presented humanitarian assistance, opposition to forced displacement, and diplomatic engagement as matters of national responsibility (Presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2023; Royal Hashemite Court, 2023a, 2023b).

These official commitments, however, also created a political tension. Public solidarity with Palestine could reinforce state narratives of regional responsibility, but it could also encourage citizens to ask what meaningful solidarity required from their own governments. Such questions could extend beyond humanitarian concern to demands for opening or securing borders, ending diplomatic normalisation, changing treaty relations, permitting independent organisation, or allowing crowds to move into politically significant public spaces. The central boundary was therefore not simply between pro-Palestinian and anti-government speech. Rather, it lay between

solidarity that remained compatible with executive control and solidarity that began to generate independent claims about national policy, political authority, and collective action.

This tension is especially visible in protest slogans because the source record preserves short, repeatable formulations that can be linked to speakers, locations, organisations and protest episodes. The documentary evidence establishes the wording and immediate context of these formulations, but the article does not treat them as direct indicators of political intention. Their significance is instead assessed through the circumstances in which they appear, including grammatical form, organisational carrier, location, sequence and political or territorial destination. The analysis therefore distinguishes between what is documented and how that evidence is interpreted. Particular formulations may assign responsibility, construct collective identities, identify policy addressees, or point towards politically significant forms of action, but these meanings are treated as contextual interpretations rather than as self-evident properties of the slogans themselves. Their political importance depends on how language interacts with organisation, space, and the wider protest setting. These interpretations do not establish protesters' intentions and should not be read as evidence that any individual formulation directly caused a government response (Benford & Snow, 2000; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015; Van de Velde, 2024).

It is from this relationship between permitted expression and possible political consequence that the article develops its central research question: under what conditions did Gaza solidarity formulations cross regime red lines in Egypt and Jordan? To answer this question, the article advances two related concepts. The first, licensed solidarity, describes the conditional permission of support for a transnational cause within political, organisational, spatial, and discursive boundaries set or enforced by the state. The second, political convertibility, identifies the process through which tolerated expressions begin to acquire independent political capacity by generating representative claims, organisational continuity, territorial movement, or institutional demands. Together, these concepts make it possible to examine not only whether solidarity was permitted, but also when that permitted solidarity began to produce political consequences that governments were less willing to tolerate.

The comparison between Egypt and Jordan provides a useful setting for examining this process because several important external conditions are broadly shared while domestic political infrastructures differ. Both states have peace treaties with Israel, direct geographic exposure to the conflict, close strategic relations with the United States, and official narratives that identify strongly with the Palestinian cause. At the same time, they differ in regime structure, the strength of intermediary institutions, traditions of protest, and the extent to which public contention is routinised or restricted. This structured contrast makes it possible to examine why similar expressions of solidarity could remain manageable in one setting or episode yet become politically more consequential in another (Schwedler, 2022; Sika, 2024).

To investigate these differences empirically, the study analyses 45 documented verbal and written formulations across ten analytical protest episodes in Egypt and Jordan. Because the available evidence is uneven across the two countries, the number of formulations is not treated as a measure of protest frequency, movement strength, or ideological diversity. Instead, the analysis examines how particular claims were connected to protest locations, organisational carriers, representative assertions, policy addressees, and observable state responses. This approach shifts the comparison away from simple counts and towards the political pathways through which expressions of solidarity acquired, or failed to acquire, a more independent political afterlife.

### **Slogans, Licensed Solidarity and Political Convertibility**

Slogans are treated here not simply as statements of opinion, but as forms of political action. Through repetition, pronouns, imperatives, accusations and call-and-response, protesters can identify problems, assign responsibility, propose remedies and construct a collective political "we." In this sense, slogans are closely connected to broader debates on contentious repertoires, street politics, framing and symbolic authority (Bayat, 2003; Benford & Snow, 2000; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015; Wedeen, 1999). The central concern of this study, however, goes beyond what slogans mean at the moment they are voiced. It asks what political capacity they may acquire afterwards.

This question leads to the concept of licensed solidarity. Licensed solidarity refers to an issue-specific arrangement in which an authoritarian government permits, encourages, or selectively tolerates public support

for an external cause while continuing to control the domestic political consequences that may emerge from that support. It therefore differs from repression, which focuses on practices intended to deter, restrict, punish,

or disrupt contention (Davenport, 2007; Earl, 2011). Licensing captures a more mixed process in which permission and restraint operate at the same time. Authorities may allow some expressions of solidarity while limiting where protests can take place, monitoring participants, redirecting mobilisation, or sanctioning activities that move beyond accepted boundaries. This combination is consistent with research showing that authoritarian rule often relies not only on coercion, but also on legitimisation, institutional management, and selective accommodation (Gerschewski, 2013).

Licensed solidarity also differs from co-optation. Co-optation generally involves incorporating potential opponents through institutions, political access, representation, or resources (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007; Gerschewski, 2013). Licensing does not necessarily require such incorporation. Protesters may remain organisationally independent while the state still regulates where they mobilise, which actors are recognised as legitimate intermediaries, and which political consequences are allowed to develop. This distinction is especially important in authoritarian settings, where civil-society organisations may create spaces for participation while also helping structure and contain political activity (Wiktorowicz, 2000).

If licensed solidarity defines the boundaries of permitted expression, political convertibility explains what happens when expression begins to move beyond those boundaries and develops a more independent political life. Political convertibility refers to the process through which protest language acquires political capacity beyond the immediate moment of expression. This can occur in four main ways. Representational conversion takes place when a claim begins to speak in the name of a wider constituency. Organisational conversion occurs when a claim gains a more durable carrier, such as a party, association, student group, or digital network. Territorial conversion occurs when symbolic protest develops into movement towards a politically significant location, such as a square, embassy, border, or crossing. Institutional conversion occurs when a claim enters formal political arenas, including parliament, elections, treaty debates, or demands directed at a specific state institution (McAdam et al., 2001; Saward, 2006). These forms may overlap, but they share a common feature: the claim begins to organise political consequences beyond its original expression.

Political convertibility is therefore related to, but distinct from, framing and mobilisation. Framing scholarship explains how political actors define problems, assign responsibility, propose solutions, construct identities, and motivate participation (Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow et al., 1986). A slogan may be rhetorically powerful, emotionally resonant, or widely repeated without developing a durable organisation, representative mandate, territorial direction, or institutional target. Mobilisation, by contrast, concerns the recruitment, coordination, participation, and deployment of people and resources (McAdam et al., 2001; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). Convertibility may begin before large-scale mobilisation occurs. A small student organisation, for example, may give continuity to a claim, while a demand to move towards a border or embassy may give it a politically meaningful territorial direction.

The concept also operates at a different level from political opportunity structures. Political opportunity approaches focus on the broader environment of contention, including institutional access, elite alignments, potential allies, and state capacity (Meyer, 2004). These factors help explain why protest may be generally more open or restricted in one political setting than another. Political convertibility, however, focuses more narrowly on particular claims and episodes. It helps explain why some forms of protest become politically more consequential when their organisational carriers, representative claims, territorial destinations, or institutional targets change, even within the same broader political environment.

Political convertibility should also be distinguished from movement institutionalisation. Institutionalisation usually refers to the longer-term incorporation of movements or their demands into political parties, elections, policymaking, or bargaining arrangements (McAdam et al., 2001; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). Institutional conversion describes an earlier and more uncertain stage. A claim may begin to enter an institutional arena without becoming fully incorporated into it and may still be blocked, redirected, appropriated, or contained. Convertibility therefore captures a transitional point between public expression and more durable political incorporation.

The two concepts describe different stages of the same political process. Licensed solidarity identifies the boundaries within which an authoritarian government permits support for a transnational cause, while political convertibility identifies the point at which that permitted expression begins to generate independent representative, organisational, territorial, or institutional consequences. The framework therefore does not replace existing theories of framing, mobilisation, repression, co-optation, political opportunity, or institutionalisation. Rather, it connects them by focusing on a specific transition: how tolerated expressions of solidarity can develop into forms of autonomous political capacity that authoritarian governments may increasingly seek to contain.

### **Research Design, Case Selection and Sources**

The study compares Egypt and Jordan between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2025 through a structured comparative design that incorporates a purposeful domestic contrast. Both countries are Arab authoritarian states with long-standing peace treaties with Israel, close strategic relations with the United States, direct geographical exposure to Israel or Palestinian territory, and official narratives that frame support for Palestine as a national and moral obligation. These common features narrow the range of plausible foreign-policy responses while simultaneously generating strong domestic expectations for visible expressions of solidarity. The two cases differ, however, in regime structure, traditions of protest, the role of intermediary institutions and the extent to which public contention is either routinised or tightly restricted (Schwedler, 2022; Sika, 2024; Wiktorowicz, 2000).

This combination of external similarity and domestic variation provides greater leverage for examining the proposed mechanism than a broader cross-regional comparison. Egypt represents a setting in which independent organisation and unscripted public assembly have been substantially constrained since 2013. Jordan, by contrast, retains more established channels of political contention through parties, professional associations, parliamentarians, and recurrent protest sites. The cases are not intended to represent authoritarian regimes generally. Rather, they are selected because comparable external constraints operate alongside different domestic infrastructures for containing, redirecting, or interrupting the organisational and political afterlives of protest.

The source-audited corpus comprises 45 distinct verbal or written formulations organised across ten analytical protest episodes, five in Egypt and five in Jordan. The distribution is uneven, with 11 formulations from Egypt and 34 from Jordan. This imbalance reflects differences in the available public record rather than an attempt to construct numerically equivalent cases: repeated demonstrations near the Israeli embassy in Amman generated substantially more documented protest language than Egypt's shorter and more restricted protest episodes. The ten episodes should therefore be understood as analytical clusters rather than ten discrete rallies. The March 2024 embassy protests in Amman, for instance, encompass closely connected mobilisation across several nights. The June 2025 Global March to Gaza and the arrests of Egyptian student organisers are included as evidence of organisational and territorial control but are excluded from the slogan corpus because the available documentation does not preserve sufficiently precise protest formulations.

Sources were identified through iterative searches in both English and Arabic using combinations of country, city, date, protest location, and terms relating to slogans, chants, demonstrations, Rafah, embassies, borders, normalisation, arrests, and student mobilisation. A formulation was included only when it could be linked to an identifiable source, date, and specific event or location. Reports that paraphrased or summarised protesters' demands were retained as contextual evidence but were not coded as exact formulations. Where the same wording appeared across multiple events, it was counted once in the corpus, while subsequent appearances were recorded separately in the audit trail rather than treated as additional slogans.

The analysis focuses on each documented formulation within the broader context of its corresponding protest episode. Each formulation was coded according to its target, grammatical form, location, organisational carrier, and principal type of political convertibility. State response was coded at the episode level because practices such as dispersal, detention, route restriction, prosecution and limits on organisational continuation generally operate against gatherings or broader mobilisation sequences rather than against isolated statements. Accordingly, a state red line is inferred from the observable treatment of an episode rather than attributed to presumed governmental intention. Tables 2A–2C distinguish documentary information, analytical coding, and

episode-level responses for clarity. Each formulation is linked to the response associated with its wider episode, but this linkage should not be interpreted as evidence that a particular slogan directly caused the state response.

### **Source Hierarchy and Translation Protocol**

The study uses different types of sources for different evidentiary purposes rather than treating all materials as equivalent. Official speeches, royal statements, government and ministry communications, and treaty texts are used primarily to examine how states publicly defined national responsibilities, political positions, and legal commitments (Jordan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, 2024; Presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2023; Royal Hashemite Court, 2023a, 2023b; United Nations, 1979, 1994). News reports, including Arabic-language journalism, are used to verify dates, locations, sequences of events, and directly reported statements or slogans. Human-rights reports provide evidence concerning arrests, charges, legal restrictions, and broader patterns of coercive state action. Academic scholarship is used to establish the relevant historical, political, and theoretical context. When sources provide conflicting accounts, these differences are acknowledged rather than reconciled without explanation. Official statements are therefore interpreted as evidence of state framing and positioning, rather than as neutral accounts of contested events.

Translation follows a source-provenance approach designed to preserve traceability and consistency. When an English-language source already provides a translation of quoted material, that published translation is retained. When an Arabic-language source preserves the original wording but provides no English version, the study supplies its own translation based directly on the available Arabic text. The corresponding Arabic wording, transliteration and literal gloss are documented in the source-and-coding audit. Where published translations differ, the Arabic original, when available, serves as the primary reference point. When only an English rendering survives, no Arabic wording is reconstructed through back-translation. This procedure ensures that each translated passage can be traced either to an identified published translation or to a study translation based on preserved Arabic-language evidence.

### **Limitations and Inferential Boundaries**

A central limitation is the size and uneven composition of the corpus: 34 documented formulations are from Jordan and 11 from Egypt. This asymmetry limits direct cross-case comparison. The larger Jordanian corpus reflects the richer public record produced by recurring embassy demonstrations and more routinised protest activity, whereas Egypt's restrictive protest environment produced shorter protest windows and fewer publicly documented formulations. The imbalance therefore reflects documentary visibility as well as substantive differences in the political environments in which mobilisation occurred.

For this reason, the 34 Jordanian and 11 Egyptian formulations are not treated as measures of actual protest frequency, mobilisation intensity, crowd size, or ideological diversity. The dataset represents a source-audited corpus of documented formulations rather than a representative sample of all Palestine-solidarity protest speech in either country. News coverage is more likely to preserve dramatic slogans and major urban demonstrations, while smaller gatherings, incomplete audiovisual records, and highly restricted protest environments may leave much weaker documentary traces. The uneven corpus therefore limits any attempt to make quantitative claims about the relative prevalence of slogans or protest activity across the two cases.

The comparative analysis instead uses the formulations as contextualised units of evidence nested within protest episodes. The focus is on how documented claims interacted with their organisational carriers, grammatical forms, locations, representative assertions, territorial destinations, institutional addressees, and observable state responses. This approach follows the broader logic of contentious-politics and political-claims research, which emphasises relationships among claims, actors, institutions, and political contexts rather than treating protest events as interchangeable observations (Koopmans & Statham, 1999; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). Consequently, the Egypt–Jordan comparison is intended to identify patterned political processes rather than to compare the absolute number of slogans documented in each country.

The study also cannot infer official motives directly or isolate the causal effect of wording from location, crowd movement, legal status, prior organising, or security context. Arrest totals are not treated as directly comparable

because reporting periods and legal categories differ across countries. Court records and complete protest-video archives are not consistently public for the episodes studied; where legal outcomes or coercive measures are documented through human-rights organisations or contemporaneous reporting rather than a court file, the manuscript identifies that evidentiary basis. The analysis therefore makes mechanism-oriented, conditional claims about patterned relationships among language, organisation, place, convertibility, and documented state response.

These constraints narrow the generalisability of the findings. The results should therefore be read as conditional evidence about political processes, not as prevalence estimates for Palestine-solidarity protest in either country.

**Table 2A. Documentary and contextual fields for all 45 documented formulations**

| ID  | Country | Date      | Slogan / formulation                                                          | Location                            | Organisational carrier                           |
|-----|---------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| E01 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “We are with you! Go Sisi!”                                                   | Designated state-backed rallies     | State-backed/encouraged rally                    |
| E02 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “We support the Palestinian cause, and we support the president’s decisions.” | Designated state-backed rallies     | State-backed/encouraged rally                    |
| E03 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “Where is the Arab army?”                                                     | Al-Azhar Mosque, Cairo              | Independent protest crowd after prayers          |
| E04 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “Bread, freedom, Arab Palestine.”                                             | Tahrir Square, Cairo                | Independent crowd moving beyond designated sites |
| E05 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “The people want the fall of Israel.”                                         | Tahrir Square, Cairo                | Independent crowd moving beyond designated sites |
| E06 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “Leave” / “Leave, Sisi.”                                                      | Tahrir Square, Cairo                | Independent crowd moving beyond designated sites |
| E07 | Egypt   | 20-Oct-23 | “Real demonstrations, not a mandate for anyone.”                              | Tahrir Square, Cairo                | Independent crowd moving beyond designated sites |
| E08 | Egypt   | 15-Jan-24 | “What a disgrace—Egypt is participating in the siege.”                        | Journalists Syndicate, Cairo        | Syndicate-area protest crowd                     |
| E09 | Egypt   | 3-Apr-24  | “No to the Israeli Embassy! No to normalisation.”                             | Journalists Syndicate, Cairo        | Syndicate-area protest crowd                     |
| E10 | Egypt   | 3-Apr-24  | “Open the Rafah crossing.”                                                    | Journalists Syndicate, Cairo        | Syndicate-area protest crowd                     |
| E11 | Egypt   | 3-Apr-24  | “Glory to the Palestinian resistance.”                                        | Journalists Syndicate, Cairo        | Syndicate-area protest crowd                     |
| J01 | Jordan  | 20-Oct-23 | “Al-Qassam, we are your army.”                                                | Karak / routes toward Jordan Valley | Karak and border mobilisation                    |
| J02 | Jordan  | 20-Oct-23 | “Open the borders.”                                                           | Karak / routes toward Jordan Valley | Karak and border mobilisation                    |

|     |        |                |                                                                              |                                 |                                                |
|-----|--------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| J03 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Close the embassy and open the borders.”                                    | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J04 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Cancel Wadi Araba.”                                                         | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J05 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “No Zionist embassy on Jordanian land.”                                      | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J06 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Go on, Hamas; you are the cannon and we are the bullets.”                   | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J07 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “With soul and blood, we sacrifice for you, Hamas.”                          | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J08 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Go on, Hamas, and drink the blood of the vile.”                             | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J09 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Chant and let everyone hear; our Gaza raises the head.”                     | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J10 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Knock, knock, cap—where is the Arab nation?”                                | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J11 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “War criminal.”                                                              | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J12 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “Partners in crime.”                                                         | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J13 | Jordan | 24-Oct-23      | “If you do not support them today, tomorrow our children will be like this.” | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J14 | Jordan | 27–31 Mar 2024 | “No embassy of the entity on your land, Amman.”                              | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Recurring embassy mobilisation / chant leaders |
| J15 | Jordan | 27–31 Mar 2024 | “The people’s decision is to bring down the Wadi Araba agreement.”           | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Recurring embassy mobilisation / chant leaders |

|     |        |                   |                                                                      |                                          |                                                      |
|-----|--------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| J16 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Return, my country, return—to<br>Jerusalem and Gaza return.”        | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J17 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “They want us to remain beggars,<br>lost and refugees.”              | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J18 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Whoever asks what is<br>happening—Gaza has died of<br>hunger.”      | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J19 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “They said Hamas is terrorist; all<br>Jordan is Hamas-aligned.”      | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J20 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Down with Israel, and down with<br>every collaborator.”             | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J21 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “To the streets, revolutionaries; let<br>the earth blaze with fire.” | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J22 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Palestine, we sacrifice for you<br>until Judgement Day.”            | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J23 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “What a disgrace—lift the siege.”                                    | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J24 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Amman–Gaza, one destiny.”                                           | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J25 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “To the Embassy!”                                                    | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J26 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “God, rid us of America’s slaves!”                                   | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J27 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Normalisation.” / “Treasonous!”                                     | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |
| J28 | Jordan | 27–31<br>Mar 2024 | “Protecting the Embassy? Shame<br>of shames!”                        | Israeli<br>embassy<br>district,<br>Amman | Recurring embassy<br>mobilisation / chant<br>leaders |

|     |        |                |                                                                                |                                 |                                                |
|-----|--------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| J29 | Jordan | 27–31 Mar 2024 | “Gaza, forgive us; we too are besieged.”                                       | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Recurring embassy mobilisation / chant leaders |
| J30 | Jordan | Apr-24         | “No to security grips.”                                                        | Israeli embassy district, Amman | Embassy protest crowd                          |
| J31 | Jordan | 24-May-24      | “Resistance fighter, repeat the attack; capture a soldier and free prisoners.” | Central Amman                   | Central Amman march                            |
| J32 | Jordan | 24-May-24      | “Put sword against sword; we are the men of Mohammed Deif.”                    | Central Amman                   | Central Amman march                            |
| J33 | Jordan | 24-May-24      | “From Amman, a salute to the student movement.”                                | Central Amman                   | Central Amman march                            |
| J34 | Jordan | 24-May-24      | “Steadfastness of the resistance.”                                             | Central Amman                   | Central Amman march                            |

**Table 2B. Analytical coding for all 45 documented formulations**

| ID  | Target                                         | Grammatical form                       | Convertibility type                     | State-response code |
|-----|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| E01 | President / state leadership                   | Acclamation                            | None observed / state-aligned           | R1                  |
| E02 | Palestinian cause + president                  | Declarative endorsement                | None observed / state-aligned           | R1                  |
| E03 | Arab states / armed forces                     | Interrogative                          | None observed / indirect accountability | R2                  |
| E04 | Domestic political order + Palestine           | Revolutionary adaptation / declaration | Representational                        | R3                  |
| E05 | Israel; collective subject is “the people”     | Representative declaration             | Representational                        | R3                  |
| E06 | President Sisi                                 | Imperative                             | Institutional / domestic accountability | R3                  |
| E07 | Presidential mandate / state scripting         | Negative representative declaration    | Representational                        | R3                  |
| E08 | Egyptian state / Gaza border policy            | Accusatory declaration                 | Institutional                           | R4                  |
| E09 | Egyptian–Israeli diplomatic relationship       | Negative demand                        | Institutional                           | R5                  |
| E10 | Egyptian border authorities / Rafah policy     | Imperative                             | Institutional + territorial             | R5                  |
| E11 | Palestinian resistance                         | Praise / declaration                   | None observed                           | R5                  |
| J01 | Al-Qassam / Hamas; Jordanian collective self   | Identity declaration                   | Representational                        | R6                  |
| J02 | Jordanian border authorities                   | Imperative                             | Territorial + institutional             | R6                  |
| J03 | Israeli embassy + Jordanian border authorities | Paired imperative                      | Territorial + institutional             | R7                  |
| J04 | 1994 peace treaty / Jordanian policy           | Imperative / nominal demand            | Institutional                           | R7                  |

|     |                                                        |                                           |                                                  |     |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----|
| J05 | Israeli embassy / Jordanian diplomatic policy          | Negative declaration                      | Territorial + institutional                      | R7  |
| J06 | Hamas / Palestinian resistance                         | Exhortation + metaphorical identification | Representational                                 | R7  |
| J07 | Hamas                                                  | Pledge / declaration                      | Representational                                 | R7  |
| J08 | Hamas + unnamed enemy                                  | Exhortation                               | Representational                                 | R7  |
| J09 | Public audience / Gaza                                 | Imperative + praise                       | None observed                                    | R7  |
| J10 | Arab states / regional public                          | Interrogative                             | None observed / indirect accountability          | R7  |
| J11 | Israeli leadership / unnamed war actor                 | Nominal accusation                        | None observed                                    | R7  |
| J12 | Unspecified complicit actors                           | Nominal accusation                        | None observed                                    | R7  |
| J13 | Regional/domestic audience                             | Conditional warning                       | None observed / mobilising                       | R7  |
| J14 | Israeli embassy / Jordanian territory                  | Negative declaration                      | Territorial + institutional                      | R8  |
| J15 | Peace treaty + Jordanian state                         | Representative declaration                | Representational + institutional                 | R8  |
| J16 | Jordan / national policy orientation                   | Appeal / imperative                       | Representational + territorial                   | R8  |
| J17 | Unspecified political actors / policies                | Accusatory declaration                    | Representational                                 | R8  |
| J18 | Public audience / Gaza crisis                          | Declarative lament                        | None observed                                    | R8  |
| J19 | Terrorism classification + Jordanian national identity | Representative declaration                | Representational                                 | R8  |
| J20 | Israel + collaborators                                 | Imprecation / declaration                 | Representational                                 | R8  |
| J21 | Potential protesters / street mobilisation             | Mobilising imperative                     | Organisational + territorial                     | R8  |
| J22 | Palestine                                              | Pledge / declaration                      | None observed                                    | R8  |
| J23 | Authorities capable of ending siege                    | Shame formula + imperative                | Institutional (diffuse addressee)                | R8  |
| J24 | Amman/Jordan + Gaza                                    | Identity declaration                      | Representational                                 | R8  |
| J25 | Israeli embassy / security cordon                      | Directional imperative                    | Territorial                                      | R8  |
| J26 | US-aligned Arab governments                            | Religious imprecation                     | Institutional / indirect domestic accountability | R8  |
| J27 | Normalisation policy                                   | Call-and-response evaluation              | Institutional                                    | R8  |
| J28 | Jordanian security apparatus / embassy protection      | Interrogative accusation                  | Institutional + territorial                      | R8  |
| J29 | Domestic restrictions + Gaza                           | Apology / identity declaration            | Representational                                 | R8  |
| J30 | Jordanian security apparatus                           | Negative demand                           | Institutional                                    | R9  |
| J31 | Palestinian resistance / Israeli soldiers              | Imperative                                | None observed                                    | R10 |
| J32 | Resistance identity / Mohammed Deif                    | Imperative + identity declaration         | Representational                                 | R10 |
| J33 | Student movement                                       | Declarative salute                        | Organisational                                   | R10 |
| J34 | Palestinian resistance                                 | Nominal praise                            | None observed                                    | R10 |

**Table 2C. Episode-level documented state-response key**

| Code | Episode                                                     | Documented state response                                                                                                                              |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R1   | Egypt - state-backed rallies, 20 Oct 2023                   | Authorised/encouraged; no coercive response reported for the episode.                                                                                  |
| R2   | Egypt - al-Azhar / broader 20 Oct mobilisation, 20 Oct 2023 | No slogan-specific response coded; broader 20 Oct mobilisation was followed by detentions.                                                             |
| R3   | Egypt - Tahrir Square, 20 Oct 2023                          | Public opening closed; dispersal/security intervention and post-protest detentions (>100 reported by Reuters; HRW documented 72 in a narrower window). |
| R4   | Egypt - Journalists Syndicate, 15 Jan 2024                  | No episode-specific coercive measure identified in the cited source set.                                                                               |
| R5   | Egypt - Journalists Syndicate, 3 Apr 2024                   | Ten participants were later arrested (Associated Press, 2024).                                                                                         |
| R6   | Jordan - Karak / routes toward Jordan Valley, 20 Oct 2023   | Police blocked roads leading toward the Jordan Valley.                                                                                                 |
| R7   | Jordan - Israeli embassy district, 24 Oct 2023              | No formulation-specific sanction coded; access to strategically sensitive sites remained security-controlled.                                          |
| R8   | Jordan - embassy protest wave, 27-31 Mar 2024               | Police cordons and pushback; Amnesty reported roughly 500 arrests following the March embassy protests.                                                |
| R9   | Jordan - embassy demonstration, Apr 2024                    | Searches, route controls and dispersal formed part of the documented security response; no slogan-specific sanction isolated.                          |
| R10  | Jordan - central Amman march, 24 May 2024                   | No slogan-specific sanction identified in the cited report; broader arrest/prosecution restrictions remained in force.                                 |

Note. Tables 2A–2C collectively present the complete 45-formulation corpus. The formulation ID links corresponding entries in Tables 2A and 2B, while the state-response code connects Table 2B to the relevant episode-level response reported in Table 2C. Target and convertibility are analytical coding categories. State responses are coded at the episode level and should not be interpreted as evidence that any individual slogan directly produced a particular response. Full Arabic wording, transliteration, translation provenance, and complete bibliographic details are retained in the source-and-coding audit. The 24 May 2024 Central Amman formulations (J31–J34) are documented in Al Araby TV (2024b).

### **Egypt: From the Official Script to Autonomous Capacity**

Egypt entered the Gaza crisis with a public sphere in which independent demonstrations had been tightly restricted since the consolidation of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi’s rule. Against this background, the events of 20 October 2023 were significant not because the state remained passive, but because it temporarily opened a controlled space for public solidarity. At designated rallies, participants were reported chanting ‘We are with you! Go Sisi!’ and displaying the message ‘We support the Palestinian cause and we support the president’s decisions’ (Al Jazeera, 2023a). In these formulations, solidarity with Palestine was closely aligned with executive authority: citizens could express support for the Palestinian cause while simultaneously affirming the president’s political judgement. The permitted script therefore positioned the public primarily as endorsers of state policy rather than as independent actors defining what solidarity should require.

That relationship changed when mobilisation moved beyond the official script. Outside al-Azhar Mosque, the question ‘Where is the Arab army?’ expressed frustration with regional inaction without directly naming a particular ruler (Reuters, 2023d). A more significant shift occurred when demonstrators entered Tahrir Square. Arabic and international reporting documented formulations including ‘Bread, freedom, Arab Palestine,’ ‘The

people want the fall of Israel,’ ‘Leave / Leave, Sisi,’ and ‘Real demonstrations, not a mandate for anyone’ (Agence France-Presse, 2023; Al Jazeera, 2023a; Al Manassa, 2023; Le Monde, 2023). Their significance lay not in wording alone, but in the interaction between language, political memory and location. ‘The people want’ revived the representative language associated with the 2011 uprising; ‘Bread, freedom’ connected Palestine to domestic political and economic grievances; and ‘not a mandate for anyone’ directly rejected an official framing in which public solidarity could be interpreted as endorsement of presidential authority.

The move into Tahrir added a territorial dimension to this shift. Demonstrators had left designated spaces and entered a square historically associated with citizens claiming political visibility and authority. The subsequent state response is therefore better understood as a response to the wider protest sequence rather than to any single slogan. Reuters reported more than 100 detentions following the 20 October protests, while Human Rights Watch documented at least 72 detainees, including four children, during the narrower period of 20–24 October (Human Rights Watch, 2023; Reuters, 2023c). The evidence supports a cautious inference: the tolerated space for solidarity narrowed when an approved expression of support developed into an autonomous crowd, moved into a politically charged location, and produced representative claims outside direct state control.

The protests at the Journalists Syndicate in January and April 2024 extended this process by directing solidarity more explicitly towards questions of domestic responsibility. Arabic reporting preserved the accusation *yā lil-‘ār, yā lil-‘ār, Miṣr mushārika fī al-ḥiṣār*—‘What a disgrace—Egypt is participating in the siege’—while the Associated Press later reported ‘No to the Israeli Embassy! No to normalisation,’ the banner ‘Open the Rafah crossing,’ and ‘Glory to the Palestinian resistance’ (Al Safir Al Arabi, 2024; Associated Press, 2024). These formulations are particularly revealing because different types of claims appeared within a broadly similar protest setting. Praise for Palestinian resistance remained directed primarily towards an external actor. By contrast, opposition to normalisation addressed Egyptian foreign policy and transformed solidarity into a direct moral judgement about the conduct of the Egyptian state.

The Rafah demand also illustrates the importance of separating documentary evidence from analytical interpretation. The Associated Press recorded ‘Open the Rafah crossing’ as a banner rather than a crowd chant (Associated Press, 2024). President Sisi’s official account, meanwhile, maintained that Egypt had not closed the crossing and attributed disruptions to Israeli attacks and control on the Palestinian side (Presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2023). The protest banner cannot resolve that factual dispute, nor is it used here to do so. Its analytical importance lies elsewhere: it positioned Egyptian authorities as legitimate addressees of a demand concerning a sovereign border issue, thereby challenging the idea that the executive alone could define the political meaning and requirements of solidarity. Ten participants in the April protest were subsequently arrested (Associated Press, 2024).

The same process extended beyond the immediate protest site. Reuters reported arrests of students attempting to establish Students for Palestine, while Amnesty International documented at least 123 people detained between October 2023 and May 2024 in connection with peaceful Palestine solidarity activities, including demonstrations, online comments, signs and slogans written on walls (Amnesty International, 2024a; Reuters, 2024a). The significance of Students for Palestine was therefore not primarily rhetorical. A named student organisation could give continuity to otherwise episodic expressions of solidarity by recruiting members, coordinating activities and boycotts, preserving claims over time, and creating an organisational structure capable of acting beyond a single protest event. In this sense, solidarity was becoming organisationally convertible.

The June 2025 Global March to Gaza carried this logic further by making territorial conversion explicit. International activists planned to travel from Cairo towards Rafah, while Egyptian authorities required prior permission, established checkpoints, detained participants, and deported foreign nationals. Organisers alleged beatings and interrogation, whereas Egyptian security sources denied mistreatment and defended the restrictions (Reuters, 2025a, 2025b). The march is not included as a slogan episode because the available documentary record does not preserve a sufficiently precise corpus of protest formulations. It remains analytically important, however, because it shows how a demand previously expressed symbolically—‘Open the Rafah crossing’—could acquire a different political significance when solidarity was translated into an independently organised route across Egyptian territory.

These episodes reveal a progression rather than a fixed list of prohibited slogans. State-backed solidarity remained compatible with executive authority when citizens appeared primarily as supporters of official policy. Political sensitivity increased as solidarity acquired a more autonomous representative voice, addressed domestic state responsibility, developed organisational continuity, or moved towards politically and strategically significant locations. The Egyptian case therefore suggests that the critical boundary was not rhetorical militancy in itself, but the extent to which solidarity became capable of generating political action and authority beyond the state-managed script.

### **Jordan: Wider Repertoires, Bounded Routes**

Jordan offered a wider and more recurrent arena for Gaza solidarity mobilisation than Egypt. Parties, professional associations, parliamentarians, and established Islamist networks provided recognisable intermediaries, while the Israeli embassy became a repeated destination for protest (Schwedler, 2022, 2024; Wiktorowicz, 2000). This wider arena, however, did not amount to unrestricted expression. Rather, the monarchy managed contention through a combination of negotiated protest sites, route control, legal restrictions, selective arrests, and institutional channels through which some opposition claims could be expressed and contained (Moss, 2014; Sika, 2024). Jordan therefore illustrates a broader licence for public solidarity, but one structured by clear spatial, organisational, and institutional limits.

The early October episodes show why rhetorical militancy alone cannot explain those limits. Protesters in Karak were reported chanting ‘Al-Qassam, we are your army’ after police blocked roads leading towards the Jordan Valley (Reuters, 2023e). Near the Israeli embassy on 24 October, Arabic reporting documented openly pro-Hamas and martial formulations alongside demands to close the embassy, open the borders, and cancel Wadi Araba (Al Araby TV, 2023). The importance of these episodes lies in the contrast between what could be said and what could be done. Highly militant language could circulate publicly, yet movement towards strategically sensitive territory remained constrained. Symbolic identification with an armed Palestinian actor therefore did not automatically translate into organisational or territorial capacity.

This distinction became even clearer during the embassy protests of 27–31 March 2024. Reuters and The New Yorker independently documented the formulation ‘They said Hamas is terrorist; all of Jordan is Hamas,’ while other slogans and placards included ‘No Zionist embassy on Jordanian land,’ ‘To the Embassy!’, ‘Open the borders!’, ‘Normalisation / Treasonous!’, and ‘Protecting the Embassy? Shame of shames!’ (Abouzeid, 2024; Al Araby TV, 2024a; Reuters, 2024c). Although these formulations appeared within the same protest wave, they carried different political implications. ‘All of Jordan is Hamas’ was representational because it claimed to speak for a national constituency. ‘To the Embassy!’ was territorial because its significance depended on collective movement towards a protected political site. ‘Protecting the Embassy?’ redirected criticism towards the domestic security apparatus. What changed, therefore, was not simply the intensity of the language, but the political capacities and domestic targets that particular formulations began to acquire.

The documented state response reinforces this interpretation. Authorities permitted recurring demonstrations and allowed explicit anti-normalisation demands to circulate, while security forces continued to regulate access to the embassy and intervene when mobilisation approached sensitive boundaries. Amnesty International reported at least 1,500 arrests after 7 October 2023, including roughly 500 following the March embassy protests, together with restrictions concerning particular slogans, flags, participation by minors, and late-night

demonstrations. Human Rights Watch also documented arrests and prosecutions connected to peaceful protest and online advocacy (Amnesty International, 2024c; Reuters, 2024b; Human Rights Watch, 2024, 2025). These figures are not directly comparable with Egypt’s because the reporting periods and protest environments differ. They nevertheless show that Jordan’s broader protest licence was sustained through recurrent adjustment and selective coercion rather than through an absence of state control.

Recognised intermediaries were central to this arrangement. Parties and professional associations could announce demonstrations, negotiate routes, and repeat anti-normalisation claims through channels already familiar to the state. Their presence widened the range of contention that could recur publicly, but the same institutional visibility also made mobilisation easier to monitor and regulate. In this sense, intermediary

institutions performed a dual function: they facilitated protest while also making it more legible and governable. Informal calls to move towards the embassy or the border were more difficult to contain because they could bypass these recognised channels. The 2023 Cybercrimes Law extended this logic into the digital sphere, giving authorities additional means to intervene against online advocacy and mobilisation calls before they developed into more durable organisational networks (Amnesty International, 2024b, 2024c; Earl et al., 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2025).

Jordan also offered a more visible institutional pathway for Gaza-related mobilisation than Egypt. In the September 2024 parliamentary election, the Islamic Action Front won 31 seats and became the largest single parliamentary grouping. Reuters reported that public anger over Gaza contributed to the electoral outcome, while party leaders presented the result as evidence of popular support for their position on Hamas and the peace treaty (Reuters, 2024d). At the same time, the election did not lead directly to changes in treaty relations or alter the king's dominant authority over strategic foreign policy (Reuters, 2024e).

The analytical significance of this development is that Gaza-related claims gained a recognised institutional carrier beyond the protest arena. This does not imply that street demands were directly transformed into policy outcomes. Rather, some claims could continue through parties, professional associations and parliament while remaining subject to executive control over treaty relations, border policy and security decisions. Political convertibility in Jordan was therefore not always blocked; in some instances, it was channelled into bounded institutional forms.

The Jordanian episodes point to a broader pattern of relatively wide expression combined with controlled political movement. Compared with Egypt, Jordan allowed repeated demonstrations, militant formulations and anti-normalisation claims to circulate through a more established protest and institutional environment, while continuing to regulate protest routes, organisational activity and access to strategically sensitive sites. The key boundary therefore did not lie simply between moderate and radical language. Political sensitivity increased when mobilisation moved beyond recognised intermediaries, approached sensitive locations, challenged domestic security practices, or began to develop representative, organisational, territorial, or institutional consequences that were more difficult to contain. Jordan's broader protest repertoire was thus sustained through an institutional arrangement that permitted wider expression while continuing to limit the political pathways through which that expression could develop.

## **WHEN SOLIDARITY BECOMES DISSENT: COMPARATIVE FINDINGS**

The comparison does not support a simple relationship between rhetorical militancy and state intervention. Jordanian protesters repeatedly voiced martial and explicitly pro-Hamas formulations, yet some of these remained within a bounded and recurring protest repertoire. In Egypt, by contrast, comparatively concrete demands concerning Rafah or the creation of a small student organisation became politically sensitive when they addressed domestic state responsibility or developed an autonomous organisational carrier. Across the cases, the more important distinction was therefore not how radical a slogan sounded, but whether it began to acquire representative, organisational, territorial, or institutional capacity.

This helps explain why the form of protest claims matters without determining political outcomes on its own. Questions may distribute responsibility, imperatives identify an addressee, representative declarations constru-

ct a collective political "we," and directional language can indicate a possible route or destination. Yet these forms become politically significant only through their interaction with context, including location, organisational carriers, political memory and the surrounding protest sequence (Benford & Snow, 2000; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). A claim expressed in a politically charged space, linked to an organised group, or directed towards a sensitive institution may therefore acquire greater political significance than the same formulation expressed in a different setting. The analysis accordingly treats grammatical form as one element within a broader configuration of language, organisation, space, and political action, rather than as an independent predictor of state response.

The comparison therefore points to different ways of organising the boundaries of licensed solidarity. In Egypt, the initial state-backed rallies tied Palestine solidarity closely to presidential legitimacy. That opening narrowed when protesters asserted an independent representative voice, entered Tahrir Square, created an autonomous student organisation, or attempted to move towards Rafah outside state-managed channels. Jordan operated through a broader and more routinised protest infrastructure. Recognised parties, professional associations, parliamentarians, and recurring protest sites allowed a wider range of formulations to circulate, while security authorities retained control over movement towards the Israeli embassy, the border, digital mobilisation, and strategic foreign-policy decisions.

The cross-case difference is therefore better understood in terms of how political claims were able to travel. Jordan provided more recognised pathways through which contentious claims could move from the street into associations, parties, recurring protest arenas, and, in limited form, parliament. These pathways widened the space for expression but did not remove state control over embassies, borders, treaty relations, or security policy. Egypt provided fewer autonomous routes. As a result, claims became more sensitive when they moved beyond state-backed solidarity into politically charged spaces, independent organisations, or direct demands concerning state policy. The broader political opportunity environment helps explain why the two countries differed overall, while the episode-level evidence shows that political sensitivity also changed within each case as particular claims gained new carriers, destinations, constituencies, or institutional addressees.

Four forms of political convertibility recur across the episodes. Representational conversion appeared when protesters spoke in the name of “the people” or “all of Jordan.” Organisational conversion emerged when claims acquired a more durable carrier through student groups, parties, professional associations, or digital networks. Territorial conversion occurred when solidarity became connected to movement towards Tahrir Square, the Israeli embassy, the Jordan Valley, or Rafah. Institutional conversion appeared when claims addressed identifiable state capacities, entered debates over treaty relations, or acquired a parliamentary carrier. These forms frequently overlapped. Their importance lies not in treating any single form as sufficient to trigger coercion, but in showing how expressions of solidarity could develop political capacities that extended beyond the original moment of protest.

The evidence also suggests that political sensitivity often emerged through combinations of these forms rather than through one feature in isolation. A representative claim became more consequential when expressed in a politically charged location; a policy demand carried greater significance when supported by an independent organisation; and a symbolic expression could change politically when it developed into a route towards a border, embassy, or other sensitive site. Regime red lines were therefore not simply attached to particular words or ideological positions. They were relational and context-dependent, shaped by how language, organisation, space, and political direction came together within a protest episode.

The three expectations derived from the framework are broadly consistent with this pattern. First, rhetorical militancy did not consistently correspond with stronger coercion. Second, recognised intermediaries widened Jordan’s tolerated repertoire while also providing channels through which some political consequences could be managed or contained. Third, intervention became more likely when solidarity was redirected towards domestic accountability and combined with an independent organisational carrier, territorial destination, representative claim, or policy addressee. These findings do not establish deterministic causal laws and differences in reporting periods mean that arrest totals cannot be treated as directly comparable quantitative measures. They do, however, identify a recurring mechanism that semantic analysis of slogans alone cannot explain.

Seen from this perspective, the principal difference between Egypt and Jordan was not one of repression versus tolerance. It concerned the political architecture available for the afterlife of solidarity. Egypt sought largely to keep solidarity tied to executive authority and to interrupt autonomous political pathways before they could become durable. Jordan allowed a broader repertoire to recur and, in some cases, to enter recognised organisations and institutions, while preserving decisive control over treaty relations, borders, diplomatic sites, and security policy. In both cases, the central struggle was therefore not over whether attachment to Palestine could be expressed, but over who could convert that attachment into an authoritative claim about domestic political responsibility and national policy.

## CONCLUSION

The theoretical contribution of the study lies in shifting attention from the content of dissent alone to the political pathways that claims may develop after expression. Recent research has similarly shown that authoritarian responses cannot be understood only through the existence or size of protest, because the nature of political demands and the capacities attached to mobilisation also shape whether authorities accommodate or repress contention (Mitchell et al., 2026; Sika, 2024). The present analysis extends this insight by showing that authoritarian governments may regulate not only what can be expressed, but also where claims can travel politically. A slogan may remain manageable as symbolic speech but become more consequential when it acquires an organisation capable of sustaining it, a constituency in whose name it speaks, a politically significant destination, or an institutional target. Regime red lines can therefore be understood less as a fixed list of prohibited words and more as boundaries around the development of autonomous political capacity.

The comparison also highlights the dual role of intermediary institutions. Parties, professional associations, parliamentarians and established protest sites may widen opportunities for public contention while simultaneously making mobilisation more visible, predictable, and governable. Research on Jordan likewise shows that organised opposition and parliamentary channels can increase political pressure while remaining embedded within an authoritarian institutional order (Shalaby & Williamson, 2024; Sika, 2024). Jordan illustrates this tension particularly clearly: recognised intermediaries enabled a broader Palestine-solidarity repertoire to recur while also providing channels through which some of its political consequences could be negotiated or contained. Egypt's more restricted environment produced a different pattern, in which even relatively limited autonomous organisation or movement into politically charged spaces could become politically sensitive. Intermediary institutions should therefore not be understood simply as indicators of greater political openness; under authoritarian rule, they may simultaneously enable contention and structure the limits of its development.

The empirical contribution lies in identifying a recurring relationship among language, organisation, space and political direction rather than treating slogans as isolated texts. The comparative evidence shows that political sensitivity emerged through combinations of features rather than any single characteristic. No grammatical form, slogan, location, or organisational carrier consistently corresponded with intervention. Instead, claims became more consequential when several dimensions came together: a representative assertion appeared in a politically charged location, a policy demand acquired an independent carrier, or symbolic solidarity developed a territorial route towards a sensitive site. This suggests that regime red lines are relational and context-dependent. Political risk emerges from what a claim is becoming capable of doing, rather than from its wording alone.

This perspective also helps explain an important contrast between the two cases. Jordan could tolerate highly militant language in some settings because rhetorical militancy did not necessarily translate into independent political capacity. Egypt, by contrast, could treat comparatively concrete or less militant demands as more sensitive when they addressed domestic state responsibility or developed organisational or territorial consequences. This finding contributes to a growing literature showing that the substantive character of protest demands matters for authoritarian responses (Mitchell et al., 2026), while adding that the political trajectory of those demands—their carriers, destinations, representative authority, and institutional direction—also requires attention.

These findings open several directions for future research. Larger multilingual and cross-national studies could examine whether political convertibility helps explain state intervention across other authoritarian regimes and other forms of transnational solidarity. Future research could also test whether representational, organisational, territorial, and institutional forms of convertibility produce different patterns of state response and whether particular combinations of these forms are especially sensitive. Longitudinal analysis would be particularly valuable for establishing sequence: whether representative claims tend to precede organisational development, whether organisational carriers facilitate territorial mobilisation, or whether institutional entry reduces or redirects street contention.

The broader implication is that authoritarian management of transnational solidarity concerns more than whether solidarity is permitted or prohibited. It concerns who is authorised to interpret that solidarity, who can organise

in its name, where it is allowed to travel and whether it can generate claims on national policy independently of the state. The boundary between solidarity and dissent therefore emerges not simply when citizens speak more forcefully, but when a publicly legitimate external cause begins to provide a basis for autonomous domestic political capacity.

## Ethical Considerations

This study is based on publicly available documentary materials, including news reports, official statements, human-rights documentation, and publicly accessible protest material. It did not involve the recruitment of human participants, experimental intervention, or research involving animals.

## Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest is reported by the author.

## Data Availability

The coded corpus used in the analysis is presented in Tables 2A-2C. Source provenance is documented in the manuscript and reference list, and the underlying documentary sources are identified through the citations provided.

## REFERENCES

1. Abouzeid, R. 2024. The other side of the river. The New Yorker, 12 May, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/letter-from-jordan/the-other-side-of-the-river>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
2. Agence France-Presse. 2023. In Tahrir Square, across Egypt, thousands rally for Gaza. Al-Monitor, 20 October, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/tahrir-square-across-egypt-thousands-rally-gaza-afp-media>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
3. Al Araby TV. 2023. In solidarity with Gaza: A demonstration near the Israeli embassy in the Jordanian capital [Arabic]. 24 October, <https://www.alaraby.com/news/%D8%AA%D8%B6%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8B%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D8%A9%D9%85%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
4. Al Araby TV. 2024a. A movement renewed daily: Thousands of Jordanians protest near the Israeli embassy [Arabic]. 31 March, <https://www.alaraby.com/news/%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AF-%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%8B%D8%A7-%D8%A2%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D8%B3%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
5. Al Araby TV. 2024b. Solidarity march with Gaza in Jordan as Safadi warns of worsening humanitarian conditions [Arabic]. 24 May, <https://www.alaraby.com/news/%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B6%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86>

- %D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%81%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%B0%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%AF%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A, Accessed 17 July 2026.
6. Al Jazeera. 2023a. Angry Egyptians denounce staged pro-Palestine rallies amid Israel–Hamas war. 21 October, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/21/exploiting-our-anger-egyptians-denounce-staged-pro-palestine-protests>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
7. Al Manassa. 2023. An Egyptian uprising by presidential order [Arabic]. 20 October, <https://manassa.news/news/14071>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
8. Al Safir Al Arabi. 2024. ‘What a disgrace!’ [Arabic]. 18 January, <https://assafirarabi.com/ar/57765/2024/01/18/%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B1/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
9. Amnesty International. 2024a. Egypt: Release protesters and activists detained over Palestine solidarity. 14 June, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/06/egypt-release-protesters-and-activists-detained-over-palestine-solidarity/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
10. Amnesty International. 2024b. Jordan: End draconian crackdown against pro-Palestinian activism. 6 February, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/jordan-end-draconian-crackdown-against-pro-palestinian-activism/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
11. Amnesty International. 2024c. Jordan: Stop cracking down on pro-Gaza protests and release those charged for exercising their freedoms of assembly and expression. 11 April, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/jordan-stop-cracking-down-on-pro-gaza-protests-and-release-those-charged-for-exercising-their-freedoms-of-assembly-and-expression/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
12. Associated Press. 2024. Egyptian authorities arrest 10 after a pro-Gaza rally calling for severing ties with Israel. 5 April, <https://apnews.com/article/egypt-gaza-rally-arrest-palestinians-israel-protest-03aeb63124d3118922ea7055a91777a6>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
13. Bayat, A. 2003. The ‘street’ and the politics of dissent in the Arab world. *Middle East Report* 226. <https://merip.org/2003/03/the-street-and-the-politics-of-dissent-in-the-arab-world/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
14. Benford, R. D., and D. A. Snow. 2000. Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology* 26:611–639.
15. Davenport, C. 2007. State repression and political order. *Annual Review of Political Science* 10:1–23.
16. Earl, J. 2011. Political repression: Iron fists, velvet gloves, and diffuse control. *Annual Review of Sociology* 37:261–284.
17. Earl, J., T. V. Maher, and J. Pan. 2022. The digital repression of social movements, protest, and activism: A synthetic review. *Science Advances* 8(10):1–15.
18. Gandhi, J., and A. Przeworski. 2007. Authoritarian institutions and the survival of autocrats. *Comparative Political Studies* 40(11):1279–1301. doi: 10.1177/0010414007305817.
19. Gerschewski, J. 2013. The three pillars of stability: Legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes. *Democratization* 20(1):13–38. doi: 10.1080/13510347.2013.738860.
20. Human Rights Watch. 2023. Egypt: Dozens of peaceful protesters detained. 1 November, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/01/egypt-dozens-peaceful-protesters-detained>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
21. Human Rights Watch. 2024. Jordan: Arrests, harassment of pro-Palestine protesters. 6 February, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/06/jordan-arrests-harassment-pro-palestine-protesters>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
22. Human Rights Watch. 2025. World Report 2025: Jordan. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/jordan>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
23. Jordan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates. 2024. Call for action: Urgent humanitarian response for Gaza. 11 June, <https://mfa.gov.jo/Gaza/index.html>, Accessed 17 July 2026.

24. Koopmans, R., and P. Statham. 1999. Political claims analysis: Integrating protest event and political discourse approaches. *Mobilization* 4(2):203–221.
25. Le Monde. 2023. Israel– Hamas war: Egypt regains role of key mediator. 21 October, [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/10/21/israel-hamas-war-egypt-regains-role-of-key-mediator\\_6193280\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/10/21/israel-hamas-war-egypt-regains-role-of-key-mediator_6193280_4.html), Accessed 17 July 2026.
26. McAdam, D., S. Tarrow, and C. Tilly. 2001. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
27. Meyer, D. S. 2004. Protest and political opportunities. *Annual Review of Sociology* 30:125–145.
28. Mitchell, A. M., K. Inata, and M. Higashijima. 2026. Political and economic protests in authoritarian regimes. *Public Choice* 206:283–307. doi: 10.1007/s11127-025-01316-y.
29. Moss, D. M. 2014. Repression, response, and contained escalation under ‘liberalized’ authoritarianism in Jordan. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 19(3):261–286.
30. Presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt. 2023. President El-Sisi’s speech at the Cairo Summit for Peace. Speech, 21 October, <https://www.presidency.eg/en/%D9%82%D8%B3%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1/%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9/new-21102023/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
31. Reuters. 2023c. More than 100 detained in Egypt after pro-Palestinian protests—lawyers. 24 October, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/more-than-100-detained-egypt-after-pro-palestinian-protests-lawyers-2023-10-24/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
32. Reuters. 2023d. Muslims protest around world to demand end to Israel’s Gaza campaign. 20 October, <https://www.reuters.com/world/muslims-protest-around-world-demand-end-israels-gaza-campaign-2023-10-20/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
33. Reuters. 2023e. Thousands of Jordanians rally in Amman in support of Hamas. 20 October, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/thousands-jordanians-rally-amman-support-hamas-2023-10-20/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
34. Reuters. 2024a. Egypt extends crackdown on Gaza activism with student arrests. 31 May, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/egypt-extends-crackdown-gaza-activism-with-student-arrests-2024-05-31/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
35. Reuters. 2024b. Jordanian anti-riot police use batons to push back protesters near Israeli embassy. 27 March, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordanian-anti-riot-police-use-batons-push-back-protesters-near-israeli-embassy-2024-03-27/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
36. Reuters. 2024c. Jordanians protest against peace treaty with Israel in fresh rallies. 29 March, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordanians-protest-against-peace-treaty-with-israel-fresh-rallies-2024-03-29/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
37. Reuters. 2024d. Jordan’s Islamists bounce back in election clouded by Gaza war. 11 September, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordans-islamists-bounce-back-election-clouded-by-gaza-war-2024-09-11/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
38. Reuters. 2024e. Jordan’s king opens parliament with larger Islamist wing. 18 November, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordans-king-opens-parliament-with-larger-islamist-wing-2024-11-18/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
39. Reuters. 2025a. Egypt deports dozens more foreign nationals heading for march to Gaza. 13 June, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/egypt-deports-dozens-more-foreign-nationals-heading-march-gaza-2025-06-13/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
40. Reuters. 2025b. Gaza march activists say participants in Egypt beaten, detained. 17 June, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/gaza-march-activists-say-participants-egypt-beaten-detained-2025-06-17/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
41. Royal Hashemite Court. 2023a. At the Cairo Summit for Peace. Speech, 21 October, <https://kingabdullah.jo/en/speeches/cairo-summit-peace>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
42. Royal Hashemite Court. 2023b. At the joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit on Gaza in Riyadh. Speech, 11 November, <https://kingabdullah.jo/en/speeches/joint-arab-islamic-extraordinary-summit-gaza-riyadh>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
43. Saward, M. 2006. The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory* 5(3):297–318.

44. Schwedler, J. 2022. *Protesting Jordan: Geographies of Power and Dissent*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, doi: 10.1515/9781503631595.
45. Schwedler, J. 2024. Palestine and the limits of permissible protest in Jordan. *Middle East Report*, 31 January, <https://www.merip.org/2024/01/jordan-palestine-and-permissible-protest/>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
46. Shalaby, M., and S. Williamson. 2024. Executive compliance with parliamentary powers under authoritarianism: Evidence from Jordan. *Governance* 37(4):1163–1182.
47. Sika, N. 2024. Mobilization, repression and policy concessions in authoritarian regimes: The cases of Egypt and Jordan. *Political Studies* 72(2):741–758.
48. Snow, D. A., E. B. Rochford Jr, S. K. Worden, and R. D. Benford. 1986. Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation. *American Sociological Review* 51(4):464–481.
49. Tilly, C., and S. Tarrow. 2015. *Contentious Politics*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
50. United Nations. 1979. Treaty of peace between Egypt and Israel. United Nations Treaty Series 1136:115–236. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201136/volume-1136-i-17813-english.pdf>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
51. United Nations. 1994. Treaty of peace between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. UN Peacemaker, <https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/default/files/document/files/2024/05/il20jo941026peacetreatyisraeljordan.pdf>, Accessed 17 July 2026.
52. Van de Velde, C. 2024. The power of slogans: Using protest writings in social movement research. *Social Movement Studies* 23(5):569–588.
53. Wedeen, L. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
54. Wiktorowicz, Q. 2000. Civil society as social control: State power in Jordan. *Comparative Politics* 33(1):43–61.