

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نپاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

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

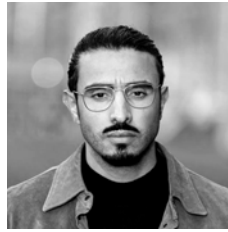
[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

Anis Raiss

07.06.2024



## ‘Digital kill chains’: The dark side of tech in warfare

Are Palantir Technologies, Starlink, and other tech giants seizing the opportunity to test their products’ war applications on civilians in Gaza, turning the besieged strip into a proving ground for their technology?

In recent years, the intersection of technology and warfare has come under public fire, raising profound ethical and legal questions about state military use of advanced tech tools. The role of advanced data analytics and [artificial intelligence](#) (AI) in modern conflicts is under intense scrutiny, especially when civilian lives are at stake.

As the genocide in Gaza advances, attention is turning to the companies whose technologies may be facilitating Israel’s daily atrocities, with US-based Palantir Technologies among them.

While the International Criminal Court (ICC) is stepping in to address genocide accusations, the tech barons who design and supply the tools of warfare remain largely unchallenged.

Since 8 October, over 36,000 Palestinians have been killed in a brutal conflict that has left more casualties than all other wars combined over the past two years. This staggering loss of innocent lives has renewed scrutiny of the technologies that are incorrectly and systematically targeting civilians instead of combatants.

### Palantir’s integration in Israel

Companies like Palantir Technologies, led by CEO Alex Karp, have been [implicated](#) in enabling some of these atrocities. Its advanced data analytics and AI tools that supposedly provide “precision targeting” are mass-killing civilians and have transformed warfare into a calculated and systematic campaign of extermination with little human oversight.

Founded in 2003 by Karp and Peter Thiel, Palantir Technologies has grown from a secretive data analytics startup to a cornerstone of modern military and intelligence operations. Initially funded by the CIA’s venture capital arm, In-Q-Tel, Palantir’s tech products have become integral to numerous US government agencies, including the FBI, Department of Defense, and various police departments.

This deep entanglement with US intelligence and military bodies paved the way for Palantir’s strategic alignment with Israel.

The tech giant’s involvement in Israel predates its formal agreements by many years. The company established an office in Tel Aviv in 2015, strategically located overlooking Rothschild Boulevard on one side and Yehuda Halevy Street on the other.

This location underscores the company’s deep integration into the Israeli tech ecosystem. Karp himself highlighted Palantir’s strong ties to Israel in a December 2023 interview on [Fox Business](#), stating, “We are very well known in Israel. Israel appreciates our product.”

### **Formalizing the partnership**

The partnership between Palantir and Israel’s military began to solidify with a formal agreement signed on 12 January 2024 – three months after the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza began – following a visit by company executives to Israel, during which they held their first board meeting of the year in Tel Aviv.

As Palantir Executive Vice President Josh Harris [stated](#), “Both parties have mutually agreed to harness Palantir’s advanced technology in support of war-related missions,” a euphemism for what has been qualified as enabling genocidal actions.

Palantir’s arsenal of technological tools – akin to digital weapons of mass destruction – is currently being deployed by the occupation army, leaving no doubt about the company’s complicity in the ongoing genocide.

### **The brutal reality of precision**

The recent [carnage in Rafah](#) on 26 May, in which Israel bombed a refugee camp, killing dozens of Palestinians, and the deaths of seven World Central Kitchen workers in April during airstrikes, highlight the brutal misuse of Palantir’s so-called “precision” technology.

The company’s TITAN system, promoted as a highly accurate AI model designed to enhance targeting precision, epitomizes the problems with Palantir’s claimed high accuracy

capabilities. While there is no direct evidence that TITAN, specifically, is used by Israel, the company's tech claims are integral to its broader product offerings, some of which are employed by Tel Aviv.

Marketed as providing real-time actionable intelligence and integrating sensor data for pinpoint accuracy, Palantir's TITAN system is touted for reducing collateral damage. However, in Gaza, the deployment of Palantir's technology has not prevented but facilitated widespread civilian casualties and destruction. The tragedies in Rafah and the deaths of aid workers expose the grotesque irony and devastating human cost of such "accuracy."

The collaboration has deeply embedded Palantir into Israel's military infrastructure, providing a technological or "digital" backbone for brutalities in Gaza and other occupied Palestinian territories.

### **Tech titans in warfare**

Given that Palantir has been active in Israel since 2015, the timing of the strategic agreement, dubbed the "[Partnership for Battle Tech](#)," in early 2024 raises serious questions.

Was this a calculated move by Palantir to use the intensified conflict as an opportunity to test their AI models on civilians, turning Gaza into a gruesome proving ground for their technology? This suggestion would cast yet another dark shadow on Palantir's ethics, implying that their business strategy might involve exploiting human suffering for technological advancement.

Palantir's deep involvement in Israel's military infrastructure is part of a broader, troubling pattern of technology enabling warfare. That connection extends to another tech giant – SpaceX's [Starlink](#), led by Elon Musk. Understanding this intricate relationship is crucial to grasping how modern conflicts are increasingly driven by advanced technologies developed by private corporations.

In Ukraine, the collaboration between Palantir and Starlink starkly illustrates the profound impact of integrated technology on warfare. Palantir's AI models provide the Ukrainian military with essential data analytics, transforming raw images from drones, satellites, and ground reports into real-time actionable intelligence.

This process, which Palantir's CEO Karp chillingly refers to as a "[digital kill chain](#)," has become central to Ukraine's defense strategy, enabling precise targeting and battlefield assessments. Simultaneously, Elon Musk's Starlink ensures uninterrupted communication for Ukrainian forces, maintaining a continuous flow of critical information vital for modern warfare.

The Ukraine war, of course, has proved catastrophic, with Ukrainian military casualties accumulating in astounding numbers, all while President Volodymyr Zelensky – despite the assistance of cutting-edge technologies from tech barons – and his allies in western capitals pretend otherwise.

Now, Israel’s war on Gaza appears to be descending into a similar quagmire. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, like Zelensky, seems politically detached from the grim military realities on the ground, counting on, it appears, the false illusion of control provided by tech barons through “sophisticated” technological support.

### **Starlink’s controversial approval in Gaza**

On 12 January, the Israeli government approved the use of Starlink services at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza, ostensibly for medical purposes.

This approval should not be viewed as a purely humanitarian gesture. Instead, it lays the groundwork for another potential insidious integration of Palantir and Starlink, mirroring their collaboration in Ukraine.

By enabling advanced satellite communication, Starlink’s approval in Gaza potentially supports military operations, suggesting the establishment of the “digital kill chain” behind the fig leaf of humanitarian aid.

The brutal siege on Al-Shifa Hospital by Israeli forces, involving severe atrocities against both civilians and medical staff, sharply contradicts any supposed altruistic intent behind Starlink’s deployment. After a two-week siege that ended on 1 April, Al-Shifa Hospital was mostly destroyed, and hundreds of dead Palestinians were found in and around the hospital, including in [mass graves](#).

The question arises: was this highly publicized approval of Starlink at Shifa a soft PR salvo laying the groundwork to integrate the company’s products into Israeli military operations inside the Gaza Strip? The timing and context of these developments raise unsettling questions about the actual intentions of both Starlink and Tel Aviv.

### **Enter Musk**

Musk’s highly publicized visit to Israel on 27 November 2023, where he met with Netanyahu, was far from a mere diplomatic event. Musk, who has been meticulously cultivating an image as a champion of free speech via his acquisition of social media Platform X – a role he cultivates like a carefully tailored suit of shining armor – found himself ensnared in a [propaganda display](#) orchestrated by Israel.

This scenario is reminiscent of the myth of Icarus, who, despite the heat, flew too close to the sun with wings made of wax and feathers.

Similarly, Musk's involvement with Netanyahu and the Israeli government, amidst growing scrutiny over war crimes, threatens to destroy his meticulously constructed image. In retrospect, with the ICC's investigation into war crimes intensifying, this meeting casts a long shadow over Musk's carefully cultivated persona.

### **Holding tech execs accountable**

Recent legal actions, such as the case in the UK brought by the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians ([ICJP](#)) against British ministers, highlight the growing effort to hold enablers of genocide accountable.

Yet, prominent figures in the tech industry remain conspicuously unexamined. But why? This situation mirrors the prosecution of individuals in Nazi Germany who enabled the Holocaust through their technological and logistical support, underscoring the need for comprehensive accountability in modern times.

The statutes of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) explicitly recognize various forms of complicity. These include aiding and abetting, which encompass providing the necessary tools and support for committing war crimes and genocide.

This legal framework implies that tech executives whose innovations facilitate large-scale violence should be held accountable under international law.

The intersection of advanced technology and warfare, driven by powerful tech magnates, illustrates a chilling reality: the tools designed to connect and protect are being repurposed to destroy and devastate. Worse yet, it seems war fields like Gaza are viewed as relatively risk-free testing grounds for these tech systems. It is time to make business collaborations with genocide a risk-heavy endeavor, and those efforts must start in the courtroom.

**JUN 6, 2024**