

Facebook

Oversight Board Selects Case on a Veiled Threat Based on Religious Beliefs

December 3, 2020

Today, the Oversight Board selected a case referred by Facebook regarding a post in a Group that appears to exist for Muslims in India. The post contains a statement about a sword being taken from its scabbard if people speak against the prophet. The post also references President Emmanuel Macron of France.

Facebook deemed this post a veiled threat, and we took it down for violating our policy on Violence and Incitement as laid out in our Community Standards.

Facebook referred this case to the Oversight Board as an example of a challenging decision about statements that may incite violence even when not explicit. It also highlights an important tension we face when addressing religious speech that could be interpreted as a threat of violence.

We will implement the board's decision once it has finished deliberating, and we will update this post accordingly. Please see the board's website for the decision when they issue it.