Social Media Factor in Security Environment

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Abstract : Social media is one of the most important and effective means of social interaction among people in which they create, share and exchange their ideas via photos, videos or voice messages. Although there are lots of communication tools, social media sites are the most prominent ones that allows the users articulate themselves in a matter of seconds all around the world with almost any expenses and thus, they became very popular and widespread after its emergence. As the usage of social media increases, it becomes an effective instrument in social matters. While it is possible to use social media to emphasize basic human rights and protest some failures of any government as in "Arab Spring", it is also possible to spread propaganda and misinformation just to cause long lasting insurgency, upheaval, turmoil or disorder as an instrument of intervention to internal affairs and state sovereignty by some hostile groups or countries. It is certain that "social media" has positive effects on democracies letting people have chance to express themselves and to organize, but it is also obvious that the misuse of it, is very common that even a five-minute-long video can cause to wage a campaign against a country. Although it looks anti-democratic, when you consider the catastrophic effects of misuse of social media, it is a kind of area that serious precautions are to be taken without limiting democratic rights while allowing constant and perpetual share but preventing the criminal events. This article begins with the current developments in social media and gives some examples on misuse of it. Second part tries to put emphasize on the legal basis that can prevent criminal activities and the upheavals and insurgencies against state security. Last part makes comparison between democratic countries and international organizations'' actions against such activities and proposes some further actions that are compatible with democratic norms.

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