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Civilian social media activists in the Arab Spring and beyond : can they ever lose their civilian protections ? / David Heitner

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Abstract:	Part I of this Note provides a background of civilian participation in conflict and the use of social media, both before and during the Arab Spring, by examining the dissidents' actions and the regimes' reactions. This examination focuses heavily on the situation in Syria, as its civil war is the closest to a traditional intrastate armed conflict, and dissidents using social media in such a conflict are more likely to cause military harm. Part II addresses the current provisions and interpretations of international law that result in civilian dissidents who use social media, either losing or maintaining their protection from targeting. Part III analyzes and evaluates the different applications of social media activities that may result in the loss of civilian protection in light of the different interpretations of a civilian's direct participation in hostilities. Part IV discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each interpretation of direct participation and propose additional criteria for determining when a social media activist has lost his or her civilian protection. These additional criteria seek to balance a regime's right to defend itself from what could be employed as a new type of military threat against the legitimate rights of a social media activist.
Keyword in French:	CIVIL PERSONNE PROTEGEE MEDIA PERTE PARTICIPATION CONFLIT ARME PAYS ARABES
Keyword in English:	CIVILIAN PROTECTED PERSON MEDIA LOSS (VERIFICATION OF GOODS) PARTICIPATION ARMED CONFLICT ARAB COUNTRIES
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