



Digital Diplomacy

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Abstract: In this article, the author provides information on the transition process of international relations to digitalisation, the close distant relations of countries regardless of their regional location, and the advantages and disadvantages of digital diplomacy. The author has given details of the impact of the digitalisation process on domestic and foreign policy. This article presents several arguments on the importance of digital sovereignty. The article is for international relations and political science professionals.

Key words: Digital Diplomacy, Digital Sovereignty, Internet, US, China, Uzbekistan.

In recent years, scientific and technological advances have led to the rapid development of information systems serving the communication needs of society, which, in turn, have been increasing year by year. As a result, the Internet, social media and other information applications have entered various spheres of society, including international relations, and are increasingly evident in diplomatic relations. State politicians' statements via the Internet are acquiring a new political status. A new culture of reaction to such statements is taking shape. Thus, the transformation of social communication serves to renew political relations and the emergence of the phenomenon of digital diplomacy.

The rapid development of the times shows that changes are waiting to happen in the field of digital diplomacy in our country. The concept of digital diplomacy is quite new in the academic literature, and there is currently no clear definition of the term. Moreover, the content of digital diplomacy can change depending on the emerging concept of digitalization at the current stage of technological development of society. In the study of digital diplomacy, many experts, political scientists, and international relations specialists have devoted their work to the study of digital diplomacy. The main purpose of digital diplomacy is to lobby a state's interests in foreign policy dialogue with foreign leaders and the public. Thus, the goals of digital diplomacy are aligned with the foreign policy goals of a state. However, digital diplomacy is characterised by a unique system of methods and tools used to promote state interests. We can observe that the approach describing the process of changing lifestyles in all aspects of public life through digitalisation is gaining momentum, and digital technology is highlighted as a key element. After all, the importance of digital technology also lies in the development of human civilization, and digital diplomacy is one of the main parts of the digitalization of international relations. Digital diplomacy can also be seen as a key tool in the digitalisation of international relations, if the priority is given to the state level. This approach seems reasonable, as digital diplomacy is a set of methods of using digital technology to achieve foreign policy goals, which is of value predominantly in the hands of state authorities.

Methods to influence foreign audiences: posting radio and TV programmes on the Internet, distributing open magazines in digital format, monitoring discussions in the online space, creating personal pages of government members on social media, creating anti-censorship computer technology.

Digitalisation of almost all sectors of the developing world, preventing costs on many fronts. In international relations, the role of political-economic relations in improving relations between countries and concluding new agreements is important. Digitalisation is a system that is expected to bring closer relations and alienate countries in the international arena, and we can emphasise this with the concept of digital diplomacy, which was introduced into all systems last year. The rapid growth of digital diplomacy was triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, which brought the economy to a halt in almost all countries and, in turn, led to the emergence of remote digital systems. In 2020, the pandemic led to the 75th session of the UN General Assembly being presented digitally, with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev delivering a speech in Uzbek. This online conversation on the pandemic reflected a new vision of digital diplomacy for the international organization.

Digital diplomacy is a tool to strengthen diplomatic relations; we can see it as a form of new public diplomacy using the Internet, new information and communication technologies and social media. This is due to the increased use of information, the expansion of relationships between prominent politicians and organisations, and the presence of the principle of transparency as major differences from the previous, classical public diplomacy¹.

The development of various websites in recent years by ministries of many countries, especially foreign ministries, diplomatic corps, embassies, international organisations and offices of international non-governmental organisations, has turned social media into another important tool for diplomacy. This, in turn, will lead to the proliferation of many online channels around the world and a wave of openness and transparency between countries.

Several specific reasons and benefits can be identified for the growing role and importance of digital diplomacy in the international relations system; the convenience of digital diplomacy lies in the proximity of all kinds of audiences, which in turn means that distance between ministries and embassies is irrelevant, and countries have long resorted to remote digital diplomacy in addressing and implementing certain political and economic goals. Digital social media allows diplomats to keep abreast of developments, keep track of them, collect and identify accurate and reliable information.

One of the main benefits of digital diplomacy today is the ability to establish fast and effective communication. The introduction of digital technologies into the political world is useful for identifying, collecting, processing information about members of the diplomatic corps and those working in the field, as well as for promptly dealing with non-standard situations. This allows governments to monitor specific events in different parts of the region, prepare analytically for and prevent possible repercussions. For example, during a crisis in the country, embassies can create their own working chat groups in Telegram groups on social networks, which include government officials, to simplify the process of solving the problems that caused the crisis. As I mentioned above, the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic crisis is a prime example of digital diplomacy becoming more effective. During the pandemic, to maintain communication between government officials and the population, the social pages kun.uz and daryo.uz, as well as Instagram, Telegram, You Tube regularly updated the daily table of regions affected by the pandemic and the Facebook pages, answering questions from ordinary citizens and providing assistance to the needy population of the country. In the work of these digital systems, we can see that the digital ecosystem has actively moved to a new stage. Having drawn the right conclusion from the situation, the channels approached as a tool to manage the pandemic crisis and ensured that information was identified in real time, collected, analyzed and communicated to the population.

Another advantage of digital diplomacy's entry into the world of politics is its low cost. Although the demand for the use of new technologies is increasing as a result of continuous technological advances in the global environment, the price of the demand is also decreasing rapidly. Furthermore, another aspect is that digital diplomacy does not require a cost in the form of financial investment; instead, digital diplomacy aims to reduce costs on the principle of communication. The loudest manifestation of digital diplomacy in the world of politics occurred in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and the effectiveness, convenience and cheapness of digital diplomacy is clearly

¹ Chakraborty K., ed. 2013. Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary. Berlin: Academy for Cultural Diplomacy

demonstrated in the processes of this election campaign. According to official data from the U.S. Federal Election Commission, Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton has spent \$897.7 million on campaigns since the start of the campaign, and Republican candidate Donald Trump has spent \$429.5 million. We can see that Hillary Clinton spent twice as much money as Donald Trump on the election process in 17 months². It is worth noting that Donald Trump is very active on social media, which gives him a clear advantage in the election. During the campaign, Trump's Twitter page had about 10.6 million followers, while Hillary Clinton had 8.1 million followers. This figure is not limited to Twitter: on Facebook, Trump's official page has about 10 million likes, and Hillary Clinton's page has about 5.2 million likes. Donald Trump had about 2.2 million followers on his Instagram page and Hillary Clinton had 1.8 million followers. It is these figures that we can see as evidence of the strong influence of digital technology on Donald Trump's great victory in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, when social media tools entered the big stage of digital diplomacy³.

Indeed, digital diplomacy has not developed in the same way in all countries. This is because the industrial revolutions have penetrated countries in different ways. The transition of industries to the digitalization phase will serve to solve a number of problems in all countries. For example, moving from the digital system to artificial intelligence tools in medicine, banking and finance, economics and politics will create a broad environment for the citizens of our country. By doing so, we will set the stage for the transition to the fourth industrial revolution. It is also worth noting that, at this point, our country is still firmly rooted in the system of change brought about by the second industrial revolution. Therefore, it is necessary and necessary to equip many of our industries with modern technological tools and improve Internet networks. Let me remind you that the second industrial revolution currently awaits 17% of the world's population, because about 1.3 billion people still do not have access to electricity. The third industrial revolution awaits about half of the world's population, or 4 billion people, because most of them live in developing countries that do not have access to the Internet⁴.

We can see three systems of digitalization in international relations: digital democracy, digital bureaucracy and digital diplomacy. The system of digital democracy embodies the possibility of using electronic network communications to develop mechanisms in the process of discussing a country's political system. In digital bureaucracy, it appears as e-government and controls the management and improvement of the country's platforms through digital technologies. Digital diplomacy refers to the means of harnessing the power of digital technology in the process of foreign policy issues in international relations. The advantage of the three systems mentioned above is that the main difference between digital diplomacy and classical diplomacy in the process of international relations is the cheapness of various political roundtables, memorandums and symposiums organized at the international level.

Digital diplomacy mechanisms may include⁵:

- ✓ Active applications on electronic media;
- ✓ Internet transmissions,
- ✓ Video content;
- ✓ Other Internet resources.

Today there is a tendency for traditional political publications to switch to electronic format: digitization of printed text, creation of video content on one's own Internet portal, creation of one's own websites.

The current trends of digital diplomacy in our country are inextricably linked to the gradual improvement of the use of information and communication systems, it is desirable to regulate them

² Клинтон потратила на предвыборную кампанию в два раза больше Трампа:

<https://www.rbc.ru/politics/07/11/2016/58172d119a79478828b87ccc>

³ ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА И РИСКИ ЦИФРОВОЙ ДИПЛОМАТИИ <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/preimuschestva-i-riski-tsifrovoy-diplomatii/viewer>

⁴ Четвертая промышленная революция / К. Шваб — «Эксмо», 2016 — (Top Business Awards) ст-12.

⁵ К.Кокоева Цифровая дипломатия как инструмент внешней политики США, 2020 ст-323

technically in order to preserve their important qualities and reduce the risk of threats. The task of implementing this process is very complex, and the emergence of new threats may occur as the regulation of old ones. Each country addresses the issue of Internet regulation and the development of digital diplomacy in its own way.

We can systematize the main models of digital diplomacy of the Republic of Uzbekistan by studying the practice of organizing digital diplomacy in the United States.

Digital diplomacy is defined as the use of digital technology tools in the national interest as part of a state's diplomatic policy. Digital diplomacy is considered as a set of tools to achieve foreign policy goals. The development of digital diplomacy is carried out not only by the efforts of the government, but also by the efforts of non-power parties, opposition and protest movements. Digital diplomacy projects in the U.S. can be summarized as follows⁶:

- formation of communications between state companies and different population groups in foreign countries;
- increase the authority of the state and state structures in relation to young people, to develop youth policy on the basis of actualization of state decisions in the sphere of youth policy;
- creation of a user-friendly information space that is accessible and user-friendly, having a relevant information space with a relevant news agenda;
- mobilization of opposition movements with its advertising, information program, propaganda materials.

By 2001, Net Diplomacy was established in the United States, and behind it was the idea of the U.S. government to establish a dialogue between participants of foreign countries in social networks. The emergence of new technologies has served as an impetus for a gradual change in U.S. national policy in international relations. Realizing how powerful social networks are, the U.S. quickly turned them into new tools for achieving its goals and conducting diplomatic activities of states. Digital and social media provide unprecedented global influence and potential for diplomatic innovation. The United States will be one of the first countries to recognize the importance of the Internet in advancing national interests abroad. The U.S. State Department is the world's leading user of digital diplomacy.

The transition of our country to the modern field of digitalization will serve as a solid foundation for the future formation of our economy and the great future of our nation. The emergence of universities specializing in the field of artificial intelligence and digitalization with the initiatives of the head of our country, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, will undoubtedly determine the further position of our development. As I mentioned above, before shaping the foreign policy of the fourth industrial revolution in the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is necessary to modernize many sectors of the country, taking into account the achievements of the third industrial revolution.

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⁶ К.Кокоева Цифровая дипломатия как инструмент внешней политики США, 2020 ст-323