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THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIPLOMACY UNDER MODERN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The article explores how the evolution of diplomacy in the era of rapid technological advancements is reshaping international relations. It examines the impact of modern information and communication technologies, including social media, artificial intelligence, and cyberspace, on diplomatic practices and global cooperation. The paper highlights the shift from traditional to digital diplomacy, emphasizing the increasing role of data, automation, and cyber threats in shaping foreign policy decisions.

Keywords. Digital diplomacy; international relations; information and communication technologies (ICTs); cyber threats; artificial intelligence; social media; foreign policy; digital transformation; geopolitical security.

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies in today's globalized world has led to significant transformations in the field of international relations. These changes affect not only the forms and methods of diplomatic activity but also the very principles of international cooperation.

The information revolution, social media, artificial intelligence, cyberspace, and other technological innovations are creating new challenges and opportunities for diplomacy, compelling states to adapt to emerging geopolitical realities. According to Twiplomacy, as of 2023, over 90% of countries had official accounts on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, while more than 80% of foreign ministers used Twitter to communicate with the public and other diplomats [1].

On one hand, the integration of information technologies into foreign policy has had a revolutionary impact on the evolution of classical diplomacy and international politics, leading to a gradual shift toward digital diplomacy—from the "art of speech" to the "art of data" in diplomatic practice [3]. On the other hand, in an era of automated analysis and forecasting, the decision-

making processes in diplomacy are undergoing transformation, giving rise to new challenges in the governance of international relations.

Given the profound dependence of modern economies on digital infrastructure and emerging technologies—where the speed of information dissemination, public opinion influence, and data manipulation capabilities become decisive factors in decision-making—countries face an urgent need to develop new strategic doctrines, implement technological initiatives, and revise their security paradigms.

In the context of exponential growth in the diplomatic sphere, it is essential to understand how states and international organizations can effectively harness new technologies to strengthen international dialogue and implement strategies to counter emerging threats in the digital age, while identifying key indicators and policy recommendations to address them. According to the Microsoft Digital Defense Report 2024, cyberattacks targeting diplomatic institutions have increased by nearly 40% over the past five years. In 2024, in terms of the frequency of cyber threats, the diplomatic sector ranked as the third most targeted domain by threat actors at the national and state levels (12%), following the information technology (24%) and scientific research sectors (21%) [2].

The contemporary world is undergoing an active transformation and adaptation to new geopolitical realities. Within the context of global digitalization governance, two opposing doctrines have emerged: Digital Solidarity (led by the United States) and Digital Sovereignty (advocated by the European Union).

The core idea of Digital Solidarity is the creation of an open, resilient, and secure global digital ecosystem, politically and legally formalized as a broad coalition between the United States and its allies and partners. This doctrine promotes common goals, unified rights and rules, close cooperation, mutual assistance, and joint responses to cyber threats. A practical step toward the implementation of this doctrine was the adoption of the International Cyberspace and Digital Policy Strategy by the United States in May 2024 [4].

In contrast, the European Union has been actively promoting the doctrine of Digital Sovereignty as a critical and integral component of state sovereignty. This doctrine asserts that the control and protection of national digital infrastructure and data flows should be exercised by states or their coalitions through a wide array of protectionist measures. These include: 1) the implementation of restrictive sectoral policies; 2) data and network localization; 3) limiting foreign access to domestic markets; 4) promoting the development of local technologies, industries, and companies to reduce reliance on foreign providers [4].

Unlike the inclusive approach of Digital Solidarity, the more isolationist stance of Digital Sovereignty is gaining traction. For example, in January 2023, the Digital Decade 2030 monitoring and cooperation framework came into effect, aimed at achieving shared objectives in Europe's digital transformation by 2030. Notably, some authoritarian regimes have adopted the Digital Sovereignty doctrine as the foundation for their national digital and information policies [5].

The progressive development of modern information and communication technologies is also profoundly reshaping the traditional format of international negotiations. Despite geographical distances, time zone constraints, and language barriers, the international negotiation process is increasingly transitioning into the digital domain. This is facilitated by real-time online platforms for hosting international video conferences (e.g., Zoom, Slack, Salesforce, DocuSign); the use of blockchain technologies (such as smart contracts in project management) to ensure transparency and security; the implementation of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) environments; automated translation and artificial intelligence applications; and digital document management systems.

According to expert assessments, over 150 countries have established dedicated e-diplomacy units, and in 2023 alone, the number of virtual diplomatic meetings increased by 50% compared to 2020 [5].

Clearly, digitalization is transforming the landscape of international negotiations, making them more adaptive to the demands of the globalized world. The use of digital platforms for public diplomacy, effective knowledge management, processing of vast data volumes to support consular communications, and other digital tools is reinforcing traditional diplomatic functions and expanding the scope of diplomatic influence.

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