THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

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ABSTRACT

As a product of globalization and as a fruit of new public diplomacy, digital diplomacy is considered one of the major trends of the twenty-first century in diplomatic communication. Being under the influence of the extraordinary advances in ICT, the internet and social media, the way of realization and presentation of diplomacy has been radically changed and is increasingly removed from the traditional diplomatic elements. The importance of digital diplomacy is based on the usage of ICT, the internet and social media, which at the same time represent its base, for the strengthening of the diplomatic relations. Therefore, knowledge about the role and importance of digital diplomacy is indispensable. This paper will offer information on the definition, goals, evolution and effectiveness of the digital diplomacy. Meanwhile, the main focus of the research lies in the classification of its benefits and risks. For international actors is more than clear how useful is exploitation of digital diplomacy benefits for achieving their goals in the international arena. However, the process of digitization is unseparated from cyber risks, as well as the freedom of the internet and social media is abused for various purposes that state and non-state actors may have. Although coupled with benefits on the one hand and risks on the other hand, the risks of digital diplomacy are still covered by benefits, making digital diplomacy a key element for the realization of diplomatic activities. Based on all the information over the features of the topic, the primary goal of the paper is to provide sufficient arguments for verifying the above-mentioned hypothesis, which is also the general hypothesis of the paper.

Key words: Digital diplomacy, globalization, international relations, benefits, risks.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is about a very important form of new public diplomacy, the role and importance of which is steadily increasing. Digital diplomacy is characterized by the great

influence on the realization of diplomatic practices, providing an influential space for ICT, the internet and social media, which are at the same time its core elements. The paper is divided into three chapters. The first one is about the characteristics of digital diplomacy. This chapter is divided into four subchapters. The first subchapter offers information on the definition of digital diplomacy, to continue with second subchapter where are mentioned the main goals of digital diplomacy. The third subchapter has data about the evolution of digital diplomacy and the fourth one is about the points that should be implemented so that digital diplomacy can be successful. The second and the third chapters are the most important chapters of the paper because within them are the main information about the classification of the most important benefits and risks of digital diplomacy. The second chapter is about the benefits and is divided into five subchapters and also the same is the fourth chapter which offers information about the risks.

Research purposes

The main purposes of this paper are:

- *To provide data on the characteristics of digital diplomacy, with particular emphasis on its definition and goals;*
- *To explain the evolution of digital diplomacy;*
- *To present the points which should be implemented so that digital diplomacy can be as effective as possible in achieving the goals of international subjects;*
- *To classify the main benefits and risks of digital diplomacy.*

Research questions and hypothesis

The paper aims to answer these research questions:

- *What is digital diplomacy?*
- *How has digital diplomacy evolved?*
- *What points are required to be implemented for effective and successful digital diplomacy?*
- *What are the main benefits and risks of digital diplomacy?*

The hypotheses of this paper are:

- *Digital diplomacy is the most important form of public diplomacy;*
- *Digital diplomacy relies entirely on soft power, combined with smart power;*
- *The main benefits of digital diplomacy emerge in the development of diplomatic practices;*
- *Digital diplomacy favors mostly small states;*
- *Some countries of the world do not use digital diplomacy because of the risks that it has, despite benefits;*
- *The main risk of digital diplomacy is hacking;*
- *If benefits and risks of digital diplomacy would be placed in scale, the benefits will raised up.*

Research methodology

For realization of this paper are used *qualitative methods* and it is characterized by:

- *Collection and selection of material (literature, scientific journals, documents, sources from the internet, etc.);*
- *Description of the collected material (focus on ideas, forms, histories, etc.);*
- *Applied methods (historical, comparative, phenomenal, narrative, based theory, etc.).*

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

1.1 The definition of digital diplomacy

Digital Diplomacy is a form of new public diplomacy, which uses the internet, new information and communication technologies (ICT) and social media as means for strengthening diplomatic relations. The main diferences with the classical public diplomacy lie in a greater access to information, greater interaction among individuals and organizations, and greater transparency (Chakraborty, 2013). The progress of websites by foreign ministries, embassies and delegations of international organisations is now a standard practice. The foreign ministries websites serve to explain and record their national foreign policies and rebut unacceptable actions or claims by other states (Barston, 2014). Social media have become other important tools of diplomacy. This worldwide embrace of online channels has brought with it a wave of openness and transparency that has never been experienced before. Social media provide a platform for unconditional communication, and have become a communicator's most powerful tool. There is a wide range of social media that international actors use, but the most popular ones are: *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *YouTube*, *Periscope* and *Snapchat*.

1.2 The goals of digital diplomacy

The adoption of digital diplomacy by international subjects, mainly from the states, is based on several goals for the realization of which the latter ones are maximally engaged. The main goals for digital diplomacy are:

- *Knowledge management:* To harness departmental and whole of government knowledge, so that it is retained, shared and its use optimized in pursuit of national interests abroad;
- *Public diplomacy:* To maintain contact with audiences as they migrate online and to harness new communications tools to listen to and target important audiences with key messages and to influence major online influencers;
- *Information management:* To help aggregate the overwhelming flow of information and to use this to better inform policy-making and to help anticipate and respond to emerging social and political movements;
- *Consular communications and response:* To create direct, personal communications channels with citizens travelling overseas, with manageable communications in crisis situations;
- *Disaster response:* To harness the power of connective technologies in disaster response situations;
- *Internet freedom:* Creation of technologies to keep the internet free and open. This has the related objectives of promoting freedom of speech and democracy as well as undermining authoritarian regimes;
- *External resources:* Creating digital mechanisms to draw on and harness external expertise to advance national goals;
- *Policy planning:* To allow for effective oversight, coordination and planning of international policy across government, in response to the internationalisation of the bureaucracy.

1.3 The evolution of digital diplomacy

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries technological revolutions changed the premises of diplomatic communication. In the nineteenth century the advent of steamships and railways increased the mobility of diplomats significantly, at the same time as the invention of the telegraph permitted fast and direct communication between governments as

well as between foreign ministries and embassies. The development of air travel and information technology (IT) in the twentieth century added to the ease and speed of movement and communication (Jönsson & Hall, 2005). Three world events in the 1920's and 30's altered the definition and practice of diplomacy. The first was the widespread use and immense popularity of the radio. The second was the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and the Nazi's rise to power in 1933 and the third was the use made by both the Nazis and the Bolsheviks of the radio in order to propagate revolutions in neighboring countries. And just like that, *public diplomacy* was born. Public diplomacy refers to processes in which countries seek to accomplish their foreign policy goals by communicating with foreign publics. It is also a tool for creating a positive climate amongst foreign populations in order to facilitate the acceptance of one's policies. Coined in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, a US career diplomat, public diplomacy literally reaches beyond traditional diplomacy, aiming at the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries (Siracusa, 2010). The communications revolution, which began shortly after the Second World War and continues today, makes possible the instantaneous transmission of information of all kinds across oceans and over mountains to the remotest areas of the world, disregarding national boundaries and penetrating into the tightest fortresses of thought control. Transistor radios, television, satellite transmissions, supersonic jet transportation, international computer link-ups, electronic data processing, and telefax enable people everywhere to receive and pass on information that may previously have taken days or weeks to reach them, if at all (Tuch, 1990). The end of the Cold War spread democracy and its values into many countries and increased people's access to international information. Nye coined the term "soft power" to refer to nation's power of influence that is largely based on perceived value, social norms and image (Golan, 2015). Applying soft power aims shaping the preferences of others not through compulsion, but through seduce. In addition to the two forms of diplomacy, the traditional and the public, there is also the third form, *social diplomacy*, as a contemporary form of the new era. One of the most frequent associations for social diplomacy is the ability to choose a delicate and complicated situation with courtesy, discretion, wisdom, or a special way of dealing with people (Reka, Bashota & Sela, 2016). Social diplomacy enables the sovereign state authority to move from states to ordinary citizens, thus creating appropriate spaces for the involvement of other international actors such as non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations. Many people all over the world have discovered that by joining NGOs, they can lobby for issues they support. Lobbying is another form of social diplomacy practice, initially in the United Kingdom and the USA, but today also in the European Union. Lobbyists try to exert influence on the design or implementation of particular policies. At the end of the twentieth century, was being developed a form of new public diplomacy, known as digital diplomacy. The *"la diplomatie numérique"* concept has the peculiarity of defining MFAs areas of action as "international digital challenges" and expanding all traditional diplomacy through the use of ICT-induced innovations, and digital means are not simply considered as tools transferring information, but also contributors to the transformation of diplomatic activities. *E-diplomacy* walks the line between continuity and change in our digital era. "E" is the abbreviation of the word "electronic" as a description of the early commercialization of the internet. The first developments of e-Diplomacy belong to 1992 when at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro for the first time civil society e-mails were used for lobbying in the negotiations as well as at the same time in Malta, at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, was founded the first unit for computer applications in diplomacy. Diplomats have often viewed the Arab Spring as the origin of digital diplomacy. The use of digital media in diplomacy had begun earlier. Already in 2008 it was estimated that the internet was responsible for some 80% of the recruitment of youths to Jihadi movements. Realizing the need to counter Al-Qaeda's recruitment tactics, and its online

narrative, President Bush's Undersecretary for Pubic Diplomacy and Public Affairs launched *Public Diplomacy 2.0*. This initiative saw the migration of the State Department to Facebook, the launching of a departmental blog and the establishment of a Digital Outreach Team tasked with countering Al Qaeda's recruitment online. The next milestone of digital diplomacy was the WikiLeaks scandal of 2010 in which WikiLeaks published some 250,000 diplomatic cables sent between US missions and Washington. It was WikiLeaks that taught diplomats that secrets can hardly exist in the digital age, that information wants to be free and that it can set itself free and that the digital age would require new working routines, procedures and tools. During and following the Arab Spring, young activists used social media to spread dissident discourse, shape narratives, and broadcast live footage of revolutions across the world. Social media began to be taken more seriously in the aftermath of the revolutions, uprisings and the ensuing political unrest in the Middle East in 2011 (Bjola & Holmes, 2015). The term "Twitter Diplomacy" emerged as a result of the dizzying usage and the very important role of social media, particularly Twitter. Twitter for now is the most used social network, which has become a very important communicative tool for many presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, ambassadors and diplomats of the world (Sandre, 2013).

1.4 Effective digital diplomacy

To be digital diplomacy effective, 25 points should be implemented, divided into six sections:

1. *Organization and management:*
    1.1 *Top leadership must champion innovation;*
    1.2 *Avoid a grandiose digital diplomacy strategy;*
    1.3 *Digital diplomacy is much more than social media and public diplomacy;*
    1.4 *High budgets sometimes yield low impacts and low budgets sometimes yield high impacts;*
    1.5 *Select the most effective digital platform for your needs;*
    1.6 *Put diplomats, particularly young officials, in the driving seat;*
    1.7 *Encourage early adopters, but do not punish laggers;*
    1.8 *Learn from others, with necessary caution;*
    1.9 *Return on investment.*
2. *Security:*
    2.1. *Cybersecurity is about risk management;*
    2.2. *You cannot succeed without failure. Make sure that failures are contained and that lessons are learned.*
3. *Time-timing-tempo:*
    3.1. *Be aware of the time needed: one day – one month – one year dynamics;*
    3.2. *Experiment and try to be among the early adopters, but also occasionally benefit from a delayed start.*
4. *Content, context, and failures:*
    4.1. *Content is king in an era where context is content;*
    4.2. *Be aware of different audiences;*
    4.3. *Try to separate official from informal communication channels;*
    4.4. *Try to separate professional from private communication in the digital space;*
    4.5. *You cannot control the message in social media, and sometimes the medium is the message;*
    4.6. *Prepare for difficulties in advance, during 'sunny days'.*
5. *Maximising knowledge and hidden resources:*
    5.1. *The most important digital diplomacy resource is found in the knowledge and experience of your diplomats. Make sure to use them;*
    5.2. *Diplomats are writers and social media is about writing.*
6. *Training and support for digital diplomats:*

2. THE BENEFITS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

2.1 Strengthening international relations

Diplomacy comes in many shapes and sizes. It is in under the guidance of presidents and prime ministers as well as lawyers, scientists, economists, aid workers, and of course, ambassadors. They exemplied the diversity of potential diplomatic actors, but also the coherence of what we might call the "diplomatic style" - the effort to increase power and influence through innovative partnerships and strategies, rather than unilateral acts offorce (Hutchings & Suri, 2015). The era of globalization is characterized by an increase and intensification of political, economic and cultural interactions beyond territorial boundaries (Salmon, 2000). In the twenty-first century, international politics have a wide variety of international actors, including states, ethno-nationalist factors, multinational corporations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, various transnational movements and networks, or even individuals (Mingst, 2008). Now, a network of international organizations, of different sizes and types, unites people from all the countries. The rapid growth of this network, as well as the intense and growing communication and interaction within it, are indicators of increasing international interdependence. These organizations, for their part, give the course that keeps united, to some extent, the world order even when the leaders and circumstances change and even when the norms are undermined by the unexpected changes of power relations (Goldstein, 2003). However, the postmodern era diplomacy is not something new. It has assumed various characteristics in the modern age, but the idea of sending emissaries to another state is old and was common to many cultures (Chan, 2017). Digital diplomacy does not replace traditional diplomacy, but it can strengthen the state's work in international relations quickly and more effectively. Today, it is an essential element for realizing foreign policy. Digital diplomacy helps a lot in advancing its foreign policy goals, expanding international alignment, and affecting people who never set foot in any of the embassies of the world. Direct public interaction and the involvement of non-state actors make countries to use social media and digital diplomacy as a way to maintain legitimacy and develop or strengthen relationships in a changing world (Deos, 2015).

2.2 Proximity with audiences

The geographical distance between MFAs and embassies is less important than it was earlier. The internet websites, blogs, and social media have attracted more and more politicians and diplomats of the world with citizens from all corners of the globe. Nations have long reached out to foreign audiences when such efforts advance a particular political or economic goals (Snow & Taylor, 2009). Blogs can contribute to the generation of a principally individual identity of the owner, which can be *active*, *interactive*, *reflective* and *multidimensional*. Social media enable diplomats to observe events, gather information, and identify key influencers. They also provide channels to influence beyond the traditional audience. They can help in consultation process, policy formulation and help to share ideas. In social media, to penetrate deeply within different audiences, must be applied the *"Think*

globally, act locally" formula (Shih, 2009). WikiLeaks has brought a conceptual shift in which digital and social media tools are seen as tools for communicating *with* online audiences rather than *on* online audiences.

2.3 Fast and effective communications

The desire for a strong state, capable of avoiding the risk of foreign invasion, persuaded Niccòlo Machiavelli to study the mechanisms of power, considering politics as a new art (Machiavelli, 2003). As a politician and a diplomat in his own time, Machiavelli was a failure, a middle-range fellow who ended up in trouble. None of his great strategies went anywhere, none of his more devious plots went anywhere. The reason for what he was considered a failure was that in the sixteenth century, a great strategy was not the proper way of action because it was influenced by interests and intrigues. Machiavelli lacked a center where he would set his strategy. If he would use Twitter or Facebook, or any of the other social media, he would be very successful because he would use public opinion, especially followers, retweets or likes that would take, to raise certain issues (Sandre, 2015). Quick knowledge of various events can be an advantage to national interest in many cases. Digital technologies are extremely useful for gathering and processing information regarding diplomatic activities as well as for fast communications in urgent situations. They enable governments to think about the consequences of events in different parts of the world and how they affect their country. For example, in times of crisis, embassies can create groups in WhatsApp that include the ambassador, consular officer, press secretary, staff who collects online information, diplomats from the headquarter and staff answering citizens questions on the internet. This group can function as a crisis management cell and enables the collection of real-time information, decision-making and dissemination of information. Whereas, people who live under authoritarian regimes that aim to limit their ability to communicate internally and internationally, thanks to digital technologies can avoid this kind of limitation, enabling the free expression of objections to certain issues, as well as affecting the minimization of authoritarianism (McGlinchey, 2017). Media coverage is almost instantaneous not only thanks to the media, but also through smart phones and social networks. As evidenced by the revolutions involving the arab world in the spring of 2011, authoritarian states find it difficult to control the flow of information. Regular communications and frequent exchange of information result in sustainable relationships among international actors, and help coordinate their common interests (Memon & Alhajj, 2010). Social media, like other forms of technology, are making societies much more democratic, but they are also offering them new tools of control in power.

2.4 Low financial cost

The costs of using new technologies are falling rapidly as a result of continuous technology advancements. International practice shows that competent use of digital diplomacy tools can bring big dividends to those who invest in it. Moreover, digital diplomacy does not always require financial investments. On the contrary, it is often aimed at reducing costs. For example, Twitter posts can help investigate and identify troublesome issues and exposing those responsible, by pushing the public, media and political-diplomatic engagement in order to achieve positive change. This fact makes digital diplomacy more attractive to governments, MFAs and embassies for spreading their work, as it does not cause budget damage.

2.5 Favoring small states

The definition of "small states" is determined by certain quantitative criteria, eg. the size of the territory, the number of inhabitants, the GDP and the military size. Smaller states during the realization of their foreign policy face many challenges. The main challenge which limits the foreign policy execution of these states is the financial capacity. Digital diplomacy favors all kinds of states, but mostly small states. Typical example is the Republic of Kosovo, which, as a new and small country with limited financial resources, sees digital diplomacy as a contributor to its cause by linking its diplomats and citizens with people of other states, than they to put pressure on their states to recognize the newest state in the Balkans. To serve its international recognition, Kosovo has set up the *Digital Kosovo* platform. In 2012, the turkish public diplomacy magazine *"Yeni Diplomasi"* had appreciated the digital diplomacy of Kosovo as the fourth best in the world after that of the UK, the USA and Israel. Small States have already become leaders in the trends of using the internet pages and ICT for their advantages. In general, it is the will of small states that must develop the process of realization of external relations in an optimal way. The technological revolution in most of the poor countries will act as a promoter or new requirements on public services, including MFAs (Rana, 2011).

3. THE RISKS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY
3.1 Freedom from the internet and social media

Globalization of information encourages connections, information about norms elsewhere, also comparing policies and best practices notes. However, new communication technologies have had a profound impact on negative events as well. Terrorist and xenophobic groups also mobilize and recruit supporters through them (Kinsman & Bassuener, 2010). The internet is also perceived as a channel for the spread of extremism, terrorism and the imposition of foreign ideologies. Then, part of social networks can become anyone, from world governments to various extremist organizations, in which the latter ones distribute their norms, values and objectives, whatever they are (Kalathil, 2013). Critics of digital diplomacy consider dangerous such as "Trojan Horse" freedom from the internet and social media. The internet multiplies the number of voices and interests involved in drafting international policies, complicating international decision-making and reducing the country's exclusive control in this process. Different actors of the state and regime, with different interests, goals and values, compile different security scenarios (Kolodziej, 2005). A state must be ensured by external threats coming from other states or other international actors, such as terrorists. It must also guarantee security in the face of internal threats against its character, order, territory, or demographic integrity (Collins, 2009). Between august 2015 and december 2017, the social network Twitter had closed 1.2 million accounts for terrorist apology with purpose to prevent the promotion of terrorism. However, Twitter, Facebook and Youtube still continue to have pressures from some world governments, which are criticizing them about not being strict enough in their fight against terrorist propaganda.

3.2 Lack of knowledge about the usage of the internet and social media

In practice, secrets no longer exist on the internet. The social media revolution is changing the way how people see the world, and how they are communicating. Not only it has made easier for governments and ambassadors to engage with the public but it has made everybody more aware of the effects - both positive and negative - a single word, tweet, Facebook comment, video, or image can have in a relatively short timeframe. Lack of knowledge about using new communication technologies, the internet, and social media can result with terrible consequences, severe conflicts, even with dismissals of politicians. Meeting the risks of the digital age meant that foreign ministries need to train their diplomats in how to use digital communication tools, thus avoiding another damage. Diplomatic missions of large countries employ permanent staff specialized in dealing with science and technology related files (Ruffini, 2017). Today, digital diplomacy users need continually to be trained and to practice, and as well to adopt new digital technologies as soon as possible, even if they are complicated, in order to gain the necessary knowledge about using them and to avoid risks of this nature.

3.3 Disagreements

All states are essentially austere because all governments and regimes have to use force to enforce the law, to maintain internal order, and to protect the state against any external threat (Wikinson, 2007). However, the global era of the twenty-first century is characterized by a sense that no one is in control. Even the most powerful state in the world can not get its way into many issues (Booth, 2007). The year 1989 did not mark the end of history, but the beginning of a new phase in relations between states and people (Inoguchi & Marsh, 2008). The internet and services based on it are seen as the driving force of globalization. Thus, the reproof of the globalized world is to some extent a rebuke of the digital world. Information about international crises, which used to take hours and days for government officials and media to be scattered, are now being broadcast live in world not only through radio and television, but also from the internet and social networks. The arrival of social media has overshadowed the element of "secrecy" in diplomacy. Diplomats can no longer be certain that their thoughts will not be revealed to the audiences they have never targeted, and it is now impossible to leave the public eye. For policymakers, the immediate distribution of information about distant and nearby events is likely to be more a risk than a benefit. It seems that the "era of secrecy" has already been replaced with the "era of distribution" in which ordinary citizens spend hours reading, marking and criticizing government policies each day, and then sharing their thoughts on the internet and the social media. Unfortunately, the level of communication culture in social media is very weak, where many political leaders and diplomats face with insults, as well as provocative and threatening messages, thus causing many disagreements. The internet also provides a lot of information of suspicious origin. Social media because of the way they work have tremendous impact and it would be wonderful to contribute as much as the truth emerges. However, information distributed inside them, are characterized by lies and slanders. Digital frustration is also linked with digital ethics. What can and can not be distributed on the internet? What is hate speech and what should be protected as part of freedom of speech? Thus, MFAs and diplomats, together with civil society, are indispensable to promote a global discussion on the issues of digital ethics.

3.4 The culture of anonymity

Another challenge of digital diplomacy is the culture of anonymity because anyone can pretend to be someone else and cause damages to certain persons. The culture of anonymity can lead to complicated crises as a result of the publication of conflicting informations, even untrue. This kind of widespread disinformation on the internet can hinder the ability of leaders to manage the ensuing crises. Social media are being abused, so they have to fix their pages in such a way as to make it clear whether a post comes from a trustworthy source. This year, Facebook is facing the harshest criticism of its 14-years history of privacy practices and how it treats user data, known as the "Cambridge Analytica Data Scandal". The analytical data firm that has worked with US President Donald Trump's electoral team and the Brexit winner campaign, and has taken millions of american voters data and has used them to build a powerful software program to predict and influence the US presidential election of 2016. Cambridge Analytica had access in informations of over 87 million Facebook users without their knowledge.

3.5 Hacking

Growing pervasiveness of the digital world, alongside the fear of future attacks of sensitive institutions, has turned many cyber optimists into cyber pessimists. Hacking is a risk, which has existed since the invention of the internet. Very rightly, he is considered to be the main risk of digital diplomacy because many heads of states, governments, and diplomats around the world have been its victims, which has rarely jeopardized their career. Diplomatic rivals, including state and non-state actors, try to attack government systems in order to extract information that would serve them for certain purposes. In the ICT era there is no success in controlling information, but in the knowledge how to use them in effective forms. When private informations become public, they may have a fast and profound impact on leading world affairs because the reputations of states and their leaders may be damaged (Westcott, 2008). Cyber security has reached the top of the international diplomatic and political agendas of the UN, NATO, ITU, OECD, OSCE, Commonwealth, G7 and G20. Many countries have adopted national cyber security strategies and relevant legislation. Nevertheless, the risks are increasingly sophisticated, and the groups concerned to exploit the cybernetic vulnerabilities have been expanded by black-hat hacking secret hackers in well-organized criminal and terrorist groups, government security services and defense forces. To make things more complicated, most of the infrastructure and internet services are privately owned, with operators spread around the various global jurisdictions.

CONCLUSION

The approval of digital initiatives is considered like a revolution in the realization of diplomacy because it has radically changed the development of diplomatic practices, information management, public diplomacy, strategy planning, international negotiation and crisis management, highlighting a new form of public diplomacy, the digital one. Digital diplomacy uses ICT, the internet and social media to strengthen diplomatic relations. The main goals of digital diplomacy are knowledge management, public diplomacy, information

management, consular communications and response, disaster response, internet freedom, external resources and policy planning. To explain the evolution of digital diplomacy, must be restored to the effects of the technological revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in diplomatic communication, appearing public diplomacy. The latter one refers to processes in which countries seek to accomplish their foreign policy goals by communicating with foreign publics. The communications revolution, which began shortly after the Second World War and continues today, makes possible the instantaneous transmission of information of all kinds across oceans and over mountains to the remotest areas of the world, disregarding national boundaries and penetrating into the tightest fortresses of thought control. "Soft power", one term that is coined by Joseph Nye refers to nation's power of influence that is largely based on perceived value, social norms and image of state. Besides traditional and public diplomacy, there is also another form which is called social diplomacy and presents the ability to choose a delicate and complicated situation with courtesy, discretion, wisdom, or a special way of dealing with people, giving a big role non-state actors which use lobbying for the realization of their goals. Digital diplomacy was developed at the end of the twentieth century. It was otherwise known like la diplomatie numérique in French language and e-diplomacy in English and both terms were referred to the ICT and the internet impacts in diplomatic activities. Launch of Public Diplomacy 2.0 in 2008, WikiLeaks scandal in 2010 and especially the Arab Spring in 2011 are considered the origin of digital diplomacy. For the moment, the role and importance of social media like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Periscope, and Snapchat, is growing very fast and the latter ones are becoming a very important communicative tools for many politicans and diplomats around the world, especially Twitter that is being used most and that fact gives digital diplomacy another synonym, Twitter diplomacy. To be digital diplomacy effective, 25 points should be implemented, divided into six sections which are organization and management, security, time, content and context, maximising knowledge and hidden resources, and the last one that is training and support for digital diplomats. Digital diplomacy has too many benefits. It helps international subjects, especially the states, in advancing foreign policy goals. Then, the websites, blogs and social networks have brought leaders of the world closer to the citizens from all corners of the globe. Digital technologies are extremely useful for collecting and processing information regarding diplomatic activities as well as for quick communications in urgent situations. Thanks to them, people who live under authoritarian regimes can avoid limitations that disable the free expression of objections to certain issues, resulting in the minimization of authoritarianism. The fact that digital diplomacy does not always requires financial investments and has a low costs compared with the other diplomatic methods, makes it attractive for governments, MFAs and embassies because it does not cause budget damages. Digital diplomacy favors all kinds of states, but mostly small states, which helps them in achieving their goals in the international arena. However, digital diplomacy is not immune to criticism because it is also seen as a source of threats and risks. Freedom of the internet and social media, part of which can be anyone, enabling them to share different norms, whatever they are, is considered very dangerous. That is the reason why world governments criticize digital platforms because they are not getting engaged enough in prevention of the spread of extremism, terrorism, and the imposition of anti-democratic ideologies. Lack of knowledge about the usage of digital technologies, the internet and social media can result with a lot of consequences, conflicts, even with discharges of positions. Digital diplomacy users need to be very careful about what they publish, especially in social media, because a single word, tweet, comment, like or a picture can have many negative effects. Digital media has enabled people to express their thoughts on the internet and on social networks, but unfortunately the level of communication culture within them is very low, with insults, provocative and threatening messages that incite multiple disagreements.

Another risk of digital diplomacy is the culture of anonymity because anyone can pretend to be someone else and cause damages to certain persons, which can lead to complicated crises as a result of the publication of conflicting and untrue information. Hacking is the main risk of digital diplomacy because many leaders have been its victims, that in many cases has even threatened their career. Diplomatic rivals, state and non-state actors, through cyber attacks intend to extract information that serve them to achieve their goals. Technological advances will continue and the process of digitization is going to progress even more. Digitization and cybercrime are inseparable, but this fact does not deny the importance and the role of the benefits of digital diplomacy. If benefits and risks of digital diplomacy would be placed in scale, the benefits will raised up, arguing enough that digital diplomacy is not harmful, rather it is quite helpful. International subjects, states or international organizations of all kinds, if they hesitate to approve digital diplomacy is only because of the lack of preparedness and capacity to combat its risks. Therefore, digital diplomacy, as a product of the soft power of the twenty-first century, should be combined with smart power, which means maximum utilization of the benefits of digitization and empowering protection policies against various threats arising from ICT, the internet and social media because there is no escape from digitization.

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