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# Approach to Digital Diplomacy and International Relations

## ***Introduction:***

*Digital diplomacy has emerged as one of the most influential phenomena in international relations with the increasing spread of social networks and their heavy use globally. It has left multiple impacts, dividing opinions and theoretical literature, which sparked theoretical debate about its role in international relations between supporters and opponents. One side views digital diplomacy as an element of a state's soft power, aiming to achieve its foreign policy objectives, maintain its national security, build its image, and enhance its soft power. Conversely, others view digital diplomacy as a means of intervention, conflicts, wars, and hegemony among states, and even as a means of "cyber wars."*

## ***Problem of the Study:***

The problem of the study lies in trying to uncover the nature of digital diplomacy, its objectives, and its role in the field of international relations, as well as the most important dimensions of the theoretical debate about the nature of this role. Therefore, the study poses a main question about how digital diplomacy is used in managing international relations and the nature of the role it plays in international relations, as well as the most important dimensions of the theoretical debate about the nature of this role.

## ***Objectives of the Study:***

The study aims to research and analyze the theoretical basis of the concept of "digital diplomacy" and its most important objectives, as well as the reasons for the growing role on the international and global level, and its various effects on international relations. It also aims to research the most important opportunities and limitations that have resulted from the growing use of digital diplomacy.

## ***Research Questions:***

From the main question of the study branch several subsidiary questions:

- A- What is the conceptual framework for digital diplomacy and what are the reasons for its spread globally?
- B- How has digital diplomacy affected international relations and what is its relationship to national security?
- C- What are the most important opportunities and limitations that digital diplomacy has posed in international relations?
- D- How can a more influential and effective Arab digital diplomacy be developed?

## ***Research Methodology:***

This study can be classified as one of the interdisciplinary studies; Therefore, the study will rely on the integrated analytical approach (exceeding specialization), by using readings



and literature on international relations and international political media equally, in order to achieve a holistic view of the nature of digital diplomacy in international relations.

***Study timeframe:***

*The study includes the following main axes:*

***A- The conceptual framework for digital diplomacy and the reasons for its global spread.***

***B- The effects of digital diplomacy on the international level and its relationship to national security.***

***C- Digital diplomacy between opportunities and limitations.***

***D- Study results and a proposal to develop a more influential and effective Arab digital diplomacy.***

***Firstly: Conceptual Framework of Digital Diplomacy and Reasons for its Global Spread:***

***1. The Concept of Digital Diplomacy***

Digital diplomacy is a form of new diplomacy that utilizes the internet, information and communication technologies, and social media as a means to enhance diplomatic relations. It relies on accessing a vast amount of information and increased interaction among individuals, organizations, and states. Websites developed by foreign ministries, embassies, and delegations of international organizations aim to explain and document their national foreign policies, refute unacceptable actions or demands from other states. This global embrace of online channels has brought an unprecedented wave of openness. Social media provides an unconditional communication platform and has become the strongest communication tool through a wide range of international social media channels.

Digital diplomacy represents a conceptual shift in diplomatic practice that emphasizes speaking to the global populations, a cultural shift that requires the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to share information rather than protect it, and it is also a reflection of the technological shift that requires diplomats to develop digital skills ranging from literacy of social media to writing computer programs and smartphone applications.

Digital diplomacy, in its simplest definitions, refers to the use of the internet and information and communication technologies to assist in the implementation of diplomatic objectives. It also expresses the process of harnessing the internet

and modern communication technologies to communicate with foreign audiences with the aim of creating an enabling environment for a country's foreign policy. Information is converted into digital form, enabling diplomats to employ it, retain it, coordinate with other branches of government, and use these means to continue to fulfill the oversight and guidance role of international policy across the government even when bureaucratic circles become increasingly digitized. E-diplomacy enables diplomats to communicate with their own people and foreign populations, listen to them, and engage in dialogue with them <sup>(1)</sup>.

In this context, some literature has indicated that digital diplomacy is "the positive and negative impact of digitization on the practice of diplomacy at both the institutional and personal levels" <sup>(2)</sup>, while others have indicated that digital diplomacy reflects the ways in which international actors - usually states - use digital platforms to achieve policy outcomes. It expresses the trend of diplomacy towards information and communication technologies to achieve goals, going beyond traditional diplomacy <sup>(3)</sup>.

While some have indicated that digital diplomacy expresses the increasing use of social media platforms by any country in order to achieve its foreign policy objectives and proactively manage its image and reputation, they have pointed out that digital diplomacy exists at two levels: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomacy of embassies around the world. By working at these two levels, countries can design foreign policy messages and national brands with the unique characteristics of local audiences in terms of history, culture, values, and traditions, thus facilitating the acceptance of their foreign policy and the image they aim to promote <sup>(4)</sup>.

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office introduces another dimension of digital diplomacy. Digital diplomacy works to solve foreign policy problems using the internet: "It is traditional diplomacy through a different medium" <sup>(5)</sup>.

According to the definition of the Diplo Foundation - a specialized institution in the relationship between traditional and digital diplomacy - digital diplomacy "describes new methods and ways of conducting diplomacy with the help of the internet and information and communication technologies." Recently, diplomats and political leaders have begun to realize the ways in which they can use the popularity of technology in this digital age to

strengthen international relations and ultimately achieve the interests of their countries (6).

While many previous definitions of digital diplomacy have emphasized its role as an extension of traditional diplomacy with different tools, some broader definitions have emerged that recognize the inclusion of additional actors. Digital diplomacy has evolved beyond the realm of interactions solely between official entities (states and their representatives) to encompass interactions between official entities and the general public.

Digital diplomacy bridges the gap between formal and informal channels, mirroring the parallel developments in international relations and the emergence of new non-state actors. It has also given rise to new levels of analysis within the field of international relations, grounded in the perspectives of individuals and communities. These new actors, whether directly or indirectly, influence decision-makers in ways that align with the goals and priorities of a state's foreign policy. This is particularly evident in the use of social media platforms by political leaders in addressing populations.

There is another important dimension of digital diplomacy that can also be discerned through reviewing previous definitions, which relates to the nature of the diplomatic message itself. These messages have become more comprehensive and inclusive, encompassing a broader range of economic, social, and political issues. This shift reflects the transformation of the international landscape towards globalization, a phenomenon that digital diplomacy has helped to amplify on a popular scale.

The global agenda has expanded to include a wider array of economic, political, and humanitarian issues, such as interdependence, environmental concerns, human rights, healthcare, and pandemics, etc. An example of this is the European Union, which has linked digital diplomacy with cultural diplomacy, aiming to provide access to European cultural content and develop new interactive ways to engage with the global audience. The Union aims to use digital diplomacy to facilitate access to its diverse cultures worldwide and promote cooperation between cultures. Therefore, in recent years, the European Union has developed digital platforms to preserve and develop European cultural heritage. (7).

Regarding the nature of the diplomatic message, we also see the transition of digital diplomacy from

closed diplomacy to what some literature terms as open diplomacy. What used to be secretive diplomatic tasks that did not concern public opinion have now become open diplomacy seeking to share rather than protect information.

Digital diplomacy can be defined as “activities carried out by diplomatic entities within countries, utilizing social media and internet platforms to achieve the state's foreign policy objectives, enhance its image and reputation, and strengthen communication with the targeted public.”(8).

Based on the aforementioned definitions of digital diplomacy, it can be observed that digital diplomacy has added entirely new dimensions and objectives to traditional diplomacy. It has introduced new objectives centered around a crucial dimension, which is influencing and integrating populations and public opinion as the targeted audience for this influence. Moreover, it aims to promote the image of the state through the internet and social media platforms, whereas traditional diplomacy primarily focused on official intergovernmental communication, which aligns with broader diplomatic objectives. Digital diplomacy also aims to address populations and public opinion through their parties and informal formations, distinguishing it from “official diplomacy” concerned solely with governments or what is referred to as “elite diplomacy.”

***In this regard, the most important objectives of digital diplomacy are:***

- Achieving national interests abroad.
- Maintaining communication with the public and harnessing new communication tools to listen to and target specific messages to the public.
- Assisting in information management for better policy-making.
- Establishing direct personal communication channels with citizens traveling abroad, with controllable communications in crisis situations.
- Harnessing the power of communication technologies in disaster response scenarios.
- Innovating technologies to keep the internet free and open to enhance freedom of expression and democracy.
- Creating digital mechanisms to benefit from external expertise and harness it to achieve national goals.



- Allowing effective monitoring, coordination, and planning of international policy through governments (9).

## ***2- The rise of digital diplomacy and reasons for its global spread:***

The United States of America is considered the hub from which digital diplomacy emerged globally. The U.S. State Department has spearheaded digital diplomacy, referred to as “21st-century diplomacy,” using new techniques to engage a growing and evolving group of stakeholders worldwide. According to the U.S. State Department, the governance agenda of the 21st-century state introduces new forces pushing for changes in international relations by reshaping diplomatic agendas to address old challenges in new ways. This is governance of the state in the 21st century - complementing traditional foreign policy tools with innovative and adaptable governance tools that fully benefit from our interconnected world’s technologies (10).

Therefore, The U.S. State Department was the first State Department to establish a dedicated diplomacy unit, also creating the Office of E-Diplomacy, formerly known as the E-Diplomacy Task Force, in 2002. Since then, this unit has grown to encompass over 150 full-time employees across 25 different offices, nearly half of whom are dedicated to E-Diplomacy work. The establishment of this office aimed to overcome knowledge barriers highlighted by the September 11, 2001 attacks and to enhance the State Department’s ability to communicate and exchange knowledge. Additionally, the State Department has an internal version of Wikipedia called (Diplopedia), and a Facebook equivalent named (Corridor), with over 6,500 members (11).

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office also played a leading role in practicing and developing digital diplomacy, influenced by Ambassador (Tom Fletcher) in Lebanon, who pioneered diplomatic use of social media, earning him the nickname “Twiplomat.” (12).

Furthermore, in Canada in 2014, former Foreign Minister “John Baird” made efforts to engage Canadian leaders and practitioners online, mentioning in his speech to the Global Internet Governance Forum in November 2014 that over 290 new social media accounts had been created for missions abroad and departments since January of that year. (13).

It also appears that India is leading the way in the digital realm, heavily investing in expanding its internet reach despite resource constraints. Indian diplomacy formally entered the digital sphere when the Ministry of External Affairs published its first tweet in 2010. Twitter was also used effectively to facilitate the successful evacuation of over 18,000 Indian citizens from Libya during the civil war in 2011. Recently, Indian Prime Minister “Narendra Modi” urged his ambassadors to “shed old mindsets and stay ahead on the curve of digital diplomacy.” India is experimenting with various methods to reach and engage both national and international audiences through mobile applications and live video broadcasts on social media platforms (14).

In Africa, more foreign ministries are adopting the internet and social media as tools to achieve foreign policy objectives. According to a report from the International Telecommunication Union in 2013, Africa was the fastest-growing region in this field, with a cumulative annual growth rate of 82% between 2010 and 2013. However, the proportion of African countries significantly enhancing their digital diplomatic capabilities remains low. A study by (Twiplomacy) in 2020 revealed that many African leaders have few accounts on Facebook or Twitter (15).

The rise of digital diplomacy worldwide has been primarily associated with major global powers such as the United States, the European Union, Britain, Canada, and Russia, emphasizing that possessing influence and economic power is linked to knowledge and technology, and thus the ability to exert influence.

Regarding the analysis of the spread of digital diplomacy as a global phenomenon, it has been closely associated with several phenomena, notably the Arab revolutions. Despite being a regional phenomenon in the Arab world, these revolutions constituted the origin of digital diplomacy on a global scale. The revolutions that swept through the Arab region since 2010, leading to the fall of presidents in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, were pivotal events in the history of digital diplomacy. Social media platforms emerged as public opinion platforms for the people, prompting foreign ministries, embassies, and diplomats at that time to realize that real-world events were shaping online.

However, another perspective suggests that the use of digital tools in diplomacy began earlier than

the Arab revolutions, specifically around 2008. The internet was responsible for approximately 80% of youth recruitment in Islamist militant movements. Recognizing the necessity to counter Al-Qaeda's recruitment methods and narratives online, the former U.S. Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, during President "Bush" 's administration, launched the State Department's migration initiative to Facebook. This initiative included the establishment of an administrative blog and a digital communication team tasked with combating Al-Qaeda's online youth recruitment <sup>(16)</sup>.

Furthermore, the emergence of digital diplomacy was also closely linked to the WikiLeaks scandal of 2010, where WikiLeaks published about 250,000 diplomatic cables exchanged between U.S. missions and Washington. Some argue that WikiLeaks was the primary reason governments adopted digital diplomacy, rather than the Arab Spring <sup>(17)</sup>.

The last factor that drove diplomats to adopt digital tools was the realization that journalists and news institutions were utilizing them. As media entered the digital realm, it paved the way for digital diplomacy, where diplomats have long sought to influence how events are portrayed in the media, recognizing that media shapes public opinion and even perceptions of nations.

All of this led to the development of social media usage by foreign ministries and embassies, prompting diplomats of all levels to receive digital training. Data began being used to gauge public opinion in foreign countries, while diplomats continued to experiment with new technologies. This resulted in redesigned departments and altered work routines, fostering a new mindset that understands the need for faster, more transparent diplomacy and communication. Consequently, digital diplomacy emerged and spread <sup>(18)</sup>.

***Secondly, the impacts of digital diplomacy on the international level and its relationship with national security:***

***1. Digital Diplomacy and its Global Impacts:***

Undoubtedly, the escalating connection between technology and politics plays a role in generating profound repercussions on international and global political dynamics, increasing links between local and transnational interactions, and influencing the future trajectory of global society <sup>(19)</sup>.

Digital diplomacy, as evident from its definition, objectives, and content, has become a significant channel of influence in the electronic space within international relations, impacting both content, actors, and issues. It has contributed to the prominence of new non-traditional issues on the international agenda, introducing cultural and moral dimensions to governmental messages aimed at populations. This is due to its expansive cross-border influence, increasing the number of actors in the digital space beyond traditional state-to-state relations. Moreover, it has elevated the role of individuals, populations, and global public opinion in shaping public policies in international relations, fostering mutual reliance between nations and communities, and empowering global public opinion to influence international relations.

On the other hand, digital diplomacy opens avenues for informal cultural exchange via social media, linking digital diplomacy with cultural diplomacy. This opens opportunities for multiple cultures to enhance their soft power globally and increase their presence in the global public sphere. This connection with cultural dimensions has gained increasing attention since the end of the Cold War and amidst globalization, potentially benefiting economically weaker entities within the international and national systems.

***2- Digital diplomacy's relationship to national security:***

The concept of national security includes the actions through which a society seeks to preserve its right to survival. In broader terms, it represents the comprehensive strength of a state politically, socially, economically, technologically, and more, enabling the state to achieve several key objectives, including securing its existence, maintaining security and political stability, and confronting internal or external risks, challenges, or threats <sup>(20)</sup>.

Therefore, within the context defined above for national security, digital diplomacy is considered one of the state's most important tools in seeking to achieve stability and national security through its diplomatic influence on digital platforms. This enhances its capacity for international and domestic influence, promoting both its domestic and foreign policies, gaining international and domestic support on various issues to ensure stability and confront any threats to its national security. Digital diplomacy also promotes transparency and openness, serving



the interests of national security through a culture of information exchange and analysis of pressures faced by political systems and presenting them to the public.

Just as the concept of national security has expanded to include more comprehensive dimensions and issues beyond the traditional focus solely on military security, such as food security, water security, cyber security, and others, the tools for achieving national security have also broadened to include new instruments of soft power alongside traditional hard power, with digital diplomacy being among the most significant tools.

### ***Thirdly: Digital Diplomacy Between Opportunities and Constraints:***

The growing role of digital diplomacy has sparked theoretical debates about its nature and role in the world of international relations, dividing scholarly opinions between proponents and opponents:

#### ***1- Opportunities associated with the use of digital diplomacy:***

Supporters of this approach draw on a cooperative vision of international relations, as reflected in the views of new liberal currents that see digital diplomacy playing a significant role in enhancing international relations. The era of globalization is characterized by increased and intensified political, economic, and cultural interactions beyond regional boundaries, involving numerous international actors.

“Nicholas Westcott”, a British diplomat, discusses how new dynamics of digital diplomacy impact foreign policy-making in four areas: service delivery by enabling foreign ministries and embassies to use the internet, more effectively providing public services to citizens, the realm of ideas where ideas are crucial in foreign policy, and the internet has provided active means for idea exchange, networks where policy practitioners need full awareness of sites discussing their countries’ issues and seek ways to engage, and finally, information where reliable information is at the heart of policy-making, and digital diplomacy has doubled sources of information, in addition to involving more active parties; this has widened the scope of information exchange and analysis<sup>(21)</sup>.

Many believe that social media, for digital diplomats, is more than just a communication tool; sometimes, it serves as a window to achieve what seemed challenging in traditional diplomacy. Digital diplomacy has managed to achieve rapid and

effective communication through rapid collection and processing of diplomatic activity-related information, as well as quick communications during urgent situations. It enables governments to instantly take measures in response to events across different parts of the world, especially during crises. Furthermore, digital diplomacy has fostered convergence and interaction among countries, officials, and global audiences, attracting more politicians and diplomats worldwide alongside citizens from all corners of the globe.

Social media platforms, blogs, and other social networking sites have empowered diplomats to monitor events, gather information, and identify influential factors. They provide channels for direct public engagement by assisting in consultation processes, policy formulation, and idea exchange. Consequently, they enhance multi-directional communication between diplomats and the general public, enabling various stakeholders to participate in diplomatic policies and operations. Some describe digital diplomacy as “democratizing diplomacy,” meaning it has made diplomacy more democratic by allowing more individuals and populations to participate in it. This has increased the capacity of non-governmental actors to engage in policy discussions, influence outcomes, and penetrate diplomatic spheres<sup>(22)</sup>.

Digital diplomacy also contributes to shaping a state’s image abroad and promoting it as a national brand. Digital tools have proven to be a powerful means for national branding. Therefore, other foreign ministries utilize social media to distinguish their countries. In the era of social media, self-portraits are known as selfies, and the concept of a national brand based on social media can be envisioned as “selfie diplomacy.”<sup>(23)</sup>

#### ***2- Restrictions associated with the use of digital diplomacy:***

Another perspective emerges in the second trend of debate, represented by the views of realist currents stemming from a conflict-oriented vision of international relations. Their arguments are summarized in the assertion made by “Alec Ross”, former senior advisor to U.S. Secretary of State “Hillary Clinton”, that “the twenty-first century is a suitable time for you, if you are obsessed with control.”

While digital technologies promise significant long-term changes, they appear to others to pose

serious challenges. The public ridicule on digital diplomatic platforms is increasing, along with the spread of social distrust and misinformation. These challenges have shaped governmental and non-governmental positions regarding the consequences of digital technologies (24).

Considering what is termed the “dark side” expansion of digital diplomacy, another critical perspective suggests that this type of diplomacy could pose greater risks to the global system. A single tweet from an official could negatively impact a country’s foreign policies and lead to severe consequences. Therefore, the use of such diplomacy requires professional training for officials and diplomats on how to use these technological techniques effectively (25).

On the other hand, social media platforms carry a lot of rumors and misinformation that shape public opinion, thereby influencing policies. Officials are subjected to various pressures, insults, and messages of threats, necessitating collaboration between foreign ministries, diplomats, and civil society to enhance global discussions on digital ethics (26).

In this regard, Facebook has faced the harshest criticism in its history regarding its handling of users’ data in a scandal known as “Cambridge Analytica Data”. This company, known for data analysis, worked with former U.S. President Donald Trump and his election campaign, as well as the Brexit campaign. The company has taken millions of users’ data and used it to build a software program for forecasting. Influencing the 2016 United States presidential election, Cambridge Analytica obtained information in more than 87 million users without their knowledge (27).

Moreover, hacking is considered one of the most significant dangers and challenges facing the digital world, turning many cyber optimists into pessimists. It remains the primary threat to digital diplomacy, with many heads of states, governments, and diplomats around the world were their victims (28).

Digital diplomacy also presents some technical challenges, foremost among them are bot programs: computer programs designed to mimic internet users and disseminate comments and opinions using bots. This allows a country to influence social media discourse in another country. For example, it was alleged that Russia used bots to create a swarm of online criticism against German Chancellor Angela Merke (29).

Another negative aspect of digital diplomacy relates to the analysis of data and opinions of citizens by governments and foreign ministries, which is an integral part of foreign policy-making in the digital age. Just as financial companies benefit from social media platforms, It’s the same when governments use data posted on social media (30).

#### ***Fourthly: The Results of the Study and a Proposal for More Effective Arab Digital Diplomacy Development***

##### ***1-The most powerful findings of the research***

- Despite the variation in definitions of digital diplomacy among experts and analysts, the study identified the main sides of the concept. Digital diplomacy is a complex phenomenon that involves not only a change in the tools used, adopting new digital technological tools, but also broadening the concept to include other active entities beyond official states and bodies. These entities primarily aim to address the public. Additionally, the diplomatic message itself has become broader to encompass numerous economic, social, and political issues. Moreover, digital diplomacy has transitioned from closed diplomacy to open diplomacy.
- Digital diplomacy has introduced new goals to traditional diplomacy revolving around a significant dimension: influence and integrating the population and public opinion as a target audience for this influence. The emergence and escalating role of digital diplomacy are associated with several international events, most notably WikiLeaks, terrorist actions through online platforms, the Arab uprisings, and the rise of international media presence on the internet.
- Regarding the impact of digital diplomacy on the nature of the global system and international relations, digital diplomacy has contributed to the emergence of new non-traditional issues on the international agenda. It has also summoned cultural and ethical dimensions to the content of government messages aimed at populations, due to the broad-reaching impact that transcends borders. Additionally, the increase in actors in the online space has given rise to a role for global opinion in influencing international relations, and has bolstered the power of populations to exert influence.



- The debate surrounding the various perspectives on the nature of digital diplomacy's role in international relations can be categorized into two main directions: one supports the role of digital diplomacy in international relations, stemming from a cooperative vision of international relations and evident in the opinions of new liberal currents. Conversely, the other direction rejects and doubts the role of digital diplomacy in international relations.

### ***2-Proposal for a more impactful and effective Arabic digital diplomacy development:***

Developing an effective and influential Arab digital diplomacy that can make a difference, attract attention, and even set the agenda on the international stage is crucial in the areas of political, economic, social, cultural, and civilizational influence. While this may require a separate study, this analysis will attempt to shed light on the key aspects of developing a more effective Arab digital diplomacy.

According to the criteria used by the Digital Diplomacy Ranking Model for Foreign Ministries<sup>(31)</sup>, there are four fundamental criteria that Arab institutions, concerned with foreign affairs and policies, should focus on to enhance the efficiency of their digital diplomacy, which currently ranks low in international digital diplomacy rankings.

#### ***A. Presence on Social Media Platforms:***

This criterion refers to the extent and diversity of the digital presence and existence of Arab diplomacy on online platforms in general, particularly focusing on widely-used social networks (such as Facebook and Twitter), across different languages.

#### ***B. Level of Engagement:***

This criterion measures the level of interaction with the targeted audience (Arabic and global) through Arabic digital diplomacy. It can be determined by the level of participation in page follow-up and include the number of followers. Increased interaction and followership contribute to broader dissemination, linked closely with the attractiveness and impactful nature of the content provided in various languages.

#### ***C. Adaptability***

This criterion emphasizes the necessity for Arab digital diplomacy to keep pace with the

latest developments in the digital field, thereby enhancing its ability to influence and engage.

#### ***D. Specialization***

This criterion refers to mapping out issues of interest, with specific criteria for this map to make it more impactful and appealing to the audience. These issues expand to include not only political or economic matters but also social, sports, arts, aspects related to Arab customs and traditions, tourism, ethics, values, beliefs, religion, Arab fashion, Arabic cuisine, and more. This attractive content map aims to attract a larger number of followers.

Therefore, it is essential to develop strategic Arab plans to activate digital diplomacy, making it more effective and influential on the international level. This approach should enable Arab digital diplomacy to keep up with international digital diplomacy and bring Arab issues to the global agenda, particularly the Palestinian cause.

Consequently, activating an institutional framework for Egyptian digital diplomacy capable of influencing and promoting Egyptian visions at local, regional, and international levels involves addressing Arab and global populations through compelling and impactful media discourse. This discourse should encompass a diverse range of issues, not limited to political and economic ones (such as tourism, health, education, history, sports, authentic Egyptian customs and traditions, etc.).

This initiative involves dedicating several social media pages to attract youth, who are the most active users of social networking sites. It also includes training young cadres responsible for managing these pages. Such efforts would significantly impact the robust presentation of Egyptian policies across all levels and thereby garner direct support for these policies locally, regionally, and internationally.

Moreover, this approach enhances Egypt's ability to confront internal or external risks, challenges, or threats the country faces, thereby ensuring its stability and ability to confront any threats to its national security. Egyptian digital diplomacy also fosters transparency and openness, serving Egyptian national security interests through a culture of information exchange and analysis of internal and external pressures affecting the Egyptian political system, presenting these insights to the public.



### Conclusion:

*Digital diplomacy is one of the important new tools used in managing international relations. It has added new goals to traditional diplomacy, focusing significantly on influence and integrating populations and public opinion as targeted audiences for this influence. It promotes the country's image through the internet and social media.*

*Its emergence is closely tied to significant events, notably the Arab revolutions, and the rise of social media's impact on public opinion. Regarding the nature of digital diplomacy in international relations, it is evident that digital diplomacy is not only used to enhance international communication and openness to the outside world, providing spaces for interaction within the international system. It is also utilized as an advanced technological tool in a country's foreign policy, serving as a tool for intervention, conflict management, wars, political and economic domination, shaping global agendas, and even reshaping mental images.*

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## Approach to Digital Diplomacy and International Relations

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### Abstract:

The study seeks to reveal the nature of digital diplomacy as an important phenomenon that has presented itself on the global scene, as well as its objectives and the reasons for its spread at the global level, and introduce an analysis of its role in international relations by reviewing the most important opportunities and constraints that it has presented in the world of international relations. The study also attempts to present a set of Important elements for developing a more effective and influential digital diplomacy.

**Keywords:** Digital Diplomacy, International relations, National security

## مقاربة للدبلوماسية الرقمية والعلاقات الدولية

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دكتوراه الفلسفة في العلوم السياسية

باحث متخصص في العلاقات الدولية

### المستخلص:

تسعى الدراسة إلى محاولة الكشف عن ماهية الدبلوماسية الرقمية كإحدى أهم الظواهر المؤثرة في العلاقات الدولية والتي أصبحت تمارس أدوارها على أكثر من مستوى، سواء على مستوى التفاعلات الدولية، أو مستوى التفاعلات التنظيمية، أو مستوى السياسة الخارجية، حيث مكنت الفواعل سواء من الدول أو من غير الدول من مخاطبة الملايين عبر هذا الفضاء اللامحدود، كذلك تحاول الدراسة الوقوف على أهداف الدبلوماسية الرقمية وأسباب انتشارها على الصعيد العالمي، وتحليل دورها في العلاقات الدولية من خلال استعراض أهم الفرص والقيود التي طرحتها في عالم العلاقات الدولية، كما تحاول الدراسة طرح مجموعة من العناصر المهمة لتنمية دبلوماسية رقمية أكثر فاعلية وتأثيراً.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الدبلوماسية الرقمية، العلاقات الدولية، الأمن القومي