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The Politics of Digital Voice: International Organizations in The Age of Social Media

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Abstract

Digital diplomacy refers to the use of digital platforms, particularly social media, to extend traditional diplomatic practices into the online sphere. States, international organizations, and diplomats use platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok to communicate directly with global audiences, making diplomacy faster, more transparent, and more engaging. “Twitter diplomacy” (Twiplomacy) exemplifies this trend, with 98% of UN member states maintaining official accounts. The UN itself has employed social media extensively, as shown in analyses of thousands of tweets from the Secretary-General’s accounts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital diplomacy proved vital in addressing the “infodemic,” as WHO and the UN collaborated with tech companies and launched initiatives like EPI-WIN and “Verified” to combat misinformation. Yet challenges persist, including disinformation, cybersecurity risks, digital inequality, and gender gaps in visibility, where female diplomats receive significantly fewer retweets. Still, digital voice remains a powerful tool of soft power, mobilization, and global influence.

Keywords: Digital diplomacy, Twitter diplomacy (Twiplomacy), misinformation & infodemic, soft power, global communication