

## **Media Diplomacy in the Age of Social Networks towards a Conceptual Framework for Understanding Diplomatic Cyber Engagement**

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**Abstract :** This study addresses media diplomacy as an integral component of public diplomacy which emerged in the United States in the post-World War II era and found applications in other countries around the world. The study seeks to evolve a conceptual framework for understanding the practice of public diplomacy through social networks, often referred to as social engagement diplomacy. This form of diplomacy is considered far more ahead of the other two forms associated with both government controlled and independent media. The cases of the Voice of America Arabic Service and the 1977 CBS interviews with the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin are cited in this study as reflecting the two traditional models. The new social engagement model sees public diplomacy as an act of communication that seeks to effect changes in target audiences through a process of persuasion shaped by discourse orientations and technological features. The proposed conceptual framework for social, diplomatic engagement draws on an open communication environment, an empowered audience, an interactive and symmetrical process of communication, multimedia-based flows of information, direct and credible feedback, distortion and high risk. The writer believes this study would be helpful in providing appropriate knowledge pertaining to our understanding of social diplomacy and furnishing concrete insights into how diplomats could harness virtual space to maximize their goals in the global environment.

**Keywords :** diplomacy, engagement, social, globalization

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