

## **OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION\*\***

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**D**ue to changes of international situation in 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> century diplomatic activities and styles undergone great changes. Diplomatic career which was regarded as faith of aristocrats became public service thanks to arrival of a new bright talents from every strata of society in late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Once unrevealed, secret service turned to be more open and transparent. Diplomacy is becoming more open for public at large i.e. women, religious persons and human rights activities besides professional diplomats. This is called public diplomacy in modern terms. Influence of public in creating and carrying out foreign policy is increasing.

It is regarded that national unity is a firm ground for stable foreign policy which is highly valued by foreign partners. Therefore most ministries of Foreign Affairs established departments to deal with mass media public opinion. More representatives from religious groups, trade unions and other social movements are involved in tailoring strategic policy of a state in era of globalization. Number of participants in diplomatic activities are increasing so is the scope of it.

Track two diplomacy is designed to deal with social, economic and cultural issues of a state. In such circumstances mechanism of dialogue between diplomatic service and civil society is much needed. It provides public with clear understanding of what country is facing, activities of foreign affairs and long term targets.

On the other side it creates basis for exchanging views and defining common grounds. Diplomatic activities could be defined as:

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- traditional or classical
- public or unofficial

Classical diplomacy is traditionally carried behind closed doors. It is obvious that bilateral or multilateral issues are kept in top secrecy.

Nowdays diplomatic activities are no longer completely secrets. Public diplomacy requires transparency and flexibility. Public diplomacy has several significances.

Firstly, it is open,

Secondly, it feeds public with information at the same time monitoring foreign policy and influencing on it,

Thirdly, it is an instrument of popularizing and main methods of public diplomacy are mass media, cultural and educational exchanges. Foreign policy of a country are supported by TV and radio broadcasting, newspaper reports, open talks, cultural and sport activities.

Let us see it on example of the Russian diplomatic activities. The Russian foreign policy could be delivered into three parts. These are:

- Tsarist Russian foreign policy
- The Soviet era
- The Russian Federation

In Tsarist Russia orthodox religion is prevailed combined with monarchy rule. In the Soviet era foreign policy of the country was closed, ideologized and monopolized by the state. In such circumstances there was not much talk about public diplomacy.

Foreign policy of Russian Federation is designed to protect national interest, to secure economic independency, to elevate standard of living and protect interests of the Russian nationalities abroad. Since 1990 Russia has eliminated foreign trade monopoly and aimed at increasing human contacts as well as cultural and scientific exchanges.

Since the establishment of the Russian Federation the country adopted foreign policy concept and military doctrine in which aspects of public diplomacy has got concrete coverage. Russia is pursuing multi polar foreign policy. It is quite obvious that building democracy and establishing market oriented economic system is going take some time.

Russia became member of internationally recognized institutions in order to strengthen its position. Thanks to open policy of Russia role of local and business entities are increasing as well as other representatives of civil society. Russia is paying much more attention to spreading Russian language and culture.

It is officially recognized that fruitful cooperation between diplomatic service and renewed public organizations is very important. It is known that religion has played significant role in foreign policy of Russia since ancient time. Once Churches fulfilled a role of diplomatic missions. Role of churches are increasing in building secure, peaceful state. Much could be said about churches in preserving and preventing local conflicts and crises. With this view in mind foreign Ministry Russia is working closely with orthodox church and muslims representatives.

Globalization opens new perspectives for Russia at the same time creating difficulties and hurdles. Therefore Russian pragmatic and realist policy will be supported by public diplomacy.

Structure of the Russian Foreign Ministry has undergone changes, namely several departments were set up dealing with public diplomacy.

These are:

- Department on humanitarian cooperation & human rights,
- Department of Culture and UNESCO,
- Department of Information Supply,
- Department of Relations with subjects of the Federation
- Department of political & public organizations ect.

Just to sum up the Russian public diplomacy is at embryo stage.