# Chapter 1
# Digital Media and Their Implications on Diplomatic Practices in the Fourth Industrial Revolution:
## A Global South Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

*This chapter explores the contemporary trends and debates on the use of digital media for diplomatic services and practices in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as 4IR, in the global south. The chapter emphases how digital diplomacy industrialized and evolved to be predominant during the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic as known as the COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter has been strengthened by the practice theory for digital diplomacy transformations. Most prominently, the chapter establishes that digital media platforms played a vital role in diplomatic relations practices for the development and social change in the global south countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the chapter suggests strategic solutions to prevent digital diplomacy challenges and highlights the future of digital diplomatic practices in the global south.*

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Diplomatic practice is a conventional service offered by diplomats and government officials that serve and oblige the well-being of their respective countries. This is especially true in the global south countries, where the diplomats and government officials would be afforded the highest responsibilities and roles to establish and report on their country's accreditation in the global community. Additionally, in the international relations and political sciences fields, this is called "diplomatic practice". Diplomatic practice is the patriotic amenity given to distinct people where they are entrusted with the responsibility to represent and participate in decision-making meetings on behalf of their countries. In this instance, the diplomats need to demonstrate sincere interest and patriotic spirit in the history, culture, politics, and major public discourses of the country to which they are accredited and desist from making a judgment on the behaviour and morals of its leaders and people (Shumba, 2020 & Zsubrinzky, 2020). In addition, diplomatic practice is usually viewed as a platform in which diplomats render services to strengthen their country's relations with other countries in the global sphere. This particular amenity should be rendered by faithful, and loyal people with high ethical and moral principles and behaviour who would not dilapidate their country's relations with other countries in the global domain. However, as much as these diplomats should adhere to the ethical principles of their operation, they are furthermore, expected to possess a philosophical intuition about the strategies and tactics that could be used to assist their respective countries to achieve their targeted national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the international level. In most cases, this is achieved through their participation in diplomatic decision-making meetings, conferences, and debates to register their presence, concerns, and standpoint on diplomatic international issues and affairs which as well affect their countries.

Erstwhile to the emergence of the internet and digital media platforms, the diplomatic practice was offered through traditional, face-to-face, or interpersonal communication, where diplomats would meet physically at a designated venue. Here, they would discuss crucial issues that affect their countries such as poverty eradication, socio-economic, education, and politics among other things. However, since the rise of the internet, new media technology, and digital media, there had been a pioneering transformation and modification in the way in which diplomatic services are rendered both local, national, continental, and global. As, Kurbalija (2017) indicated that digital diplomacy focuses on the interplay between the internet and diplomacy,

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