


Chapter 10

Digital Diplomacy in Kuwait's New Foreign Policy (2020–2024): Opportunities and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to highlight the impact of digital diplomacy on foreign policy by examining Kuwait's new foreign policy during the period (2020-2024) as a case study. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a rapid transition to digital governance, and the Gulf states demonstrated exceptional capability in organizing supply chains and ensuring food and medicine security, surpassing even the developed world. Kuwait played a prominent role in this digital transformation in its foreign policies, taking the initiative in coordinating among Gulf states, particularly during the ongoing dispute between Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain on the other. However, Kuwait faces numerous challenges in the realm of digital diplomacy, especially digital security. Responsibility for digital transformation in the State of Kuwait is divided into several institutions, including the Central Information Technology Authority, the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Autho

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-6074-3.ch010

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INTRODUCTION

Kuwait is one of the leading countries in adopting digital tools to enhance its foreign policy. The use of digital diplomacy in Kuwait is not merely a luxury but an essential part of its strategy to achieve international objectives and strengthen its position on the global stage. Digital diplomacy refers to the use of information and communication technologies, especially the internet and social media, to conduct diplomacy and communicate effectively with both domestic and international audiences. Kuwait uses digital diplomacy to improve its national image on the international level. Through the official accounts of embassies and consulates on social media platforms, Kuwait presents a modern and developed image of its culture and values. Content related to Kuwaiti history and culture is published, which enhances international understanding and appreciation of Kuwait as a country with a rich heritage and a promising future (Bjola & Holmes, 2015). The Kuwaiti diaspora abroad is one of the most important groups benefiting from digital diplomacy. Kuwaiti embassies and consulates provide vital information to citizens abroad through the internet, such as travel updates, consular guidance, and essential services. This effective communication ensures that Kuwaiti citizens are kept well-informed about their legal and administrative matters, enhancing their sense of security and support from their government.

Digital diplomacy is an effective tool for strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations. Through continuous digital communication with other countries and international community organizations, Kuwait can enhance cooperation and exchange information and expertise. This digital interaction helps build strong alliances and partnerships that contribute to achieving common goals (Manor, 2019). Digital diplomacy plays a pivotal role in managing international crises that may affect Kuwait or its citizens abroad. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kuwaiti government actively used social media platforms to provide necessary guidelines and warnings promptly. It also conducted the largest evacuation operation to bring its citizens back to Kuwait. Given Kuwait's interest in supporting humanitarian and developmental issues, such as its efforts in mediating conflicts and providing humanitarian aid, digital diplomacy will enhance these efforts by quickly communicating with affected and distressed individuals to provide assistance and deliver aid. This soft power contributes to enhancing Kuwait's status as an active and responsible country on the international stage (Nye, 2004).

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