

PEOPLE'S DIPLOMACY AS A MEANS OF INTERACTION WITH THE PUBLIC

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Abstract. This article examines the concept, structure and key mechanisms of people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan, which is relevant given the growing importance of establishing a dialogue with a wide audience.

The study clarifies the conceptual distinctions between people's, public, and citizen diplomacy and identifies the main actors involved, including government institutions, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, NGOs, and diasporas. Using system analysis and comparative analysis the study systematizes the main tools used by people's diplomacy.

Attention is focused on the implementation of people's diplomacy tools to promote Kazakhstan's national interests by fostering effective communication with the public both domestically and internationally. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening the practice of people's diplomacy as a strategic component of Kazakhstan's international communications and internal stability.

Keywords: *people's diplomacy, soft power, the public, the foreign policy of Kazakhstan, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, NGOs.*

ХАЛЫҚТЫҚ ДИПЛОМАТИЯ ҚОҒАММЕН ӨЗАРА ӘРЕКЕТТЕСУ ҚҰРАЛЫ РЕТІНДЕ

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Аңдатпа. Бұл мақалада Қазақстандағы халықтық дипломатияның түсінігі, құрылымы және негізгі тетіктері қарастырылады. Бұл кең аудиториямен диалог орнатудың маңыздылығының артуы тұрғысынан өзекті болып көрінеді.

Мақалада халықтық, жария және азаматтық дипломатия арасындағы тұжырымдамалық айырмашылықтар түсіндіріледі. Негізгі қатысушылар- мемлекеттік институттар, Қазақстан халқы Ассамблеясы, үкіметтік емес ұйымдар және диаспоралар айқындалады.

Жүйелік талдау және салыстырмалы талдау әдістерін қолдану арқылы халықтық дипломатияның негізгі құралдары жүйелендірілді. Мақалада аталған тетіктердің Қазақстанның ұлттық мүдделерін ілгерілетуге, ел ішінде және халықаралық деңгейде қоғамдық топтармен тиімді өзара іс-қимыл жасауға қалай бағытталатыны көрсетілген. Зерттеу нәтижелері халықтық дипломатияны Қазақстанның халықаралық коммуникациялары мен ішкі тұрақтылығының стратегиялық құрамдас бөлігі ретінде нығайтудың маңыздылығын айқындайды.

Түйін сөздер: *халықтық дипломатия, жұмсақ күш, қоғам, Қазақстанның сыртқы саясаты, Қазақстан халқы Ассамблеясы, ҰЕҰ.*

НАРОДНАЯ ДИПЛОМАТИЯ КАК СРЕДСТВО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ С ОБЩЕСТВЕННОСТЬЮ

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается понятие, структура и ключевые механизмы народной дипломатии в Казахстане, что представляется актуальным в свете растущей важности установления диалога с широкой аудиторией.

В работе разъясняются концептуальные различия между народной, публичной и гражданской дипломатией и определяются основные вовлеченные стороны, включая государственные институты, Ассамблею народа Казахстана, НПО и диаспоры. Используя системный анализ и сравнительный анализ в исследовании систематизированы основные инструменты, с помощью которых действует народная дипломатия.

Акцентируется внимание на реализации инструментов народной дипломатии для продвижения национальных интересов Казахстана посредством эффективного взаимодействия с общественностью в стране и за рубежом. Полученные результаты подчеркивают важность укрепления практики народной дипломатии как стратегического компонента международных коммуникаций Казахстана и внутренней стабильности.

Ключевые слова: *народная дипломатия, мягкая сила, общественность, внешняя политика Казахстана, Ассамблея народа Казахстана, НПО.*

Introduction

The modern system of international relations is undergoing significant changes under the influence of globalization, the rapid development of information and communication technologies and the growing role of non-state actors. These processes empower citizens to influence both the foreign and domestic policies of their countries. In response to these trends, many countries are developing various mechanisms for engaging with the public that extend beyond traditional state-centric diplomacy. One of these mechanisms is people's diplomacy, which is considered as a system of establishing direct relations with the peoples of different countries. Unlike other approaches in international relations, it is aimed at promoting the interests and initiatives of the people themselves [1]. People's diplomacy includes the activities of citizen diplomacy, as well as direct appeals from politicians and government agencies to the foreign public to convey their position [2].

The modern system of foreign policy is shaped not only by the efforts of States but also by the active involvement of broad segments of society. In this regard, the study of the role of people's diplomacy in global political processes and the analysis of its interaction with other actors are becoming particularly relevant.

The sphere of public relations has become an important part of the system of interstate relations. Despite the existing international contradictions, direct contacts between people and friendly relations between citizens of different countries play an important role, and the influence of people's diplomacy on the formation of foreign policy is becoming more noticeable and significant. This field covers the activities of non-governmental organizations, public associations, cultural and scientific institutions, diasporas, bloggers, scientists and cultural figures. The expansion of the circle of participants in international communications confirms that people's diplomacy is developing within the context of a democratic society. Given the growing role of the public in the global political process, the study of people's diplomacy mechanisms as a tool for interaction with society is becoming particularly relevant.

People's diplomacy in Kazakhstan has a special significance both inside and outside the country. In the years following independence, the country faced a critical task: to preserve social harmony in a state where representatives of more than 130 ethnic groups live. Kazakhstan built its policy based on the tools of the rule of law as well as long-standing traditions that predate modern institutions. For example, the Kazakh steppe culture, based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect, continues to transmit these values to the modern world. Accordingly, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK), established in 1995, became both a reflection of this philosophy and an important institution for strengthening national harmony and unity of the nation [3].

People's diplomacy serves as an effective means of interacting with the society and represents an important resource within Kazakhstan's modern foreign policy course. However, it should be noted that the global academic literature lacks sufficient theoretical clarity regarding the concept of people's diplomacy, its subjects and mechanisms. The terms of people's diplomacy and public diplomacy are often used interchangeably, which creates conceptual gaps and highlights the need to clarify the substantive boundaries of people's diplomacy as an independent phenomenon.

For Kazakhstan, people's diplomacy is an important part of the model of social

harmony and international humanitarian cooperation. The country has a unique experience of interethnic dialogue, institutionalized through the APK, active NGOs, cultural and educational initiatives. Nevertheless, the contribution of these institutions to the formation of external cultural and social dialogue has been examined only partially and predominantly in a descriptive manner.

Under these circumstances, the need for a comprehensive study of Kazakhstan's people's diplomacy and the systematization of its theoretical foundations, and an examination of its role in public engagement makes this topic relevant.

The purpose of this study is to identify the features, structure and mechanisms of people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan, as well as to analyze its potential as an effective means of interacting with the public. To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been solved within the framework of the scientific article:

1. the theoretical content of the concept of "people's diplomacy" and its distinction from other forms of diplomacy has been clarified.
2. the structures and subjects of people's diplomacy have been identified, including government institutions, non-governmental organizations, and diasporas.
3. the main mechanisms and tools of people's diplomacy used in Kazakhstan are systematized;
4. the prospects for the further development of people's diplomacy in the country have been outlined.

Literature review

Today, people's diplomacy is a highly relevant topic in interstate relations. People's diplomacy has become an integral part of the political process, and research in this field has expanded considerably, although it remains conceptually diverse. The term people's diplomacy is not new, yet its meaning has evolved. Most scholars agree that it reflects the essence of public diplomacy. Edmund Gullion introduced the term public diplomacy in 1965, defining it as communication aimed at influencing foreign public opinion. This definition is still widely recognized today [4]. Although E. Gallion is not the author of the term "people's diplomacy", his ideas about expanding the circle of participants in international communications laid the foundation for the later development of the concept.

Researchers such as Nicholas Cull [5], Joseph Nye [6], and Jan Melissen [7] emphasize the growing role of non-governmental actors, civil society organizations, diasporas, and cultural and educational institutions. J. Nye's concept of "soft power" further strengthened the theoretical foundations of people's diplomacy by highlighting cultural attraction, communication, and humanitarian exchanges as key tools.

In the post-Soviet academic discourse, researchers such as O. Gabrielyan [8] and T. Medvedeva [9] analyze the information and civil dimensions of people's diplomacy, emphasizing its importance for building trust, reducing conflict and developing interpersonal interaction. Their research highlights that people's diplomacy relies on building trust, interpersonal interaction, and bottom-up initiatives that complement the official diplomatic agenda.

Studies on Kazakhstan remain relatively limited, although several authors have explored the institutional and cultural aspects of people's diplomacy. Research

dedicated to the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, including the works of A. Sadvakasova [10] and analytical reports of APK, explore the Kazakh model of interethnic dialogue as a unique platform for promoting national unity and intercultural communication. These sources underscore the APK's contribution to strengthening social cohesion and promoting Kazakhstan's image abroad.

Government and policy documents such as Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy Concept [11], reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and publications from strategic institutes provide additional information about the country's efforts to integrate people's diplomacy with broader foreign policy goals. These materials highlight the importance of cultural diplomacy, youth exchange programs, interaction with the diaspora, and educational cooperation as key mechanisms of soft power.

Overall, the existing body of literature shows that, although the conceptual framework of people's diplomacy is well developed at the international level, scientific research focused on Kazakhstan remains fragmented. This highlights the need for a comprehensive review summarizing current approaches and practices of people's diplomacy in the country.

Research methods

The study's objectives were achieved through information and analytical work that aimed to collect, process, and analyze information. A systematic analysis was used to study the structure of people's diplomacy, identify key actors and mechanisms of their interaction. Comparative analysis to compare people's diplomacy with other types of diplomacy. SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used to assess the potential of Kazakhstan's people's diplomacy. A content analysis of the texts has been carried out, namely government statements, media publications, NGO reports and public activities aimed at promoting people's diplomacy. The key markers reflecting the main ideas and goals of people's diplomacy and the ways of its implementation were highlighted. The use of these methods makes it possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of Kazakhstan's people's diplomacy, identify its specifics and offer recommendations for further development.

Results and discussion

The modern system of international relations is characterized by an expanding range of actors involved in foreign policy processes, which has led to the emergence of new forms of diplomacy such as people's, public and citizen diplomacy. These forms are interrelated, but they differ in subjects, mechanisms, and objectives, which makes their comparative analysis relevant.

People's diplomacy influences public opinion on the formation and conduct of foreign policy. It is defined as a means of achieving state goals or promoting values in the international community through the participation of public associations, foundations and non-governmental organizations in international relations [4].

People's diplomacy complements traditional diplomacy by presenting a wide range of tools that make it possible to gain the loyalty of the target audience to achieve the country's foreign policy objectives. Its distinguishing feature is that actors may include not only diplomats, but also representatives of culture, science, education, mass media, NGOs, and others [7]. It has several advantages over traditional diplomacy, as it allows people to communicate more openly and sincerely than the

formal, regulated language of official diplomacy. The level of people's diplomacy development is undoubtedly an indicator of the democratic nature of a political system. Its effective implementation aims to humanize international relations and serves as a tool for the "soft power" of a state and its people in promoting their interests and strengthening their image and authority abroad [6].

People's diplomacy is often associated with public diplomacy, which is implemented by government institutions to promote a positive image of the country abroad [12]. The target audience of public diplomacy is the people of various countries. This sphere is state-driven and is viewed as a means of communicating national policy objectives to the international community. It means that both forms have the same audiences, the expected results are different [13]. For people's diplomacy, the key tool is to reduce conflict at the interstate and international levels. This means that the public must influence and adjust government policy, rejecting violent and hybrid forms of confrontation.

Citizen diplomacy is closely related to people's diplomacy, but it has a more proactive and activist nature. In academic literature, citizen diplomacy (Track II) is defined as a form of cross-border civil society activity aimed at solving social, environmental, and humanitarian problems [14]. It is implemented by individual citizens, NGOs, experts, volunteers, and social movements, and often focuses on specific tasks (human rights protection, environmental initiatives, and peacekeeping projects). Unlike people's diplomacy, which has a broad cultural focus, citizen diplomacy has a more targeted social impact.

In Kazakhstan, these two approaches are viewed differently. People's diplomacy is carried out through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cultural centers, the "Bolashak" program, and international broadcasting. People's diplomacy is implemented through the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, ethnocultural centers, international festivals and educational exchanges. Citizen diplomacy is promoted through NGOs, volunteer movements, environmental and social initiatives. Together, they form a single multi-layered architecture of external communications: the state defines strategic directions, society reinforces the cultural foundation, and civic initiatives expand their influence on the global agenda [15].

Thus, comparative analysis allowed distinguishing that the people's, public and citizen diplomacy have different tasks and mechanisms, but they are united by a common function such as strengthening international dialogue and building mutual trust. Their interaction allows the state and society to have a more complete and effective presence on the world stage.

People's diplomacy holds strategic importance in Kazakhstan. As it is shown in Table 1, its key instruments are cultural initiatives, educational programs, international exchanges, and NGO activities that promote the country's image, strengthen social capital, and expand international cooperation. Culture promotes the unification of people of different nationalities and ensures a positive attitude of the foreign audience; educational programs promote interaction with the public, and NGOs, in turn, help influence other countries and peoples through the exchange of ideas and activities.

Thus, it can be argued that people's diplomacy contributes to shaping positive public opinion through effective engagement with various public groups.

Table 1. Subjects and instruments of the implementation of people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan

Subjects	Functions	Tools	Examples of implemented initiatives
Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Promoting interethnic harmony ii. Coordination of the activities of ethnocultural associations. iii. Organization of public events aimed at strengthening the unity of the nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. International cooperation of the APK with other States. ii. Congresses, round tables and conferences. iii. Educational and scientific projects on interethnic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. International Forum "30 years of APK: Unity, Stability, Development". ii. Ethnocultural festivals and folk-art contests.
Government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Development and implementation of public policy in the field of people's diplomacy. ii. Financing and support of cultural, educational and international projects. iii. Kazakhstan's representation in the international arena. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan ii. Embassies and consulates. iii. Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. "Rukhani zhangyru" ii. Cooperation programs with UNESCO, the United Nations and the SCO iii. EXPO-2017
Non-governmental organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Participation in people's diplomacy, cultural and educational initiatives. ii. Creation of independent platforms for dialogue among different communities. iii. Organization of international events, youth exchanges and forums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Youth organizations ii. Centers of intercultural dialogue and educational foundations. iii. Independent media initiatives and research institutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. International Youth Forum "Open Kazakhstan". ii. "Kazakh-Turkish dialogue". iii. Youth exchange programs.
Diasporas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support of national identity abroad. ii. Development of international relations through cultural and educational projects. iii. Organization of events for compatriots abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support programs for Kazakh diasporas abroad ii. International festivals and days of Kazakh culture. iii. Online information platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The World Kazakh Kurultai is a platform for strengthening ties with compatriots abroad. ii. The Days of Culture of Kazakhstan Festival abroad

Source: authors

People's diplomacy of Kazakhstan represents a comprehensive system of interaction between government agencies, public organizations and diasporas, which is aimed at promoting national interests and creating a positive image of the country through effective communication with the public. This system is designed to shape positive public opinion about Kazakhstan through interaction with the broad segments of society [10].

According to the table, one of the main actors in the development of people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan is the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. The APK cooperates with organizations of the Kazakh diaspora and cultural centers of compatriots abroad. It actively promotes Kazakhstan's experience in the field of interethnic relations. Moreover, the APK cooperates with various international organizations such as the UN, OSCE, UNESCO, and others, thereby strengthening the role of the state as a model of ethnopolitical stability [15].

Another important group of actors consists of government agencies, which play an important role in the development of people's diplomacy in the country. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan coordinates international cultural, educational and public initiatives [16]. The Ministry of Culture and Information, in turn, is responsible for popularizing the national cultural heritage [17]. Initiatives such as "Rukhani Zhangyru" and other programs are being implemented in this context. The Foundation of the First President and the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies also provide analytical support, where concepts of international cooperation are being developed.

The activities of non-governmental organizations play an important role in the development of people's diplomacy. Representatives of civil society actively participate in people's diplomacy through NGO activities, various educational initiatives, as well as digital platforms.

The Kazakh diaspora abroad plays an important role in people's diplomacy. The "Otandastar Qory" Non-profit JSC implements projects to strengthen ties with Kazakh communities in various countries. Through ethnic media and cultural events, such as the Days of Culture of Kazakhstan Abroad, the foundation strives to promote the dissemination of Kazakh culture and identity, as well as create a positive image of Kazakhstan, thereby contributing to the development of public relations [11] [18].

Kazakhstan's people's diplomacy is implemented through various tools, which include international events, cultural initiatives, media relations, and educational programs. This can be seen in the example of the Expo-2017 exhibition and the G-Global project, which demonstrated the country's innovative potential. Cultural events, including ethnocultural festivals and concert performances by national theaters, contribute to the popularization of Kazakh traditions and contemporary art [19]. Media diplomacy is conducted through state-owned media (Kazinform, Khabar, etc.), as well as independent online platforms and blogs targeted at an international audience.

Educational initiatives, international youth exchange programs and academic partnership between Kazakhstan's universities help train specialists with international experience and strengthen scientific cooperation. These initiatives also contribute to the promotion of the Kazakh language and culture abroad. The introduction of Kazakh language courses for foreign students increased interest in the language and culture of Kazakhstan among foreign students and representatives of the Kazakh diaspora abroad.

Financial support for people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan is provided through various channels, including government subsidies, international grants and partnership programs. The country cooperates with organizations such as UNESCO, OSCE, TURKSOY, and others, to attract funding for cultural and educational

initiatives [20]. Government-funded institutions such as the “Otandastar Qory” Non-profit JSC, along with international donors such as the Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan, support projects aimed at promoting people’s diplomacy and developing cultural ties with other countries.

Thus, all these actors operate as a multi-level system and use a wide range of various instruments of people’s diplomacy. This, in turn, helps to establish and strengthen relationships both domestically and internationally. Through the active participation of state and public institutions, as well as through various platforms, Kazakhstan can effectively promote its national interests and create a positive image on the world stage. Moreover, all these efforts contribute to the development of stable intercultural relations, greater recognition of the national values and enhance mutual trust among people.

In scientific literature and public discourse, there is a lack of attention given to the development of people’s diplomacy, despite its significant potential to impact various aspects of public life. People’s diplomacy can contribute to building trust between nations, fostering cultural exchange, enhancing a country’s international image, and promoting economic growth through supporting entrepreneurship and attracting investment.

Below is a table presenting the strengths and weaknesses of people’s diplomacy in Kazakhstan, as well as its opportunities and threats in the context of public engagement:

Table 2. SWOT-analysis of the development of people’s diplomacy in Kazakhstan

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Diversity of subjects (APK, NGOs, diasporas, government agencies) 2. Humanitarian and cultural instruments 3. Sustainable institutions 4. Trust in informal channels	1. Lack of coordination between actors 2. Limited resources of NGOs and diasporas 3. Lack of consistency and feedback 4. Short-term projects
Opportunities	Threats
1. Development of digital people’s diplomacy 2. International partnership through diasporas 3. Attracting young people and volunteers 4. The growing interest in "soft power"	1. Politicization of initiatives 2. Information wars and fakes 3. Declining public trust 4. Cultural and linguistic barriers

The diversity of institutional structures is one of the key resources of people’s diplomacy, with government agencies, APK, NGOs, and diasporas serving as its primary actors. This broad range of participants makes it possible to build a dialogue with a wide variety of population groups both inside and outside the country. Cultural events, educational projects, and interpersonal contacts serve as important instruments of people’s diplomacy. Such forms of interaction are perceived by people as warmer and sincere compared to official political statements. Moreover, the APK and the state cultural centers function as stable institutional foundations for people’s diplomacy, enabling the development of long-term relations with foreign countries, communities, and diasporas [10].

Along with the strengths, there are also weaknesses in the implementation of people’s diplomacy in the country. These include the problem of a lack of close

coordination between actors, who often do not interact with each other. As a result, initiatives are duplicated, resources are used inefficiently, and outcomes fall short of their potential. Limited funding, a shortage of skilled professionals, and insufficient organizational support, especially at the regional level which also hinder progress. The lack of feedback from the participants also negatively affects the establishment of contacts with the public, further complicating efforts to improve project quality and tailor programs to the needs of specific target groups (youth, diasporas, foreign audiences, etc.).

Despite the above challenges, people's diplomacy has great potential in interacting with the public. For example, digital technologies create new opportunities through social networks, blogs, and online forums which make it possible to spread cultural and educational information about the country and establish contact with young people and foreign audiences. This is especially important for diasporas, who will have the opportunity to participate in the cultural life of their homeland from a distance. The involvement of the youth audience and volunteers also expands the scope of interaction with society. Moreover, growing international interest in "soft power" creates a favorable external environment for the development of people's diplomacy. This is especially important for Kazakhstan, as a multiethnic state that strives to play an active role in global processes.

However, several threats should also be considered. There is a risk of politicization of people's diplomacy if it is perceived as an instrument of state propaganda or manipulation its sincerity may be questioned. In the era of information warfare and online misinformation, even well-intentioned initiatives can be distorted and criticized, moreover, they can be used against the country. Public trust can also decline quickly if results are not visible or if initiatives appear insincere. Cultural and linguistic barriers, especially when working with foreign audiences, require more advanced training and carefully designed programs [8].

Based on the analysis, people's diplomacy is a powerful but sensitive tool. For it to truly become an effective way of interacting with the public, the following measures are proposed:

1. Strengthen coordination among actors. Various organizations, NGOs, universities, diasporas abroad and ethnocultural associations inside Kazakhstan often work without knowing each other's activities, which leads to a decrease in efficiency. To solve this problem, it is possible to create a coordinating council or platform under the APK, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Culture and Information. This would make it possible to share information about planned events and establish partnerships, which is especially important for external coordination.

2. Expand the participation of civil society. The main projects in the field of people's diplomacy are concentrated in large cities, while in other regions, there is a shortage of resources. To solve this problem, grant programs should be launched to support regional initiatives. Such grants can be implemented within the framework of the state social order, which is regulated by the law "On State Social Orders, Grants, and Awards for Non-governmental organizations in the Republic of Kazakhstan." This will allow active citizens and organizations from small towns and villages to propose and implement their projects aimed at developing intercultural dialogue, popularizing Kazakh culture abroad, and supporting interaction with diasporas.

3. Enhance the use of digital technologies. The use of modern technology will help create a digital community of supporters of Kazakhstan around the world by creating an online portal that will host various cultural initiatives, blogs, information about events and opportunities for participation. It is also possible to create various courses for representatives of NGOs, activists and students on digital skills, which can be conducted jointly with the Ministry of Information and Public Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

4. Strengthen training and intercultural competencies. In the modern world, it is not enough just to know foreign languages; it is also important to deeply understand the cultural characteristics, history, traditions and values of other nations. These skills are necessary to build trusting and respectful relationships with representatives of other countries.

Kazakhstan has already made some progress in this area: the Eurasian National University after L.N. Gumilyov has a department of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, which works to strengthen social harmony, civic unity and ethnopolitical education. Nevertheless, further expansion of educational programs in people's diplomacy, intercultural communication, and citizen-level foreign policy would be beneficial. Internship opportunities, exchange programs, and summer schools both domestically and internationally would help prepare a new generation of diplomacy-oriented specialists.

The measures proposed require an integrated and strategic approach. These challenges are not just barriers, but tasks that can be solved with the political will, support of civil society institutions and effective governance. The implementation of the proposed measures will bring people's diplomacy to a qualitatively new level and strengthen its role as an intermediary between the state and society. This is especially important for building trust, engagement, and civic engagement, as well as for promoting Kazakhstan abroad through real, vibrant connections between state and society. As a result, this will contribute not only to improving the country's international image, but also to strengthening national unity, forming a culture of open dialogue and sustainable development of interethnic peace within society.

Conclusion.

The study revealed that people's diplomacy in Kazakhstan is a multifaceted system that brings together state institutions, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, non-governmental organizations, diasporas, youth groups, and digital platforms. To achieve the goal of the research, the analysis delved into the conceptual essence of people's diplomacy, distinguishing it from public and citizen diplomacy, identifying its key players, and categorizing the major mechanisms through which it engages with society.

Findings indicate that people's diplomacy serves twofold purposes for Kazakhstan. Externally, it enhances the country's soft power, cultural visibility, and international reputation. Internally, it fosters interethnic harmony and social cohesion. Compared to other diplomatic approaches, people's diplomacy has a broader societal base and relies on sincere interpersonal communication, making it a delicate yet highly effective tool for building trust.

At the same time, the SWOT analysis identified several challenges, including lack of coordination among participants, disparities in regional resources, and

the risk of politicization. Nevertheless, the identified opportunities such as digital diplomacy, youth engagement and cooperation with diaspora communities, and increasing global interest in soft power. Taken together, these factors create favorable conditions for future development.

Overall, the results of the study suggest that people's diplomacy has the potential to significantly strengthen Kazakhstan's international relations and internal unity, if supported by coordinated efforts, professional training, open dialogue, and ongoing modernization. Enhancing this area would allow Kazakhstan to advance its national interests internationally and contribute to long-term social harmony within the country.

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