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The Impact of Humanitarian Diplomacy and its Position in the International System

In the past decade, there has been a marked escalation in internal armed conflicts, often characterized by blatant breaches of international law. As a result, the operational environment for humanitarian efforts has grown increasingly complex and perilous. This study examines the role of humanitarian diplomacy and its position in the international system, it seeks to investigate the future of humanitarian diplomacy and how to expand its impact towards a positive change on the ground. This research adopts a qualitative methodology, utilizing a comprehensive review of existing literature and case studies to analyze the evolving role of humanitarian diplomacy within the international system. The study examines policy documents, reports, and scholarly articles, to explore the intersection of humanitarian action and global governance, and to provide practical insights into the operational challenges and strategies of humanitarian diplomacy. The paper concluded that humanitarian diplomacy has become an issue of increasing importance, and the term itself is still controversial regarding using it and reaching international agreement on it. Globalization developments shaped the concept of humanitarian diplomacy, enlarged the role of NGOs to become major new players, and public opinion has a degree of influence over political decisions. Humanitarian diplomacy could be the new form of diplomacy but needs to have frameworks that make it governed by rights and obligations, so it will not always be improvised and chaotic. Humanitarian organizations also need specialized bodies of humanitarian diplomats and provide them with immunity and protection. It is anticipated that the future will witness a broader array of institutions engaged in overseeing cross-border human activities, with sovereign states retaining their role but allowing greater space for NGOs. However, prevailing trends among NGOs suggest an inclination towards expanding bureaucratic structures, increasing politicization, and convening conferences that highlight issues without offering enforceable solutions.

Keywords: Humanitarian Diplomacy, Globalization, Non-Governmental Organizations, International System, Humanitarian Action.

İnsani Diplomasinin Etkisi ve Uluslararası Sistemdeki Konumu

Son on yılda, uluslararası hukuk ihlallerinin sıkça yaşandığı iç silahlı çatışmalarda belirgin bir artış meydana gelmiştir. Bunun sonucunda, insani yardım faaliyetlerinin operasyonel ortamı giderek daha karmaşık ve tehlikeli bir hale gelmiştir (Régnier, 2011, s. 1229). Ayrıca, küresel terörle mücadele süreci, insani yardım kuruluşlarının devlet dışı gruplarla etkileşimlerinde önemli zorluklar doğurmuştur. Bazı devletler, bu gruplara istemeden meşruiyet kazandırma endişesiyle, bu tür etkileşimleri kriminalize eden yasalar çıkarmıştır (Régnier, 2011, s. 1230). Bu çalışma, insani diplomasinin uluslararası sistemdeki rolünü ve konumunu incelemekte; insani diplomasinin geleceğini araştırmayı ve bu alandaki etkisini sahada olumlu bir değişime yönlendirme yollarını değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, uluslararası sistemde insani diplomasinin değişen rolünü analiz etmek için mevcut literatürün kapsamlı bir şekilde gözden geçirilmesini ve vaka analizlerini içeren nitel bir yöntem benimsemektedir. Çalışma, insani yardım faaliyetleri ile küresel yönetişim arasındaki kesişimi araştırmak ve insani diplomasiye ilişkin

operasyonel zorluklar ile stratejilere dair pratik bilgiler sunmak amacıyla politika belgeleri, raporlar ve akademik makaleleri incelemektedir. Araştırma, insani diplomasinin giderek önem kazanan bir konu haline geldiğini, ancak bu terimin kullanımının ve uluslararası düzeyde üzerinde uzlaşılmasının hâlâ tartışmalı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Küreselleşme süreci, insani diplomasi kavramını şekillendirmiş; STK'ların rolünü genişleterek onları önemli yeni aktörler haline getirmiş ve kamuoyunun siyasi kararlar üzerindeki etkisini artırmıştır. İnsani diplomasi, yeni bir diplomasi biçimi olabilir; ancak, doğaçlama ve kaotik olmaktan çıkarılıp haklar ve yükümlülükler çerçevesinde düzenlenmesi gerekmektedir. İnsani yardım kuruluşlarının ayrıca insani diplomatlar için uzmanlaşmış organlar oluşturması ve bu diplomatlara dokunulmazlık ve koruma sağlaması gereklidir. Gelecekte, sınır ötesi insani faaliyetleri denetleyen daha geniş bir kurum yelpazesinin ortaya çıkması beklenmekte; egemen devletler rollerini sürdürmekle birlikte STK'lara daha fazla alan tanımaktadır. Ancak, STK'lar arasındaki eğilimler, bürokratik yapıların genişlemesi, siyasallaşmanın artması ve uygulanabilir çözümler sunmadan sorunları tartışan konferansların düzenlenmesi yönünde bir eğilime işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnsani Diplomasi, Küreselleşme, Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, Uluslararası Sistem, İnsani Hareket.

The Impact of Humanitarian Diplomacy and its Position in the International System

1. Introduction

Humanitarian diplomacy is undergoing a transformative evolution, emerging prominently in the post–Cold War era, where traditional diplomacy has waned, and more assertive methods of addressing global challenges have gained traction. It represents a critical tool integral to the effective support and protection of vulnerable populations (Minear & Smith, 2007, p. 32). There is an increasing political consensus and dedication to the principle of "leaving no one behind" as outlined in the 2030 Agenda, positioning humanitarian diplomacy as a key tool to reach the most vulnerable populations. This ambitious goal and the emergence of new challenges have solidified humanitarian diplomacy as a central component of the humanitarian sector and a significant instrument in states' foreign policy strategies (De Lauri, Humanitarian Diplomacy: A New Research Agenda, 2018).

To understand the impact of humanitarian diplomacy and its position in the international system, this paper examines the concept of humanitarian diplomacy, identifies its main actors and analyzes the effects of globalization on it. Furthermore, it studies the relationship between traditional diplomacy and humanitarian diplomacy, the challenges it faces and explores its future.

2. Concept of Humanitarian Diplomacy

Humanitarian diplomacy, a concept that emerged in the early 2000s, is broadly defined as the effort to persuade decision-makers and opinion leaders to consistently prioritize the interests of vulnerable populations while adhering to core humanitarian principles. It involves actions undertaken by humanitarian actors to secure operational spaces from political and military authorities, enabling them to work with integrity (De Lauri, Diplomacy, 2020). Such activities involve facilitating the establishment of humanitarian organizations within specific countries, negotiating access to civilian populations requiring aid and protection, overseeing the implementation of assistance programs, advocating for adherence to international laws and norms, and undertaking advocacy efforts at multiple levels to advance humanitarian goals (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Historically, humanitarian efforts have operated within contexts of severe insecurity and political instability, aiming to ensure access, deliver assistance, and provide protection for civilian populations (De Lauri, Humanitarian Diplomacy: A New Research Agenda, 2018). The diverse array of humanitarian actors engaged in complex emergencies, along with their competing priorities and objectives, has led to varied interpretations and practices of humanitarian diplomacy. A notable distinction exists between conceptualizing the idea of humanitarian diplomacy, employing the term in practice, and achieving international consensus on its definition and the frameworks guiding its implementation (De Lauri, Diplomacy, 2020).

Effective humanitarian diplomacy relies on a comprehensive understanding of the political, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics within conflict settings. This necessitates enhanced efforts by humanitarian actors to conduct thorough political and conflict analysis, alongside establishing trust and confidence-building measures with armed groups to facilitate meaningful engagement (Kurtzer, 2019). Comprehending the political and cultural environment is fundamental to the success of humanitarian diplomacy. Experienced humanitarian officials with prolonged service in specific regions possess a deep understanding of the political forces and dynamics at play (Minear & Smith, 2007).

The skills required for effective humanitarian diplomacy are both highly specific and broad-ranging. They encompass a thorough understanding of international humanitarian law, insight into the drivers and dynamics of conflicts within their cultural contexts, the ability to lead within the diverse and often fragmented humanitarian sector, familiarity with previous efforts to

establish and sustain humanitarian space, strong interpersonal skills, and an acute sense of timing. Furthermore, agencies must not only develop these skills among their staff but also demonstrate a wider institutional commitment to these essential components (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Humanitarian diplomacy is more likely to succeed in scenarios where minimal trade-offs are required. Undermining the fundamental principle of impartiality by disproportionately distributing relief supplies to certain communities carries significant consequences. Negotiations are more effective when all parties clearly understand that certain principles are non-negotiable (Minear & Smith, 2007). Negotiations and humanitarian diplomacy should not be perceived as breaches of neutrality or as granting legitimacy to armed groups. Instead, they should be regarded as indispensable tools for achieving humanitarian objectives and reaching vulnerable populations. Context-specific humanitarian diplomacy is crucial for humanitarian actors working in complex environments to ensure access and implement vital programs. Donors and humanitarian organizations must prioritize enhancing the training and capacity of humanitarian staff to navigate these challenging negotiations effectively (Kurtzer, 2019).

Humanitarian diplomacy has gained increasing significance, particularly as ensuring access to humanitarian aid in conflict and complex emergency settings remains a critical challenge. It encompasses the actions undertaken by humanitarian actors to create spaces where they can operate with integrity. The diverse range of actors involved in such emergencies, along with their competing priorities and objectives, has led to varied interpretations and practices of humanitarian diplomacy. As a result, substantial differences exist between conceptualizing the idea of humanitarian diplomacy, employing the term in practice, and achieving international consensus on its definition and management. To better understand humanitarian diplomacy, it is essential to identify the entities responsible for its implementation.

3. Who Is Doing Humanitarian Diplomacy?

Humanitarian diplomacy operates at multiple levels. International organizations can advocate for domestic legislation safeguarding humanitarian efforts, foster shared values and commitments to humanitarian principles, and enact treaties and resolutions to protect humanitarian actions while reinforcing adherence to international law. National governments and organizations can work to remove access barriers and mediate ceasefires and peace agreements among conflicting parties. Local actors play a critical role by facilitating negotiations between humanitarian organizations and conflict parties, leveraging established community relationships to support access (Kurtzer, 2019). Furthermore, NGOs are the key new players in defining national and international public policy and they must master a range of new skills including how best to engage in international diplomacy (Comras, 2013).

In the 20th and 21st centuries, international organizations have emerged as key platforms for diplomacy and decision-making. They play a vital role in global governance by facilitating cooperative solutions to international challenges and engaging in diplomatic efforts to attract global attention to pressing issues. Acting as independent entities, they execute their mandates by collaborating directly with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). The expanding agenda of global issues, from climate change to terrorism, has further amplified the role of IGOs and the growth of global governance mechanisms. Consequently, international diplomacy increasingly occurs within and through IGOs, whose adaptation to complex forms of network diplomacy now involves NGOs, corporations, and other IGOs (Karns, 2013).

Over the past two decades, humanitarian action has significantly expanded, fostering increased engagement between diplomats and humanitarian actors on a variety of issues that hold prominence on the international agenda (Sending, 2015). Improving access to humanitarian aid in conflict and complex emergencies has always been a major concern for policy makers and humanitarian actors (De Lauri, Humanitarian Diplomacy: A New Research Agenda, 2018). During the post-Cold War era, the rising significance of belligerent non-state actors as partners in

humanitarian dialogue has prompted policymakers and practitioners to closely monitor their activities and, when feasible, to familiarize them with their obligations (Minear & Smith, 2007). Some practitioners of both humanitarian action and traditional diplomacy argue that humanitarian diplomacy should be exclusively handled by professional diplomats. However, the evidence does not support this view, as many diplomats lack familiarity with humanitarian principles, organizations, and culture. Furthermore, they often tend to instrumentalize humanitarian assistance and protection efforts, viewing them as tools within a broader strategy that includes economic sanctions and military force (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Lobbying can serve as the most effective strategy for small or emerging NGOs to establish their reputation. NGOs must secure a seat at the negotiation table with governments and international organizations to influence key historical documents, such as UN resolutions and treaties, with the aim of reducing conflict, strengthening the global economy and environment, and safeguarding human rights. NGO diplomacy focuses on addressing practical, day-to-day challenges while driving strategic change (Roeder & Simard, 2013). Success in humanitarian efforts appears to be closely linked to factors such as the cohesiveness of the humanitarian sector, the involvement of experienced and innovative practitioners, the effective use of institutional knowledge and memory, a deep understanding of the political and cultural context, the establishment of trust, clear boundaries on negotiable issues, and sustained political and public support. Conversely, failure often stems from a lack of coordination among the agencies operating within a specific crisis (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Therefore, we can say that humanitarian diplomacy can be carried out through multiple actors, NGOs can have a fundamental role in promoting and applying humanitarian diplomacy on a large scale, as they have become major arenas for diplomacy and decision-making. They are also independent actors that participate in diplomatic activities to mobilize international attention to humanitarian issues. IGOs can also contribute by supporting ceasefire and peace treaty negotiation processes between conflict parties. Local actors can facilitate negotiations between humanitarian organizations and conflict parties, leading to the establishment of long-term community relationships to support access. Non-state combatants have also become partners in the humanitarian dialogue, as they control large areas, and it is necessary to negotiate with them to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches the most vulnerable people. Thus, it is mandatory to study the relationship with globalization and its impacts on it.

4. Humanitarian Diplomacy and Globalization

Globalization is fostering the emergence of a global cosmopolitan society, fundamentally transforming traditional ways of life irrespective of location. This phenomenon is not the result of collective human will but is unfolding in an anarchic and haphazard manner, driven by a combination of economic, technological, and cultural forces (Giddens, 2003). From a constructivist perspective, globalization is often viewed as an external force impacting states, yet constructivists argue that it can be shaped in diverse ways, particularly through opportunities to establish cross-national social movements facilitated by modern communication technologies such as the Internet (Baylis, 2014).

Globalization is political, technological and cultural, as well as economic. It has been influenced above all by developments in systems of communication, dating back only to the late 1960s (Giddens, 2003). Advancements in communication technologies have fundamentally transformed how we interact with the world. We now inhabit a global environment where events in one location can be instantly observed across the globe, reshaping our perceptions of the social groups with which we engage and coexist. Power within the global system is no longer monopolized by states but is instead distributed unevenly among a wide array of public and private actors and networks, including international agencies, corporations, and NGOs. Although sovereignty remains a fundamental legal characteristic of states, it is increasingly fragmented and shared across local, national, regional, and global levels. In an age of globalization, national polities no longer function as bounded or closed systems. Sovereign statehood is being transformed from

international (inter-state) politics to global politics-the politics of state and non-state actors within a shared global social space (Baylis, 2014).

Globalization is a complex set of processes, not a single one. And these operate in a contradictory or oppositional fashion. Nations have lost most of the sovereignty they once had, and politicians have lost most of their capability to influence events (Baylis, 2014). National borders are becoming less significant in regulating the movement of ideas, information, goods, services, capital, labor, and technology. The rapid pace of modern communication has rendered borders increasingly permeable, while the sheer volume of cross-border exchanges challenges states' capacity to manage them effectively. Rather than reducing complexity, globalization and interdependence have expanded the scope and intensity of negotiations, particularly in multilateral forums. The growing number of participants, the diversity of issues under negotiation, the varying styles of officials from distinct political cultures and development levels, and the technical intricacies of the topics have collectively made negotiations more complex, technical, and prolonged (Cooper, 2013).

President Bush characterized the events of September 11, 2001, and their aftermath as a new kind of war; however, his response remained rooted in traditional warfare and national security frameworks, rather than addressing the broader challenges of the global era. Global guerrilla movements remain challenging to defeat militarily, as their conflicts typically end only through political solutions involving compromise, negotiation, and addressing the root causes of insurgency (Giddens, 2003). The concept of humanitarian diplomacy has been shaped by the transformative effects of globalization, although its origins are deeply rooted in history. It has gained prominence on the international stage, particularly in response to the rising number of civil wars (Dora, 2019).

Over the past two decades, research on globalization has highlighted the increasing influence of non-state actors and the consequent transformation or decline of traditional diplomacy. However, discussions on the evolution of diplomacy are not novel; as early as 1908, a German Foreign Office press officer observed that the era of small, exclusive diplomatic circles deciding national fates had given way to the growing influence of public opinion on political decisions (Sending, 2015). Globalization has significantly expanded the role of NGOs, enhancing their impact on perceptions of national, regional, and international interests. These organizations have emerged as pivotal players in shaping public policy at both national and international levels (Comras, 2013).

Thus, we have found how globalization which is based upon instantaneous communication technologies has promoted transborder flows of goods, money, information and cultural patterns. This led to major changes as national borders became less important and states lost part of their sovereignty. With the increase in the number of civil wars; the nation-state becomes more permeated by global forces and non-state actors become more important in the global political system. Therefore, these developments shaped the concept of humanitarian diplomacy and expanded the role of NGOs to become major new players, and public opinion has a degree of influence over political decisions. All of this requires that humanitarian diplomacy has advantages and characteristics through which it can deal with the conditions of globalization in which it arose. To reach that, we need to understand the relationship between humanitarian diplomacy and traditional diplomacy and how can benefit from the long and ancient history of the latter.

5. Diplomacy and Humanitarian Diplomacy

Traditional diplomacy operates within a framework of sovereign states, guided by the Vienna Conventions of 1949, which define the boundaries of acceptable professional conduct (Minear & Smith, 2007). In contrast, humanitarians advocate for universal humanity and aim to transcend territorial boundaries, making the study of their relationship with traditional diplomacy essential for understanding their distinct characteristics (Sending, 2015). While

diplomacy's content and structure remain state-centric, humanitarian officials, driven by their mandate, are often more willing than traditional diplomats to take risks and confront the possibility of failure. Unlike traditional diplomats who value discretion and operate behind the scenes, humanitarians are more inclined to engage publicly, leveraging media to galvanize public opinion and pressure non-compliant authorities in support of humanitarian objectives (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Humanitarian diplomacy emphasizes the critical role of strong political relationships in delivering aid and support to vulnerable populations whose rights and interests are at risk and whose voices are overshadowed by larger sociopolitical conflicts. Unlike traditional diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy operates without relying on the military or political power of a single government. Nevertheless, both forms of diplomacy are grounded in the principles of international humanitarian law, human rights, and refugee rights (Norwich University Online, 2020). While humanitarian diplomacy is not directly initiated by beneficiaries, in certain crises, victims succeed in making their voices heard at national or international levels. As a result, humanitarian diplomacy often adopts an improvised approach, tailored to the specific demands of the moment (Régnier, 2011).

Humanitarian diplomacy is often compared to state diplomacy, yet the two differ in more ways than they align. They share commonalities such as the gathering and analysis of information and similar negotiation techniques. Traditional diplomacy functions at a political level and is governed by rights and obligations established through custom and international diplomatic and consular law, with violations being rare and often met with sanctions or even force. Conversely, humanitarian organizations lack a dedicated corps of humanitarian diplomats and do not operate within a robust international legal framework beyond international humanitarian law, human rights law, and refugee law. Additionally, their immunity is not as inviolable as that of traditional diplomats (Régnier, 2011).

Humanitarian diplomacy inherently involves significant tension; traditional diplomacy focuses on representing one polity in relation to another, whereas humanitarianism centers on advocating for and assisting people in need. Consequently, diplomacy is marked by compromise and pragmatic negotiation, while humanitarian action is publicly perceived as driven by ideals and universal principles, independent of the interests of specific political actors (De Lauri, 2020).

Accordingly, humanitarian diplomacy could be the new form of diplomacy and regardless of the size of the differences between them; it needs to learn from traditional diplomacy in its way of organizing and working within agreements that make it governed by rights and obligations, so humanitarian diplomacy will not always be improvised and chaotic. Humanitarian organizations also need specialized bodies of humanitarian diplomats and provide them with immunity and protection. Moreover, and in order to achieve that practically and effectively, it is essential to explore the challenges that humanitarian diplomacy faces and draw lessons for reforming it.

6. Challenges of Humanitarian Diplomacy

The challenges facing humanitarian diplomacy stem from three key developments: the evolving roles and attitudes of international actors, the increasing tendency to view humanitarian efforts as tools for political agendas, and the rapid advancements in information technology. These global challenges demand not only inter-state diplomacy but also coordinated actions within networks of influence (Harroff-Tavel, 2006). Over the past decade, internal armed conflicts have surged, contrasting with the decline in international armed conflicts. A defining feature of these conflicts is the involvement of diverse actors, with government forces often confronting non-state armed groups and an increasing presence of international stakeholders. Non-state armed groups frequently compensate for their military inferiority by employing tactics that blatantly violate international law. These shifts have introduced heightened uncertainty and unpredictability, rendering humanitarian operations on the ground increasingly complex and perilous (Régnier, 2011).

Today's world faces a troubling rise in armed conflicts and humanitarian crises, leaving vulnerable civilians struggling to meet their basic needs. Armed conflicts have led to unprecedented levels of migration, significantly increasing the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons while causing devastating loss of life (Kurtzer, 2019). The complex global challenges, including pandemics, hunger, environmental degradation, human rights violations, and corruption, cannot be addressed solely through interstate diplomacy. Rather than establishing additional international organizations, many actors on the global stage favor creating networks of influence and engaging in informal "track two diplomacy" to tackle these issues effectively (Harroff-Tavel, 2006).

Since the onset of the post-2001 global war on terrorism, state perceptions of non-state armed groups, both local and transnational, have undergone significant transformation. States have introduced new barriers preventing humanitarian agencies from accessing crisis zones and areas controlled by non-state groups. As some of these groups are designated as terrorist organizations, certain states have enacted laws criminalizing any engagement with them, fearing it might confer legitimacy (Régnier, 2011). Humanitarian diplomacy is further complicated by the fact that relief assistance and protection offered by agencies are not always seen as priorities by negotiating counterparts, who may prioritize progress toward ending aggression (Minear & Smith, 2007). The central challenge for humanitarian diplomacy lies in achieving its objectives without the compulsory authority to enforce compliance with international agreements (Norwich University Online, 2020).

When a humanitarian organization negotiates with groups like ISIS to deliver aid to territories under their control, a common necessity for humanitarian agencies, it often faces criticism from certain Western governments. Such negotiations may be perceived as providing material support to terrorism, either by aiding ISIS's propaganda efforts or freeing up resources for military operations (MacLeod, 2016). These tensions create significant challenges for humanitarian actors, who are subjected to heightened scrutiny amid concerns that aid might be exploited or misused by terrorists. For instance, Turkish counter-terrorism police recently raided the offices of the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) due to suspected links with al-Qaeda (Burniske, 2014).

Major humanitarian crises, such as those in Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and Syria, have demonstrated that the protected areas intended for humanitarian action are increasingly targeted by parties to the conflict. This leaves many individuals trapped within conflict zones or forced to flee along routes where they face high risks of exploitation and trafficking, often in areas where humanitarian access is minimal or nonexistent. The challenges to humanitarianism today stem from war zones and protracted crises where civilians are deliberately targeted, access is severely restricted, aid workers are at risk of being perceived as threats or kidnapping targets, and their personal safety is frequently compromised. These access challenges are reshaping the role of humanitarian actors and their diplomatic capacity, as the evolving nature of violent conflicts increasingly intertwines with the politicization of humanitarian aid (De Lauri, Diplomacy, 2020).

In certain situations, NGOs and IGOs are unable to prevent their limited aid from being misappropriated, stolen, or used in ways that inadvertently exacerbate the crisis rather than mitigate it. While emergency humanitarian relief often garners public support and limited governmental funding, the more complex and costly tasks of nation-building and establishing a stable future for developing countries frequently struggle to secure sufficient backing from powerful Western governments. As a result, NGOs may provide short-term relief but also risk deflecting criticism away from governments for failing to address the root causes of these crises (Armstrong, Lloyd, & Redmond, 2004).

The information age presents new challenges for international organizations. The internet, characterized by its anarchic structure, has proven difficult for governments to regulate due to its global nature, with international organizations playing only a minimal role in its

development. NGOs have increasingly utilized the internet as a tool for their operations (Archer, 2001). Humanitarian diplomacy faces particular challenges from the rapid and intensified exchanges enabled by the information technology revolution. Public opinion now heavily influences diplomatic processes, with civil society demanding transparency, accountability, and swift responses. Sensitive negotiations can be abruptly disrupted by unfolding events, potentially derailing entire diplomatic efforts as a single issue dominates the attention of state officials, sidelining other critical matters (Harroff-Tavel, 2006).

According to the above, it is obvious that humanitarian diplomacy faces serious and complex challenges, which come from the changing role and behavior of actors on the international sphere and the significant increase in internal armed conflicts. Humanitarian action has become more complicated, and the global war on terror has raised new obstacles for humanitarian agencies dealing with non-state groups designated as terrorist organizations. In addition, the protected areas intended for humanitarian action are increasingly becoming targets for parties of the conflict where aid workers are in danger, and politicizing access to aid has become an integral part of the conflict itself. Moreover, humanitarian diplomacy faces the challenge of the speed of exchanges made by the information technology revolution and public opinion greatly influencing diplomatic processes. Therefore, NGOs should prevent their aid from being deployed in ways that may inadvertently increase the crisis rather than help solve it and they should not help distract from criticism that governments are not doing enough to address the root of the problem. All of these challenges necessarily require a greater commitment to humanitarian diplomacy and lead us to move to envision and explore its future.

The evolving geopolitical landscape and the increasing complexity of conflicts necessitate a reevaluation of humanitarian diplomacy's strategic role. Non-state actors, including NGOs and armed groups, are increasingly central to shaping humanitarian outcomes. However, their growing influence also introduces challenges related to legitimacy, accountability, and the politicization of aid. Humanitarian diplomacy must adapt to these dynamics by fostering innovative approaches, including enhanced collaboration with local actors and leveraging digital platforms to improve transparency and advocacy. These measures are essential for ensuring that humanitarian objectives remain aligned with international law and the core principles of impartiality and neutrality.

7. Future of Humanitarian Diplomacy

Advocates of "realpolitik" often contend that government officials should focus on the world as it is rather than as it ought to be, prioritizing pragmatic techniques over visionary ideals to serve their government's specific interests. However, it is crucial to recognize that NGOs represent the people, and while NGO diplomats must be adept in practical strategies and grounded in realism, they should never lose sight of their vision for a better future or allow it to be overshadowed by politics or funding pressures. This perspective is particularly relevant in the twenty-first century, which is fraught with complex uncertainties requiring innovative solutions beyond those traditionally offered by governments. NGOs must be regarded as essential partners in bridging the gap between governments and the will of the people, as ultimately, governments, the UN, and other international organizations exist to serve the public (Roeder & Simard, 2013).

The evolving field of humanitarian diplomacy is emerging amidst tensions between political and humanitarian priorities. Within the United Nations, debates on integration aim to position humanitarian activities as one component among others, such as trade, development, conflict resolution, and democracy promotion, that collectively support international peace and security. However, within the broader humanitarian community, there is significant disagreement about the risks of such instrumentalization and the necessity of safeguarding the independence of humanitarian actions. It has been suggested that humanitarian diplomacy should be viewed as an investment in effective programs rather than as a means of politicizing them (Minear & Smith, 2007).

Despite advancements in communication, human beings appear to struggle more than ever to understand one another, often leading to violent conflicts fueled by fear of others (Harroff-Tavel, 2006). Emerging technologies, such as the internet and videoconferencing, provide new platforms for group communication, fostering the rise of protest and advocacy coalitions that leverage these tools. This trend suggests that future international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) will be more global in nature, functioning as networks and forums rather than traditional formal organizations. In an era where global governance gains prominence, a more diverse mix of institutions is expected to manage cross-border human activities. While the sovereign state will persist, it will increasingly share its role with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), INGOs, transnational corporations, and emerging networks. The growing strain on global resources and persistent insecurity will underscore the need for effective international organizations, though their capacity to secure adequate resources for optimal functioning remains uncertain (Archer, 2001).

Humanitarian organizations should adopt innovative initiatives such as cash programming and localization efforts to ensure aid reaches the most vulnerable populations while supporting existing coping mechanisms, including sustaining local markets. The international community must reaffirm its highest-level commitments to international humanitarian law and the principles of humanitarian action. Addressing field-based access challenges requires a strong commitment to political solutions for complex crises and sustained engagement in humanitarian diplomacy. This approach involves avoiding short-term, quid-pro-quo agreements at the UN that undermine humanitarian laws and norms, instead focusing on conflict prevention and resolution (Kurtzer, 2019). The roles of global civil society, including NGOs, advocacy networks, and social movements, are critical in strengthening global governance, enhancing its legitimacy, and ensuring greater accountability (Armstrong, Lloyd, & Redmond, 2004).

Current trends in economic, social, and environmental intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) suggest the growth of larger bureaucracies, increased politicization, and reduced effectiveness, with a tendency for conferences to focus on defining problems and setting rules without the capacity to enforce decisions. While the projected future of international organizations contains few surprises, other trends warrant consideration, particularly those linked to broader strategic developments (Archer, 2001). Given the critical role of humanitarian actors in addressing global emergencies, it is essential to examine whether, and how, these actors assume diplomatic roles as they claim to represent victims of humanitarian crises and advocate on their behalf (Sending, 2015).

Humanitarian diplomacy faces an evolving geopolitical landscape and increasing complexity in conflicts, necessitating innovative approaches to address these challenges effectively. Non-state actors, including NGOs and armed groups, are central to shaping humanitarian outcomes, yet their influence introduces challenges related to legitimacy, accountability, and the politicization of aid. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced collaboration with local actors and leveraging digital platforms to improve transparency and advocacy. Additionally, fostering dialogue among diverse stakeholders is critical to maintaining impartiality and neutrality, core principles of humanitarian action.

A key insight from recent studies, such as the work of Dr. Francesca Pusterla and Dr. Elia R.G. Pusterla in "The Future of Humanitarian Aid in a New Context Full of Challenges," emphasizes the need for a structured approach to humanitarian operations. Their analysis underlines the importance of integrating climate change adaptation into humanitarian strategies, strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, and addressing funding gaps through innovative mechanisms. They advocate for leveraging digital tools and technology to streamline humanitarian aid delivery while ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law (Pusterla & Pusterla, 2021).

Furthermore, the European Commission's Communication on humanitarian action identifies the necessity of adopting multiannual and flexible funding mechanisms to enhance

efficiency and responsiveness. The use of digital cash transfers and the promotion of equal partnerships with local responders are essential steps toward achieving these goals. These measures not only improve the effectiveness of humanitarian programs but also foster trust and cooperation among all actors involved (Pusterla & Pusterla, 2021).

It can be suggested that the NGOs will be more global in the future because of the appearance of lobbying coalitions and the development of modern means of communication. The practice of humanitarian diplomacy should represent an investment in effective programs rather than necessarily a politicization of them. It is expected that in a future there will be a richer mix of institutions involved in managing human activities across borders; the sovereign state will not disappear, but it will give more space to the NGOs. Moreover, the growing pressure on global resources and the continuing insecurity around the world will only emphasize the need for international organizations. But unfortunately, the persistence of current trends in NGOs seem to point to larger bureaucracies, more politicized and conferences that identify problems without the means to impose solutions.

In summary, the future of humanitarian diplomacy lies in embracing innovative tools, fostering global collaboration, and ensuring that humanitarian principles remain central to all efforts. The integration of sustainability considerations, coupled with advanced technological solutions and transparent practices, will enable humanitarian diplomacy to address contemporary challenges more effectively. As the field evolves, it must continue to adapt to the growing interconnection between local, regional, and global dynamics, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations receive the assistance they need.

8. Conclusion

Humanitarian diplomacy has become an issue of increasing importance, it includes the activities that humanitarian workers undertake with the aim of obtaining spaces in which they can operate with integrity. Moreover, the diversity of humanitarian actors involved in complex emergencies and their competing priorities yield different concepts and practices of humanitarian diplomacy. The term itself is still controversial regarding using it and reaching international agreement on it. Humanitarian diplomacy can be carried out through multiple actors, NGOs can have a fundamental role in promoting and applying humanitarian diplomacy on a large scale, IGOs and local actors can also contribute by supporting it as well. Non-state combatants have also become partners in the humanitarian dialogue.

Globalization brought about major changes as national borders became less important and states lost part of their sovereignty. In addition to the increase in the number of civil wars and the power of non-state actors. These developments shaped the concept of humanitarian diplomacy and enlarged the role of NGOs to become major new players, and public opinion has a degree of influence over political decisions. Accordingly, humanitarian diplomacy could be the new form of diplomacy and regardless of the size of the differences between them; it needs to learn from traditional diplomacy in its way of organizing and working within frameworks that make it governed by rights and obligations, so humanitarian diplomacy will not always be improvised and chaotic. Humanitarian organizations also need specialized bodies of humanitarian diplomats and provide them with immunity and protection.

It is obvious that humanitarian diplomacy faces serious challenges, which come from the changing role and behavior of actors and the significant increase in internal armed conflicts. Humanitarian action has become more complicated, and the global war on terror has raised new obstacles for humanitarian agencies dealing with non-state groups designated as terrorist organizations. Additionally, the protected areas intended for humanitarian action are increasingly becoming targets for parties of the conflict where aid workers are in danger, and politicizing access to aid has become an integral part of the conflict itself. Moreover, humanitarian diplomacy faces the challenge of the speed of exchanges made by the information technology revolution and public opinion greatly influencing diplomatic processes. Therefore, NGOs should prevent their aid

from being deployed in ways that may inadvertently increase the crisis rather than help solve it and they should not help distract from criticism that governments are not doing enough to address the root of the problem. All of these challenges necessarily require a greater commitment to humanitarian diplomacy.

NGOs will be more global because of the appearance of lobbying coalitions and the development of modern means of communication. The practice of humanitarian diplomacy should represent an investment in effective programs rather than necessarily a politicization of them. It is expected that in a future there will be a richer mix of institutions involved in managing human activities across borders; the sovereign state will not disappear, but it will give more space to the NGOs. Moreover, the growing pressure on global resources and the continuing insecurity will only emphasize the need for international organizations. But unfortunately, the persistence of current trends in NGOs seem to point to larger bureaucracies, more politicized and conferences that identify problems without the means to impose solutions.

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