

## **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION: REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES**

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*Acest articol se bazează pe cercetarea efectuată în procesul de elaborare a tezei de master care analizează conceptul diplomației publice în contextul proceselor complexe ale globalizării la care sunt țările expuse la nivel mondial și abordează evaluarea sistematică a politicii externe și practicii la începutul secolului XXI, cu accent pe Statele Unite și Republica Moldova.*

Interest to the public diplomacy grows due to vital need of expanding standard ways of conducting foreign policy worldwide. Study is underlining that public diplomacy has gained solid positions in the international discourse. Its means are aimed to increase of the appeal of the country for the international society. Within the international academic community, the term of public diplomacy was used for the first time in 1965 by Dean Edmund Gullion from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University [1].

Jen Mellisen, who is Director of the Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme believes that *“It is tempting to see public diplomacy as old wine in new bottles”*[2]. James Pamment, lecturer and researcher at Karlstad University and Uppsala University is conveying the perspective that public diplomacy is a major paradigm shift in international political communication due to the fact that intense and multilateral global affairs, linked with continuously developing media landscape *“challenge traditional foreign ministries can no longer claim to being sole or dominant actors in communicating foreign policy”*. From the beginning of its use as a term and until today, public diplomacy has often been considered a synonym of the propaganda and the differentiation between these two terms was rather hard to be made. Some authors consider that the main differentiation between them can be made by the political system of the country as a source of true information [3].

At present, the *“public diplomacy”* term is defined differently from one country to another [4]. In the U.S, according to U.S. Department

of State, public diplomacy “refers to government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries”. More recently, in 2004, in a Congressional report for the American Congress, public diplomacy is defined as “the promotion of American interests, culture and policies by informing and influencing foreign populations” [5]. In the Republic of Moldova, findings related to the topic of public diplomacy are rather limited by the small academic community in the field of international relations and political sciences which covers general aspects of diplomacy and current globalized processes. At the same time occasionally can be assessed articles and general remarks delivered by former or actual diplomats anchored in academic field, such as Igor Munteanu, or Oleg Serebrian, as well as representatives of the Faculties of International Relations and Political Sciences of the leading Universities united by various academic conferences and scientific symposiums. Drawing upon case studies of the U.S. and the Republic of Moldova, it can be highlighted the value of *winning the hearts and minds of the people* [6] and the growing importance of civil society in international relations.

New public diplomacy is based on a number of principles which distinguishes it clearly from other related topics. These principles can help to give a basic overview of the concept: *“dialogue, not monologue, work after the network method, not the hierarchical method, coherence between the public diplomacy work at home and abroad, honest and reliable information, not propaganda* [7].

So the goals of public diplomacy can span a vast area from basically introducing the country to targeted audiences or dispelling any misperceptions they might have about it to actively engaging people with the country by attracting people there for sightseeing, studies or making investments or political deals.

American public diplomacy in the Republic of Moldova can be linked with the various programs and initiatives organized by the American Government via U.S. Embassy or related entities, such as Peace Corp, USAID, AmCham and others. The U.S. Government sponsors a number of academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs in Moldova to foster mutual understanding through exchange and training programs, and to further democratic and economic reforms in Moldova through participants implementing the

experience and knowledge they gain in the United States. Although, except the academic community, the term of “public diplomacy” or “state image” is not used within the legal framework of the country. Time to time can be found some political statements which have rather bombastic character than the intention to provide valuable contribution for the possibility to anchor the instruments of public diplomacy in the public discourse of the Moldovan elites. In can be observed that above examples are shaping quite obvious reality – Republic of Moldova, by not having even the clear institutional definition of public diplomacy cannot exercise the series of initiatives which will help to built on its own international image [8].

As discussed above, the key policy documents on Moldovan foreign policy unfortunately do not refer to public diplomacy as a means for cultivating Moldovan image around the world.

Therefore can be formulated several conclusions: **Importance of “explaining Moldova”**: Another fundamental assumption in the discussions about public diplomacy is that the root cause for negative perception of Republic of Moldova is either the lack of appropriate and/or sufficient information abroad about the country and its people, or is a deliberate attempt of media or officials to tarnish the image of the country. **Cultural and Educational programs**: Coupled with the informational approach, cultural and educational initiatives constitute some of the fundamental bases of Moldovan conceptualization of public diplomacy. Moldovan Embassies maintain a network of cultural and educational events abroad, organize and host various festivals, and act as mediators in attracting Moldovans living abroad as well as foreign students.

A future tool can be providing educational experiences for current and future leaders, journalists and cultural figures is seen as essential for ensuring long-lasting good-will for Moldova around the world. **Economic Diplomacy**: This discussion is distinct from the previous one, since its objective is not the utilization of certain economic initiatives for the purposes of public diplomacy, but rather the opposite: using public diplomacy to improve the image of Republic of Moldova, so as to be able to help economic growth by attracting foreign investment and helping companies abroad. **Mobilization of and relationships with the Moldovan communities abroad**: A

persistent theme that runs through all these various discussions and conceptualizations is the importance of reaching out to the ethnic Moldovans publics living abroad. There is a need to protect the interests of and cultivate closer ties with the diasporas abroad, while various bodies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as affiliated organizations such as the Diaspora Bureau within State Chancellery have created various programs and special partnerships targeting diasporas communities. Although there is recognition of the role that diasporas communities living within Western countries can play in enhancing the objectives of Moldovan public diplomacy in their respective home countries, the greatest emphasis is usually put on those living in the EU, U.S. and Canada.

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*Recomandat  
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