

Public diplomacy – a modern tool in international activities of small countries

Case of the Republic of Macedonia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the significance of public diplomacy which has become an integral part of the work of the diplomats of modern states. In this direction, an attempt has been made to show the positive sides that this modern method, especially in the information technology era, offers in the international communication and cooperation of the international subjects. Special emphasis is placed on the diplomacy of small states, bearing in mind their limited human and financial potentials. The text also deals with the emergence of fake news in terms of the way the public diplomacy can unmask and prevent them. In the end, the case of the Republic of Macedonia is presented during the period 1991 - 2016. The views of this state given by the world's media are tasked to draw our attention to create a concrete strategy that will produce a positive image for the country.

KEY WORDS: public diplomacy, foreign relations, fake news, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

POVZETEK

Namen prispevka je predstaviti pomen javne diplomacije, ki je postala sestavni del diplomatskih aktivnosti sodobnih držav. Članek v tem smislu predstavlja poskus pokazati pozitivne strani te moderne metode, še posebej v informacijski dobi, ki jo ponuja za mednarodno komunikacijo in sodelovanje. Poseben poudarek je posvečen diplomacijam malih držav, upošteva dejstvo, da imajo omejene človeške in finančne vire. Besedilo se tudi ukvarja s pojavom lažnih novic, in sicer v smislu, kako jih javna diplomacija lahko razkriva in deluje preventivno. Predstavljena je tudi študija primera Republike Makedonije za obdobje 1991–2016. Pogledi svetovnih medijev nanjo so uporabni za oblikovanje konkretne strategije, ki naj bi zagotovila pozitivno podobo države.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: javna diplomacija, zunanje zadeve, lažne novice, ministrstvo za zunanje zadeve

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INTRODUCTION

The end of the Second World War and the established peace in the world announced the beginning of transformation of the classical diplomacy. The process of change was not only about the establishment of a multilateral diplomacy, along with the predominant bilateral diplomacy, but also about the adoption and application of new modern forms and methods in its action. In the period from the 1960s to the present days, several methods of diplomatic activity have been adopted and applied in various fields of interest of the international subjects in their international communication the political relations, economy, trade, science, culture etc. Depending on the area in which these diplomatic methods were applied, they also received appropriate names. Thus, in the diplomatic dictionary we can find the notion of cultural diplomacy, economic or trade diplomacy, virtual or internet diplomacy, and, of course, public diplomacy, which is discussed in this article.

BUT WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PUBLIC DIPLOMACY?

According to Nicholas J. Cull (2007) phrase, public diplomacy was first publicly used by the London Times newspaper, in January 1856. The article criticized the views of the US President Franklin Pierce, who, according to the Times, was trying to impress the English, but also his own citizens, including with some examples, those of public diplomacy.² The use of the term began to spread during the First World War in order to describe the new way - a cluster of diplomatic practice. In 1928, the reporter of Christian Science Monitor Reporter, J. Roscoe Drummond, in his award-winning essay, the public diplomacy era, emphasized the moral duty of the informative media to report on international affairs accurately and impartially, in order to reduce tensions.

Cull further states that the use of the term gradually takes its place, especially after the end of World War II. Until 1950, the use of the term public diplomacy significantly shifted to the realm of international information and propaganda. "It was not so important that the term is used differently, but that the practice of diplomacy and understanding were understood differently, and the key diplomatic events were now explicitly recognized as matters of public performance."³

2 Cull J., N., 'Public Diplomacy' Before Gullion: The Evolution of A Phrase, uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdfs/gullion.pdf.

3 Ibid.,

In the positive context of the application of public diplomacy, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, spoke in his speech in 1958, highlighting the following: “The value of public diplomacy in the United Nations will depend on the crucial measure of how far the responsible spokesman will find an opportunity to rise above the narrow tactics of the politics of international life, and to speak as a man of the aspirations and hopes that are all of humanity.”⁴

As to its definition in literature, we can find many definitions that from a different perspective represent the notion, meaning, goals and holders of public diplomacy. It seems that such an approach is also the most rational.

For example, the authors Charles Wolf, Jr. and Brian Rosen (2004), as one of the most responsive to the issue of public diplomacy, cited the following definition: “The US State Department defines public diplomacy as government-sponsored programs with the intention of informing or influencing public opinion in other countries.”⁵

For its part, Murrow Center,⁶ in one of its early published brochures, describes public diplomacy as follows: “Public diplomacy ... deals with the influence of public opinion on the establishment and execution of external policies. It covers the dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by the governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with one another; reporting on foreign affairs and its impact on politics; communication between those whose work is communication, as well as between diplomats and foreign correspondents, and the processes of intercultural communication.”

Professor Henrikson (2005) defines public diplomacy simply as: “Behavior in international relations by governments through public communication media and through deals with a wide range of non-governmental actors (political parties, corporations, trade associations, trade unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on, including influential individuals) in order to influence the policies and activities of other governments.”⁷

4 Cull J., N., 'Public Diplomacy' Before Gullion: The Evolution of A Phrase, uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdfs/gullion.pdf.

5 Wolf, Jr. C. and Rosen, B., 2004. *Public Diplomacy How to Think About and Improve It*, RAND Corporation.

6 Edmund A. Gullion, (former diplomat), Dean of the FletcherSchool, March 1966. <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy/Definitions>.

7 Henrikson, K. Alan. 2005 Professor of Diplomatic History, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy/Definitions>.

The USIA Director, Stanton H. Burnetta,⁸ who defines the term “public diplomat” also deserves attention: “The public diplomat is above all a diplomat. When we are the best, we must not differ from the good old definition of the diplomat. The adjective public does not apply so much to the way of work, but to the audience to which we address it. Stanton points out that “the public diplomat is not aimed at a diplomat from his rank in the foreign ministry, but his activity is aimed at the public of that state.”

The wide range of possibilities for acting enabled public diplomacy to come out from the overcoat of the bloc division of the world (US and USSR) and become an indispensable element in the foreign policy strategy of a significant number of modern states in the last three decades. It has become a very important tool in international communication, which enables the achievement of the desired goals of a state in its relations on a bilateral and multilateral basis. Its application finds a suitable place in the activities of international organizations too.

Before continuing with further elaboration, we need to make a parallel between public diplomacy and propaganda, bearing in mind the criticism of some theorists, who equate public diplomacy with propaganda or consider it to be its surrogate. For this purpose, I will use several facts: The term propaganda comes from the notion *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*,⁹ meaning the Assembly of the Roman Curia, a missionary organization founded by the Pope in 1622, whose jurisdiction and action in the name of Catholicism was above the missionary territories and related institutions.

Propaganda¹⁰ means highlighting the elements of any information that supports the positions of the one who dispose it, and suppress or exclude those who do not do it. It also means giving misleading statements even lies that can be used to create the desired effect on public opinion.

The term propaganda in Webster Dictionary is also defined as the spread of ideas, information or rumors in order to help or hurt an institution, cause, or individual. Therefore, propaganda is a material that is intended to convince or change public opinion. Although often varies in its form and technique, it always serves the same purpose. Propa-

8 Staar F., R. ed. *Public Diplomacy, USA Versus USSR*, Stanford, California: Cover Institution Stanford University, p. 81

9 www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/propaganda.

10 Ibid.,

ganda is a communication aimed at persuasion.¹¹ Hence, the negative connotation that is most often tied to this notion,¹² which is not necessarily always the case. For these reasons, the term public relations is increasingly used today.

Edward Murrow,¹³ the first director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), defined the difference between public diplomacy and propaganda as follows: “Public diplomacy is a more creative, open form of communication that is based on the idea of pluralism, while propaganda has a different structure - it deliberately narrows the possibilities for the other party.” In other words, “while propaganda represents a unilateral form of communication, public diplomacy in the dialogue includes the other party, because the process involves a certain degree of listening, and not just infiltrating information to the target group in the foreign public.”

Jan Melisen¹⁴ (2009) in his book “The New Public Diplomacy” in the section related to the separation of public diplomacy from propaganda says: “There are two key characteristics of propaganda, its historical baggage and publics. In general, propaganda is conceived as a concept with extremely negative connotations, amplified by memoirs of Nazi and Communist propaganda, the Cold War tactics, and more recently with so-called psychological operations in conflicts after the Cold War... A category such as propaganda simply cannot affect the contemporary diversity of relations between diplomatic practitioners and the growing awareness of the foreign public.”

ESTABLISHING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN PRACTICE

The process of acceptance, use and application of the term public diplomacy completes in a way with the formation of the Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy in 1965, and the establishment of the United States Information Agency - USIA. With this, public diplomacy received an institutional relationship, which marks the beginning of the period of application of this method in the activities of contemporary diplomacy.

11 <http://library.thinkquest.org/C0111500/whatis.htm>

12 It received negative connotations in the 20th century when totalitarian regimes (mainly Nazi Germany) used all means to distort the facts and spread only lies. <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/propaganda>

13 Mojzes Vrabec, Z., *Public Diplomacy and the Media*, p. 181.

14 Milissen, J., 2009. *The New Public Diplomacy: soft power in international relations*, Prosvetno delo, p. 42.

Call in his essay “Public Diplomacy before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase”, presents the introduction of the term public diplomacy as follows: “The reason why the term public diplomacy was launched in 1965 was the existence of a real need for such a concept in Washington. After ten years of its existence the US Information Agency, was in need of an alternative neutral - acceptable term for information against the hated term for propaganda as a new twist on the phrase upon which one could build new benevolent meaning. With the term public diplomacy Gullion has covered every aspect of the activity of the USIA and a number of cultural exchanges and functions, jealously guarded by the State Department. The phrase gave a solid identity to the career USIA diplomat, which was a step towards his isolation from the “vulgar” realm of public relations. Its use, together with the term “diplomacy”, explicitly contains USIA’s activities together with the State Department, as a legitimate body of US foreign relations.”

However, the widespread use of public diplomacy, as a special segment of contemporary diplomacy, began with the democratic changes in the world caused by the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, that is, the collapse of the Warsaw bloc and disintegration of the Soviet Union and the pronounced technical and technological development of the world.

Said Saddiki (2006) emphasizes that “The previous hard-power policy characteristic of the block-division of the world began to be replaced by a so-called soft power. Instead of demonstrating military power, radio, film, television, scientific exchanges, study trips and stays, culture, art and sports were increasingly used in international relations.”¹⁵ Any of the listed means aimed to achieve greater impact on the citizens of the state to which the activity of public diplomacy was targeted. At the beginning, the role of “special” radio stations was significant, such as “Voice of America”, “Radio Free Europe”, “BBC”, “Radio Moscow – Говорит Москва”, whose programs aimed to communicate and convey the ideals and achievements of governments to which they belonged. Following the radio, television has caused a real revolution in the mass media. With the formation of global broadcasters like CNN, NBC, BBC, Euro News, capable to “cover” every point of the Earth and directly – “live” to carry significant events in a specific country or territory, fi-

15 Saddiki, S., 2006. Alternatives, Turkish Journal of International Relations, Volume 4, Number 5, www.alternativesjournal.net/volume4/numb5 The main instruments in the implementation of the public diplomacy of the US State Department are publications, feature films, cultural exchanges, radio and television.

nally, an interaction was created between mass - media and diplomacy. Reporting on the spot about events - developments, such as social unrest, demonstrations, massive human rights violations, military actions or terrorist acts, has prevented non-democratic regimes from hiding their activities, while causing condemnation general public and a pressure from the international community.¹⁶

Eytan Gilboa's¹⁷ (2002) thesis on the CNN effect is based on "the assumption that the news can make a policy, or at least contribute to shaping the environment to create a political decision. The most important impact of new ICT, particularly the television channels, is a result of their broad coverage that has the following five characteristics: 1. It is broadcasted 24 hours a day; 2. It is transmitted in real time, 3. It is transmitted from any place in the world; 4. The title dominates; 5. It is oriented on live events."

In addition to the radio and television, scientific and educational exchanges, study trips and stays, culture, film art, sports, as well as specialized representative offices in the form of cultural information centers play an important role as means of action of the public diplomacy.

However, the most important place in the implementation of public diplomacy has been the Information Communication Technology (ICT) through the web portals, the Internet and the emergence of social networks, Face book, Twitter, etc., which created even greater opportunities for its operation. ICT has a special significance for the diplomacy of the small states, enabling them to use public diplomacy, which will be discussed in the further part of the paper.

But if we have presented the means by which public diplomacy is conducted, it is also necessary to define its goals in terms of its application by the diplomacy of modern states.

The American theorist and author of the famous work "Soft Power - The Measures to Success in the Word Politics", Josheph S. Nye, (2004)¹⁸ emphasizes the importance of non-military expressions and more subtle use of soft power, because they are the ones that are usually mani-

16 In this period, the term "CNN effect" appeared.

17 Gilboa, E., 2002. *The Global News Networks and US Policymaking in Defense and Foreign Affairs*, Working Paper, Harvard University, The Joan Shorenstein Center, http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research_Publications/Papers/Working_Papers/2002_6.pdf. p.99.

18 Nye, J.S., 2004. *Soft Power: The means to success in the world politics*, New York: Public Affairs, pp. 6-7.

fested in the diplomacy, which, at nonetheless, embodies and expresses much more than a force. Political leaders have long understood the power that comes from attracting.”

Mark Leonard,¹⁹ (2002) director of the Center for Foreign Policy, in his book *Public Diplomacy* states: “In essence, public diplomacy has a function to establish relations; to understand the needs of other countries, cultures and nations; to communicate our views, to correct misconceptions; and to look for areas in which we can find a common cause. The difference between the public and traditional diplomacy is that public diplomacy involves a wider group of people on both sides and wider interest groups that exceed the current interests of the government”...Further on the author presents “Hierarchical influence that public diplomacy can achieve in the following order:

- To increase people’s awareness of a country (to encourage them to think about it, to update the images, to change negative opinions).
- To increase respect for a country (to create positive perceptions, to achieve others from the same perspective to consider issues that are of global importance).
- To get people interested in a country (to strengthen ties - from educational reforms to scientific cooperation, to encourage people to see the country as an attractive destination for tourism, study, online learning, encourage them to buy our products, to encourage them to understand and accept our values).
- To influence people (to encourage companies to invest, to address the public support for our positions or politicians, to turn to us as a partner).
- In order for public diplomacy to achieve these goals, governments should be clear that it cannot be the one-dimensional process of transferring messages.
- One way of conceptualizing public diplomacy is to present it as Reactive, which implies reaction to current events at times when they occur, in a manner that is in line with our strategic goals; Proactive, creating an agenda of events through activities and events that are so designed to reinforce essential messages and influence perceptions; and building long-lasting relationships with overseas populations in order to gain recognition of our values and traditions, and to learn from theirs.”

19 Leonard, M., 2002. *Public diplomacy*, The Foreign Policy Centre, pp. 19-21

As for the holders of public diplomacy, they can be formally divided into two groups:

The first is made up of state officials under the jurisdiction of the country's foreign policy, which includes the presidents of the states, prime ministers, foreign ministers, ambassadors, diplomatic-consular representatives, other officials, who with their statements and foreign political activities in the international community promote national interests, safeguard the security of the country, build the profile of their country and contribute to creating mutual trust; and, The second group is made up of the representatives of civil society, where we meet NGOs, civil associations, prominent individuals from science, business, culture, arts, sports and others who with their status of new actors in international relations turn, through their actions, the attention of the world public or the public of a particular country on current issues of social, environmental, human rights, humanitarian and other spheres.²⁰

Their common denominator is the activities that should enable the implementation of the so-called soft power of the country, which implies building its reputation - image and values and providing appropriate positions in the international community. Hence, their interdependence emerges - a connection during the preparation and implementation of the state strategy for public diplomacy.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF SMALL STATES

If at the beginning public diplomacy was a "privilege" for the great states, over the past thirty years, this modern method is increasingly taking its place in the diplomacy of the small states. In the organizational structure of the ministries of foreign affairs, special units are formed that, in cooperation with the prime ministers and presidents offices devise, coordinate and implement the activities of the public diplomacy of the state.

According to the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "the main mission for small and medium-sized countries is to be visible, to say that they exist and what values are important for them, and public diplomacy is closely related to the foreign political activities and it helps to create such a state profile. Small states also have to deal with another prob-

20 There are numerous examples in everyday life when the name of a State is bound - associated with a well-known athlete, artist or actor.

lem, which is limited financial and human resources, even for public diplomacy activities. The solution is to specialize and to focus all available resources on only one or several topics. This means that their volume or width of messages and images should be very limited. At the outset, the legitimacy of public diplomacy of the small states is high, given the limited resources of their power, that is, they are not in doubt about their ambitions, ideas or intentions-intentions are considered cooperative.²¹

According to Josef Bator, “public diplomacy for small and medium-sized nations is an opportunity to provide influence and shape the international agenda in a way that goes beyond their limited sources of power (such as size, military, and economic strength).”

But, until the achievement of the desired reputation - the image of the country, a number of preparatory activities and their holders from several sectors of society are needed, as well as carefully defined goals transformed into a generally accepted strategy of action. It is this formula that can be read from the official page of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2006, under the then leadership of Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, the Norwegian Forum for Public Diplomacy was established as one of the key recommendations in the final report presented by the Public Diplomacy Committee. In his address, Minister Støre outlined the following: “How does the rest of the world see Norway today? What kind of reputation do we have in the future? A beautiful country with large areas of untouched nature, a nation rich in oil, or a facilitator of peace who wants to make the world a little better? Good reputation is important for a country, and it can create consecutive effects that have consequences for everything from trade and tourism to investment and influence. A good reputation will enhance our chances of attracting tourists in Norway, will improve access for Norwegian companies in the market, will provide acceptance for our political views and presentation of Norwegian culture. A strong image is important for Norway’s cultural, economic and political influence abroad. The forum aims to encourage debate and dialogue between the authorities, business sector, academia and other stakeholders, on how and in which areas we can develop an organized strategy of public diplomacy.”

Of particular importance for the implementation of public diplomacy is the application of the principle of partnership in the co-operation

21 <http://www.exchangediplomacy.com/peterkova/8>.

between the state and the private sector that encompasses non-governmental organizations, associations and individuals. The involvement of other entities implies the decentralization of the state's activities in public diplomacy and at the same time incorporates the public in the creation and implementation of the foreign policy strategy. The absence of these couple-diplomatic participants generally makes it difficult to implement the process itself.

THE USE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN UNMASKING THE FAKE NEWS

In recent years, we have witnessed a new phenomenon in the information field called Fake News. It is about fictitious information with false content aimed at grossly distorting current events, personalities, or news. One of the definitions reads: "Fake news is news, stories or hoaxes created to deliberately misinform or deceive readers. Usually, these stories are created to either influence people's views, push a political agenda or cause confusion and can often be a profitable business for on line publishers. Fake news stories can deceive people by looking like trusted websites or using similar names and web addresses to reputable news organizations".²² But what needs to be emphasized is that Fake news contains three basic elements. According to Martina Chapman (Media Literacy Expert) these are: mistrust, misinformation and manipulation.²³

Fake news is a serious problem, whether it's about some important question, an event or an occurrence inside a country in order to discredit or disrupt the stability of the current government or to defile the reputation of the state beyond its borders. The possibilities and the speed that the Internet offered through social networks and the huge number of portals, this news makes them highly resistant and tough. During the US presidential election held two years ago, Macedonia became the focus of the spread of false news against Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton, who after the elections blamed that they had an impact on the outcome of the vote. Face book owner, Mark Zuckerberg, told CNN that in 2017 they found many false profiles from Macedonia from where false news have been spread, testifying before the US Congress over the abuse of personal data by millions of users on that social network. He undertook some of the responsibility as to the safeguards measures, by announcing improvement of the whole con-

²² <https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/what-is-fake-news/>

²³ Ibid.,

cept of work, which could have a positive impact on public diplomacy of states from the dangers of Fake News that have a negative impact on major political processes, for example elections or referendum as in The United State of America, now in Macedonia, etc., as well as on the image of the states.

The measures of confrontation taken by individual states like China, Russia, Iran, etc., in the form of censorship or closing cannot give the desired results. On the contrary, such measures may also have a counter effect of “forbidden fruit”. The fight against Fake News is necessary to be guided through well-developed education system for the wider population, especially among young people who need to gain the necessary level of critical thinking and check the source of this news. Of course, the most important role should play the states through the legal regulation of this phenomenon.

A particular problem arises when Fake News is used by certain undemocratic regimes for achieving political goals, as was the example with the previous Macedonian Government (2006-2016). The previous government did all of that and one of the tools were government advertising and government propaganda, on which it spent vast sums of money from the citizens, to propagate their truth. Chief Editors were being appointed by a political dictate and the news was being edited from one political center. On the other side, opposition had a terribly limited access to traditional media, and censorship was present everywhere.

As for the role of the public diplomacy it is expected adequate mobility and efficiency not only in the “coverage” of Fake news, but also in their interception. This requires the creation of special departments in the Foreign Ministry and the creation of professional diplomats trained for rapid and independent action in the diplomatic network of the country. After all it is required by the new state in the world of the Internet. Consultations i.e. guidelines for certain issues need to be performed in the same moment, without waiting for the diplomatic mail as earlier. On the other hand, access to the websites of the foreign ministries, international organizations, embassies, consulates and cultural information centers, where official opinions, announcements or adopted international documents are published, enables taking them without the physical presence of diplomats. It is necessary to update them daily.

This requires a well-designed state strategy and a *modus operandi* system for the operation of professional diplomats trained, *inter alia*, with knowledge in the field of public relations (PR), as well as individuals who will be in charge of social networks. To them, it is necessary to include other representatives who communicate with the public.

THE NECESSITY OF APPLICATION OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

After proclaiming its independence, the Republic of Macedonia²⁴ faced several issues of vital importance for its further social and political development: international recognition, the establishment of international organizations, diplomatic representation and above all ensuring the national security of the country. In front of the Macedonian diplomacy, there was a challenge for representing and profiling one's own state in the international community, something that the Yugoslav Federation was doing on its behalf. Implementation of this agenda was not easy at all for us if we take into account the initially restrained attitudes of the international community towards the process of recognition of the former Yugoslav republics, the insufficient information of the interlocutors, and the open opposition to the establishment of our country by certain Western countries. To this, we should add the limited financial and staffing opportunities that Macedonian diplomacy initially faced.

The general picture of the new Macedonian state comprised of external and internal political factors in the period 1991 - 2015 was perceived as follows:

At the international level there were negative attitudes and propaganda of some of our neighbors as to our national and identity features (people, language, culture), based on great national - chauvinistic ideas reaching even to the territorial integrity of our country thus slowing the integration process of the country into the international community.

Internally, the absence of state maturity of the political actors and their deep division along ethnic, religious and ideological affiliation dominated, causing frequent political crises which were being resolved by international facilitators, thus putting into question the functionality of the state itself and its necessary progress.

As a result, the perception that the world's information houses (BBC, CNN, Euro news), the CIA, or the search engines had about the Republic of Macedonia was not positive.

24 At a referendum held on September 8, 1991.

For example, the Encyclopedia Britannica will state: “If the Republic of Macedonia is able to successfully meet its economic challenges, maintain good relations with the Albanian minority, and resolve the name dispute with Greece, it will prove that it is possible a true multinational state in the Balkans to be created.”²⁵

BBC in the country profile section will state: “Macedonia has seen steady economic growth since independence, but remains one of the poorest countries in Europe with a high unemployment rate. Although Macedonia was confirmed as an EU candidate country in December 2005, the name issue continues to slow down its progress towards full EU membership.”²⁶

CIA: “Regardless of the fact that Macedonia became an EU candidate in 2005, the country still faces challenges, including full implementation of the Framework Agreement, improving relations with Bulgaria, implementing democratic reforms, and stimulating economic growth and development.”²⁷

CNN: “Given that it is still a relatively young country, the number of Macedonians who have left their mark on the world stage is relatively small.”²⁸

The negative external and internal conditions culminated in the last ten years (2008 - 2016), a period in which the state faced a full partisanism of the state and local government, causing the effect of a captured state. As a result, a process of quiet international isolation took place. This situation has dramatically changed with the democratic changes in the political scene in 2016. The new political authority began to resolve open issues with its neighbors, concluding the Treaty of Friendship with Bulgaria and the Agreement to resolve the name dispute with Greece, opening the possibility of finally fulfilling the national strategic goals - membership in NATO and the EU.

In such constellations, the need for applying a strategically well-thought-out, nationally accepted and organized public diplomacy becomes imperative in the following period. But in order to successfully

25 <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/354223/Macedonia/42788/Economy>,

26 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17550407>,

27 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mk.html>,

28 <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/09/30/world/europe/macedonia-country-profile/index.html?iref=allsearch>

implement it, it is necessary to consider a number of issues, of which the most important ones are: What is the state of public diplomacy in the Republic of Macedonia? What are the reasons that hinder the achievement of the desired level of implementation of this important segment of the work of our diplomatic service? And, what is needed to improve the performance of the Macedonian diplomacy?

The situation in which the public diplomacy is as follows: Its implementation is under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its diplomatic consular network, and according to the scope of activities, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Institute for Macedonian Language, the Agency for Tourism, the Agency for Sport, as well as budget cultural art houses, associations and associations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the carrier of public diplomacy, did not have a separate unit in charge of initiating, planning and conducting public diplomacy. This kind of activity was carried out by campaigning without any thoughtful strategy. With the changes in the organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2007, for the first time a special sector for public diplomacy was established.²⁹With the current Regulations on internal organization of MFA in 2013,³⁰ there is a Department for Public Diplomacy composed of Publications Unit and Unit for coordination of promotional activities.

According to the established tasks, the Sector is in charge of: “planning and implementation of activities in the field of public diplomacy; preparation of published materials, planning of promotional activities in individual countries and target groups, organization of tribunes and forums on certain issues of foreign policy; participation in the preparation of the performances of the Minister in terms of public relations; editing the web portal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, preparing information on certain current regional and global topics and issues, proposing elements for adequate presentation of the country’s positions in international forums and media, proposals for dynamics of activities, preparation of studies, analyzes, elaborates, plans and information and other needs and tasks within the competence of units within its composition.”

29 This organizational unit was established for the first time in 2007, and it has been functioning as an independent or as a part of the Directorate, functioning to date.

30 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia - Strategic Plan 2013-2015
www.mfa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/.../Strateshki-plan-2013-2015.pdf,

In the several years since the existence of the Sector, initial activities were completed in terms of setting up a web page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embassies and consulates in the world, containing some useful information about the Macedonian state, notifications of economic, consular and touristic nature, as well as external links - more important Internet addresses of interest to visitors on the site. However, the absence of their regular maintenance is obvious, except for those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which indicates that we are in the initial phase.

But the biggest problem faced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the massive partisanship of its personnel. This has contributed to its capture, as were actually all institutions and the whole state in general, fact that was also noted by the European Union Commission. As a result of this situation, we received a party-political diplomacy in the classical diplomatic sphere and in what could be called public diplomacy. In fact, after only one year of the adoption of the Law on Foreign Affairs (2006), it has experienced very significant changes that disrupt the establishment of the principles of professionalism, career system, human resources policy and so on.

As a result of these changes,³¹ the diplomatic consular network of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs came to a dramatic change in the diplomatic composition of the Diplomatic and Consular Missions. Out of a total of 56 embassies, permanent missions, general consulates and liaison offices, about 40 were run by non-professional, politically appointed diplomats, whose mandate ends with the MFA. Moreover, the appointees were often with professions that did not have any common ground with international politics or diplomacy. But they were in function of the regime. The situation was similar with diplomats in senior positions who were without any previous diplomatic experience. The same situation was also within the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the appointment of civil servants in managerial positions, a condition enabled by the aforementioned changes in the Foreign Affairs Act.

The result of this condition follows: The level of this modern diplomat-

31 By comparison, the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, according to the latest amendments to the Law on Foreign Affairs, are professional diplomats. In Art. 27 concerning the election of heads of diplomatic missions and consular missions shall be carried out between diplomats who have at least 14 years of working experience, that is, have at least three years of diplomatic service in a diplomatic mission or consular post. In this way Slovenia provides full professionalism to its diplomatic staff. Foreign Affairs Act - official consolidated text (ZZZ-1-UPB1, Official Gazette RS No. 113/03).

ic method compared to Slovenia, Croatia, Estonia, Denmark and other countries, leads to the conclusion that public diplomacy hardly meets the real needs of our country.

In order to overcome this situation, it is necessary to undertake a more active public diplomacy, which should become imperative in our day-to-day action in this field, with the sole aim of a complete positive change of the reputation of the country, followed by activities aimed at our recognition in the world - nation branding.

But what are the reasons that hinder the achievement of the desired level of this very important segment and how to overcome it? In particular, they are: The lack of a sound strategy that would continuously implement this type of activity; Insufficient understanding of the significance of public diplomacy in the structures that are most important for its implementation; Absence of a more meaningful dialogue and cooperation among the holders of public diplomacy and representatives of civil society and individuals in the public sphere, filled with concrete programs that would be organized in a systematic way; Reviewing the current approach of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in terms of information and communication programs for both the central service and the diplomatic network; Reorganizing the current position of the Public Diplomacy Sector by joining some of the organizational units that carry out related activities, as well as establishing operational links with the directorates for political bilateral and multilateral relations, thus obtaining the necessary role; Finally overcoming the acute problem with the financing of more significant projects and information logistics. Publishing of a dozen number of publications, as stated in the mentioned Strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the organization of suitable lectures on certain topics (mostly in front of the domestic public), can not by any means be a comprehensive approach to public diplomacy.

In positioning the future functioning of public diplomacy as one of the most important segments of the work of the Macedonian MFA and as a carrier of public diplomacy, it should also use and practically apply the experience of Norway. It is necessary to set in our approach the questions - the guidelines that former Norwegian Minister Jonas GahrStøre set in 2006, when setting up the Norwegian Forum for Public Diplomacy, which are: How does the rest of the world see Macedonia today? What kind of reputation do we have in the future? Encour-

age debate and dialogue between the authorities, the business sector, the academic community and other actors, on how and in which areas we can develop an organized strategy of public diplomacy.

Here is the content of the formula for success, according to which good reputation is very important for a country, and it can create ripple effects that have consequences on everything, from trade and tourism to investment and influence. A good reputation will enhance our chances of attracting tourists and it will improve the access of Macedonian companies in the market, it will provide acceptance for our political views and presentation of Macedonian culture. The strong image is important for the cultural, economic and political influence of our country abroad.

For that purpose it is necessary to train the available staff in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and establish cooperation with the specialized institutions that will be able to implement the determined strategy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its diplomatic consular network in accordance with their scope of activities will have to coordinate their activities and the activities of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Institute for Macedonian Language, the Agency for Tourism, the Agency for Sport, and the budget cultural art houses, and associations. Given the fact that Macedonia is among the small states actions of public diplomacy should be limited to a few topics.

Finally, the success of public diplomacy is in a direct correlation with the political stability of the state, raising the level of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, the freedom of expression, that is, the application of all contemporary democratic standards that determine the initial picture of one state in the international community.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Public Diplomacy in everyday international activity of the states has become an integral part of the activities of contemporary diplomacy. The underlying reasons that led to its popularity and application are: First, it is a modern method of communication that is fully compatible with the development of information technology, the Internet and the emergence of social media that marked the beginning of the 21st century. Second, the opportunities it offers to

diplomatic missions of small states, which are limited both financial and in human resources in their international representation and the implementation of certain international activities and goals.

The successful implementation of this modern diplomatic method depends on several factors that every diplomatic service needs to carry out. This involves the organizational and institutional establishment of Public Diplomacy in the structure of the foreign ministries, as its coordinators and bearers as well as the creation of a professional staff task force who, in addition to diplomatic skills, will be trained to implement this type of activities in their daily work routine, until the adoption of a state strategy that will contain the goals and methods of its implementation.

The example and short analysis of the case of the Republic of Macedonia shows exactly this.

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