

**SECTION 4. HUMANITARIAN, CULTURAL,
AND COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS OF
INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

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**DIGITALIZATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND CULTURAL
DIVERSITY. AN EXAMINATION OF COMMUNICATIVE
CHALLENGES FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

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The transformation of the contemporary international order is increasingly shaped not only by geopolitical competition, but also by significant changes in the communicative environments through which global interactions unfold. Digital interconnectivity is becoming more accelerated while social media platforms and digital diplomatic practices have become central arenas in which international solidarity is articulated, negotiated, and at times fragmented. The communicative dimensions of solidarity are no longer mediated exclusively through traditional diplomatic channels, but through networked digital infrastructures that connect states, institutions, and citizens in real time. This article explores how communicative structures influence solidarity examining the intersection of social media ecosystems, multicultural contexts, misinformation and digital diplomacy. It argues that

the resilience of international solidarity today is closely linked to the quality and security of digital interaction. The ability of diverse societies to navigate multiculturalism and information flows without being eroded by fragmentation and distrust is also explored due to its relevance in society.

The importance of navigating multiculturalism and polarization

Due to media and migration developments, local contexts are becoming more diverse and cultural patterns are changing as a result of globalised interconnectivity, which involves acculturation processes that impact large numbers of people through direct or media-facilitated intercultural contact between people from various cultural backgrounds [1, p. 1]. As increasing cultural diversity reshapes local environments, identity formation may become more complex, making political identity and ideological affiliation more influential in how individuals perceive and engage with others. According to research, a strong determinant of social and political behaviour is political identity, partisanship and ideological affinity which play a major role in how we perceive, assess, and engage with those around us [2, p. 378]. When competition between groups is very strong, people become more aware of which group they belong to and are more likely to feel hostility and dislike toward members of the other group [2, p. 378]. Political polarisation is made worse by the occurrence of echo chambers, in which people are solely consuming material that supports their opinions, making it challenging for individuals to participate in productive debates [3, p. 45]. As group attachments increasingly shape how individuals interpret difference, the development of personal competencies that foster empathy and intercultural engagement may help sustain more balanced forms of living together. Obtaining a fulfilling, successful, and peaceful life trajectory is becoming a personal endeavour that calls for abilities like basic life competencies as cultural traditions grow less static and become more diversified, the results of a study showing how certain life competencies are essential for adjusting to cultural diversity, finding purpose in life, and fostering positive cross-cultural relationships [1, p. 11–12]. Other findings show that positive dialogue between individuals with differing political views has a depolarizing effect, as users who make favorable references to the other group become more likely to continue engaging in constructive interactions across ideological divides [2, p. 390].

Relevance of social media and digital diplomacy

If identity and intergroup dynamics influence how individuals relate to one another, then the communication infrastructures that mediate these interactions acquire broader social significance. Findings underscore the central role of social media in shaping perceptions of insecurity, either amplifying or mitigating feelings of risk depending on patterns of information consumption, and highlight the need, in an increasingly

digitalized era, for comprehensive strategies combining platform regulation, media literacy, and informed public discourse, as well as differentiated public policies tailored to the specific concerns of diverse sociodemographic groups [4, p. 1]. How the public understands and responds to emergencies is also strongly influenced by online platforms, as social networking sites play an important role in the receiving and distribution of information concerning crises [5, p. 1]. Analysing the phenomenon of misinformation, with its causes and consequences is also especially relevant to this context, due to the impact it can have on communities and the international environment. Misinformation is defined as “information that is false, but not intended to cause harm. For example, individuals who don’t know a piece of information is false may spread it on social media in an attempt to be helpful” [6, p. 5]. This challenge can cause general fear and misunderstanding, erode trust in authorities and official sources, and, especially in times of emergency, obstruct efficient public-response agency communication [5, p. 9]. In this sense, misinformation is not only a matter of incorrect content, but also a question of how societies maintain common reference points. Where shared understanding becomes unstable, both civic cooperation and international solidarity may depend increasingly on the quality of communicative practices across political, cultural, and institutional domains.

Considering the communicative dimension of social life as inherently vulnerable to distortion and fragmentation, institutional efforts to foster dialogue through digital channels acquire broader significance, as they may help strengthen trust and support more cooperative forms of international engagement. In this respect, digital diplomacy emerges as a relevant field of inquiry, as it sits at the intersection of technological infrastructure, political responsibility, and the cultivation of transnational understanding. Digital diplomacy is a contemporary framework that uses communication technologies to enhance dialogue, collaboration, and comprehension among countries, entities, and individuals, enabling governments and other actors to interact in real time, amplify underrepresented voices, and promote equitable engagement in peace initiatives [3, p. 39]. It encompasses the development of international rules regulating state conduct in cyberspace, the formation of cybersecurity partnerships, the sharing of intelligence on cyber threats, and collaborative efforts to safeguard vital infrastructure [7, p. 59]. Digital diplomacy gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic as travel limitations forced authorities to count largely on digital platforms. AI tools support data analysis, automate routine tasks, inform decision-making, and counter misinformation to strengthen public diplomacy, while blockchain is emerging as a secure and transparent tool for verifying agreements, managing digital identities, and ensuring the integrity

of humanitarian assistance delivery [3, p. 41]. Taken together, the analysis suggests that the quality of digital communication increasingly shapes how solidarity is expressed, sustained, or weakened across culturally diverse societies, particularly in moments of crisis. Future research and policy discussions may therefore benefit from approaching digital diplomacy, media practices, intercultural dialogue and emerging technologies not as separate domains, but as interconnected responsibilities that require sustained attention.

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