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**PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY AS A TOOL FOR PROMOTING
RUSSIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE FOREIGN POLICY SPHERE**

Speciality:5.5.4. International Relations, Global and Regional Studies

Abstract

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Relevance of the research topic. This is due to the fact that the recent deterioration of the international situation, the decline in opportunities for political contacts between representatives of the executive branch, and the information war unleashed against Russia significantly increase the importance of interparliamentary cooperation as an important instrument of state foreign policy. In the modern world, conflicts are becoming increasingly complex and nonlinear. In recent years, it has become clear that traditional methods of conflict resolution based on force and the use of military might are not always effective. In such circumstances, the use of diplomatic tools is becoming a key factor in achieving sustainable peace. In 2023, more than 180 regional conflicts occurred worldwide. This is the highest number in 30 years. The defining feature of the modern global "conflict landscape" is their intractability.

In this regard, the evolution of the tensions between Russia and Ukraine preceding the 2014 coup d'état is a telling example. An analysis of the agendas of the State Duma and Federation Council meetings from 2010 to 2014 reveals that the topics of bills concerning relations with Ukraine were entirely determined by the Russian executive branch, including issues such as gas tariffs, the terms for the deployment of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, and so on. This means that the development of relations between the Ukrainian and Russian parliaments was limited to matters of Russia's national and economic security, to the detriment of improving relations between Ukrainian and Russian societies. In essence, parliamentarians approved bills drafted by the executive branch, thereby missing out on the opportunity to establish personal relationships between the two countries' deputies, effectively following the decisions of the executive branch of both countries.

Clearly, the parliamentary corps' untimely involvement in the Ukrainian issue did not contribute to the resolution of the interstate tensions that culminated in the Special Military Operation. The relevance of this dissertation topic is determined by the rapidly changing geopolitical situation and the growing role of state actors in the international arena. In today's context, where traditional channels of diplomacy often face limitations, parliamentary diplomacy as a form of interstate interaction is

particularly important. It enables direct contacts between legislative bodies of different countries, facilitating the formation of favorable public opinion, the advancement of national interests, and the resolution of complex international problems.

The relevance of this research topic stems from a number of factors shaping the current landscape of international relations and Russia's role in them. First, in the context of a constantly changing geopolitical environment, growing global challenges and threats, and evolving forms and methods of foreign policy implementation, traditional diplomacy often proves insufficient. New, unconventional tools capable of fostering direct dialogue, establishing trust, and shaping a constructive agenda are becoming especially important.

Secondly, parliamentary diplomacy, as one of the most dynamically developing formats of interstate cooperation, is demonstrating its effectiveness as an efficient mechanism for advancing national interests. It allows for direct contact between representatives of the legislative branch, bypassing bureaucratic procedures and often rigid formal frameworks, facilitating a better understanding of each other's positions, the search for compromises, and the development of mutually beneficial solutions.

Third, for the Russian Federation, which seeks to strengthen its position on the international stage, resist unilateral approaches, and promote the formation of a multipolar world order, the development and effective use of parliamentary diplomacy is of strategic importance. In the context of information confrontation and sanctions pressure, parliamentary diplomacy can become an important tool for fostering a positive image of Russia, clarifying its foreign policy, and consolidating support at the interparliamentary level.

Foreign policy cannot be the exclusive prerogative of the executive branch, and while parliamentary diplomacy cannot, in principle, replace the actions of the executive branch, it serves as an additional channel for facilitating the resolution of complex foreign policy issues.

The perception of parliament as both a state actor and a representative of the interests of certain social groups, as well as the business community, gives the legislative body so-called “double legitimacy” and allows it to establish interaction where traditional diplomacy efforts are ineffective.

This interpretation of parliamentary diplomacy was defined at the conference of heads of national parliaments held in New York in 2000 in connection with the Millennium Assembly, where it was stated that parliaments are the embodiment of the sovereignty of the people and can legitimately contribute to the process of expressing the will of the state on the international level.

Parliamentary diplomacy, as a form of diplomatic interaction, can play a vital role in political conflicts. Russia, as one of the world's leading powers, has national interests that must be protected and defended. Parliamentary diplomacy techniques allow the Russian Federation to effectively represent and defend its interests, as well as find compromises with other countries. This is important for reducing tensions and strengthening international security. In recent years, new methods of generating conflict in the international arena have become increasingly popular, and these techniques are now at the disposal of our country's Western competitors.

A scholarly understanding of the nature, mechanisms, and applications of parliamentary diplomacy in Russia's interests is a pressing task. The lack of in-depth, comprehensive research in this area, summarizing practical experience and offering evidence-based recommendations, limits its potential use. Therefore, research into this topic is timely and relevant, contributing to the effectiveness of Russia's foreign policy.

Purpose of the study – identification of mechanisms and technologies of parliamentary diplomacy that contribute to the promotion of Russia's national interests and the inclusion of parliamentary diplomacy in political and managerial activities at the stage of forming political decisions in the foreign policy sphere.

Research objectives:

1. To explore the theoretical foundations of the genesis of the formation of the “national interest”: essence, structure, actors, mechanisms and technologies of protection and promotion.
2. To examine the main approaches to the study of parliamentary diplomacy as an instrument of soft power in the context of the implementation of political interests
3. To identify the specific features of the state's foreign policy activities to promote Russia's national interests, defining the place and role of parliamentary diplomacy in preventing interstate conflicts.
4. To reveal the essence, goals, actors, role and place of parliamentary diplomacy in the system of foreign policy activities of the state aimed at protecting and promoting the national interests of Russia.
5. To identify the mechanisms and technologies of parliamentary diplomacy necessary for the protection and promotion of Russia's national interests in foreign policy, including those used to prevent interstate conflicts.
6. Develop proposals for improving mechanisms and technologies for protecting and promoting Russia's national interests using parliamentary diplomacy tools at the political decision-making stage.

Object of study – National interests of Russia.

Subject of research – Parliamentary diplomacy as a tool for promoting the national interests of the Russian Federation in foreign policy.

Research hypothesis – The idea is that incorporating parliamentary diplomacy into the political and managerial process of formulating and making political decisions in order to advance national interests in foreign policy will help build trusting relationships between parliamentarians through interparliamentary interaction, which, in turn, will help reduce the risk of interstate conflicts. Should they arise, this will help mitigate the potential for conflict already in the early stages of the evolution of interstate contradictions, when the parties' interconnected practical actions to resolve the conflict are carried out within a peaceful paradigm of seeking compromise, avoiding military confrontation. This also applies to the

peaceful resolution of interstate conflicts, during which tensions between the parties are reduced and a mutually acceptable compromise is reached.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research. The author relies on sociocentric paradigm, which unites the broadest group of theoretical ideas about the social origins of politics and concepts related to the study of national interests. The views of various political science schools are presented, among them are the classical concepts of national interest (T. Hobbes, J. Locke, N. Machiavelli, C. Montesquieu, B. Spinoza), the left-radical trend - national interests as the subject of formation and development of socio-political conflicts (F. Nietzsche, E. Fromm), the conservative trend - national interests as the interests of the current political elite (M. Weber, L. Gumplowicz), the liberal trend - national interests as a natural result of the development of a market economy and the strengthening of the political influence of economic entities (J. Mill, A. Tocqueville), the democratic-utopian trend - national interests as the primary basis for achieving social harmony and agreement (A. Saint-Simon, C. Fourier), the revolutionary socialist trend - national interests as the interests of the working class (K. Marx, V.I. Lenin), the revolutionary radical trend - national interests as the driving force of the revolutionary movement (M.A. Bakunin, P.A. Kropotkin). and also used are the concepts of political space (P. Bourdieu, G.W.F. Hegel, I. Kant), theories of realism (R. Niebuhr) and neorealism (K. Waltz); the concept of forming public opinion with the help of political communication (W. Lippmann).

The methodological basis of the study is based on the following approaches:

- systemic-historical approach (collection, analysis and interpretation of historical facts, and their systematization);
- communicative (establishing relationships, exchanging information, emotions) and network (exchanging values and interests) approaches;
- technological approach (algorithmization of foreign policy activities);
- institutional approach (studying the activities of parliament, determining the effectiveness of its activities);

- normative and descriptive approaches (research into decision-making, analysis of factors and situations in the foreign policy activities of parliament).

Scientific novelty of the study:

1. The author's approach to the study of the national interests of Russian society in modern political conditions has been developed,

based on:

- correlation of the concepts of "nation", "national interests", "national relations", "national idea", "nationalism",
- on the construction of key theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding the national interests of Russian society and the state (constructivist, institutional, instrumentalist, historical, ethnocultural, geopolitical approaches);

aimed at interpreting Russian national interests through the prism of the effectiveness of the public administration system (constitutionality of government, democracy, accountability, balance, openness, adequacy of response to changes in the external environment, compliance with current institutional and procedural norms and rules, separation of powers).

2. The specificity of modern parliamentary diplomacy is defined, which is becoming not an auxiliary instrument of foreign policy activity, but an independent mechanism with significant regulatory and compensatory potential, capable of effectively countering the growing uncontrollability of modern international relations.

3. The definition of “parliamentary diplomacy” has been clarified based on the following positions:

- technologies and technical and practical tools for formulating and implementing foreign policy – improving the regulatory framework for bilateral interaction, exercising arbitration powers within the framework of mediation, harmonizing partnerships, etc.;
- direct and latent actions of a negotiating and conciliatory nature by official representatives of the political leadership, employees of government structures and diplomatic agencies;

- special techniques and methods of parliamentary cooperation, implementation of humanitarian projects, participation in scientific and practical conferences and round tables, based on the tools of the Soft Power concept, used in diplomatic practice;
- the implementation of electoral rights, the articulation of political claims, the construction of the institutional design of the political regime, etc., as features of the political functionality of legislative bodies in the implementation of foreign policy through the representation of the legitimate rights and interests of citizens;
- expansion of the administrative and political functions of parliament as a representative body of state power and clarification of the official duties of the executive branch of government as mechanisms for ensuring institutional and departmental control over political decisions made and maintaining optimal political communication;
- problematic aspects of interstate cooperation in the form of ideas and concepts for maintaining conciliation procedures, exchanging positions, developing compromise solutions, etc., formulated within the framework of defining and achieving national goals and objectives.

4. Forms of parliamentary diplomacy in the new international context have been identified, representing a tool for open dialogue, allowing for the development of interregional ties, strengthening trust, and finding compromise solutions to interstate problems.

5. The technologies of parliamentary diplomacy aimed at promoting the national interests of Russia in the context of interstate conflicts are defined, the technologization of parliamentary diplomacy in ensuring national interests is demonstrated (network, digital, hybrid technologies of parliamentary diplomacy), a typology of parliamentary diplomacy technologies is given (integration/destructive, conventional/non-conventional, open/latent types of parliamentary diplomacy technologies), vectors for the implementation of national interests through parliamentary diplomacy technologies are determined (expanding the geography of participation of parliamentary diplomacy subjects, deepening the multilateralism

and interdependence of formal and informal political participants, strengthening the role of new media in global political processes).

6. It has been proven that the use of parliamentary diplomacy techniques in interstate conflicts is driven by Russia's national interests, strengthening state sovereignty, enhancing economic performance, minimizing the use of material resources in achieving national interests, and increasing accountability in foreign policy decision-making. Parliamentary diplomacy, therefore, should be integrated into the state's political and managerial activities during the decision-making phase of foreign policy.

Provisions submitted for defense:

1. The political and historical context of the formulation and achievement of the national interests of Russian society is associated with the identification of the following logical stages:

- the formation and development of Russian statehood, which presupposes ensuring territorial integrity and socio-political security;
- strengthening of political institutions and the state apparatus as a whole, accompanied by foreign policy activism and expansion of the territorial borders of the Russian state;
- the actualization of ideological and political discussions on the topic of Westernism and Slavophilism, associated with the search for arguments in favor of the uniqueness of Russia's historical path and the justification of ongoing state reforms based on the preservation of folk religious and cultural traditions, the acquisition of national identity, and the strengthening of the authority of political power.

2. Parliamentary diplomacy is proposed to be defined as the activities of a national representative authority in the sphere of foreign policy, limited by relevant competencies and aimed at ensuring political stability and advancing the state's national interests. This interpretation is the most fruitful in that it leaves room for integration into various theoretical frameworks. Schools of international relations in the process of analyzing specific political practices. Parliamentary diplomacy today

requires considering the key issues in the development of international relations, determining the levels of political and legal support and regulation, and updating the political and administrative functions of parliamentarians. This reveals the following technologies of modern parliamentary diplomacy:

- constructing a positive political image of the state abroad;
- organization of formal and informal interparliamentary meetings;
- establishing optimal political contacts with representatives of the systemic establishment;
- optimization of interaction with international organizations and institutions of global political governance;
- institutionalization of legislative support for foreign policy and the fulfillment of international obligations of a particular state;
- updating the global political and legal agenda, taking into account potential responses to certain global challenges and threats;
- participation in the conduct of mediation and mediation;
- ensuring accountability for the work of national parliaments and inter-parliamentary structures;
- maintaining information transparency of the discussion and approval of legislative initiatives under consideration and subsequent access to adopted regulatory documents in electronic format (the concept of E-parliament);
- initiating a negotiation process using special tools to reduce conflict potential.

3. Parliamentary diplomacy is an effective tool for reducing tensions and improving international relations in the face of escalating sanctions pressure. It is flexible, informal, and free from restrictions, facilitating effective conflict resolution. Parliamentary diplomacy in the Russian Federation, as a tool for advancing national interests, entails exploring new models of foreign policy that adapt to current political realities.

4. Parliamentary diplomacy technologies are determined by declared national interests. The specific nature of such technologies manifests itself in crisis and

conflict processes in conjunction with policy documents for safeguarding national interests. Algorithmic methods and techniques for implementing parliamentary foreign policy activities form the basis of parliamentary diplomacy technologies. The essence of such technologies is embedded in the theories, concepts, and paradigms of parliamentary diplomacy, political communication, and political technologies. The technologicalization of parliamentary diplomacy is based on subject-to-subject relationships. It is necessary to expand interparliamentary ties, cooperation, and enhance their effectiveness.

5. Modern parliamentary diplomacy aims to resolve conflicts while pursuing the national interests of various countries. The tasks facing parliamentary diplomacy include optimizing the global political process or its regional segment; these are needed to change the quality of international relations. Currently, the positive potential for fostering interaction between the Russian Federation and countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, and the Middle East has increased in the face of Western political and economic aggression, and the eastern vector in the development of interstate relations has expanded. The sanctions imposed by the "collective" West on Russia have activated the internal resources of its economies.

6. The complication of the international situation in recent years, the reduction of opportunities for political contacts between representatives of the executive branch, and the information war unleashed against Russia have significantly increase the importance of interparliamentary Cooperation as an important instrument of state foreign policy. Parliamentary diplomacy, as a tool for advancing the state's national interests in foreign policy, should be integrated into the state's political and administrative activities at the decision-making stage, which will reduce the potential for conflict in foreign policy.

Theoretical significance of the study. The purpose of this study is to develop a unique framework for studying the national interests of Russian society in the current political context and to develop an approach to understanding parliamentary diplomacy as an effective method for ensuring the national interests of the Russian Federation in the implementation of foreign policy. The theoretical approaches

discussed in the study, as well as practical cases, allow for a broader understanding of the use of parliamentary diplomacy as a component of foreign policy and to forecast trends in its future development.

Practical significance research. The dissertation's factual material may be of interest to legislative and executive authorities of the Russian Federation, political parties, and public organizations in their efforts to develop new areas of international cooperation. Furthermore, the materials presented in this study can be used in the educational process to develop general and specialized courses in the fields of "Political Science," "Political Management," and "International Relations."

Testing the work:

The study's key provisions and conclusions were tested at fourteen national and international scientific and practical conferences and forums. The author has published the key findings of this dissertation in political science journals recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission (HAC) under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, as well as in other publications totaling 8.2 (pp).

Scope and structure of work.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of references., presented on 227 pages. The list of sources and literature includes 200 sources, including: regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation, scientific literature in Russian and foreign languages, Internet sources.