



Globalization and shift in modern diplomatic practice

Onyinyechi J Joe-Onyema

Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.66856/ijl.2026.12.4.12330>

Abstract

Globalisation has significantly transformed the nature, scope and operation of modern diplomatic practice. This paper examined how globalisation occasioned a shift from traditional state-centred and predominantly bilateral diplomacy towards more complex, multilateral, economic, cultural and digitally mediated forms of diplomatic engagement. It examined China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), as well as South Korea's Global Korea (Segyehwa) strategy and Hallyu (Korean Wave), to demonstrate how states have strategically employed economic, developmental and cultural resources as instruments of diplomacy. The study further examined the implications of these developments for traditional diplomatic practice and the legal institutions governing diplomatic relations. It identified the increasing role of regional organisations, multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations and other non-state actors; the expansion of diplomatic functions into economic, cultural and development-financed diplomacy; the compression of time and space through digital communication; the emergence of new institutional frameworks; and challenges to the traditional conception of diplomatic immunity and state-centred diplomatic recognition. The study adopted the doctrinal research method, relying on relevant international legal instruments, legislation, judicial decisions, books, journals and other secondary materials. It found that globalisation has not displaced the fundamental principles of diplomacy but has significantly modified the manner in which diplomatic functions are performed. It therefore concluded that traditional legal and institutional frameworks must evolve to accommodate contemporary diplomatic realities while preserving the essential protections necessary for effective diplomatic relations. The study recommended legal and institutional reforms, stronger digital and economic diplomatic capacity, improved engagement with non-state actors, and greater Nigerian participation in emerging multilateral and development-financing frameworks.

Keywords: Globalisation, modern diplomacy, digital diplomacy, BRI, AIIB, Hallyu, diplomatic immunity

Introduction

Globalisation has become a significant force shaping contemporary international relations and diplomatic practice. The increasing movement of goods, services, capital, people, information and technology across national borders has transformed diplomacy from a predominantly state-centred and bilateral process into a more complex practice involving multilateral, economic, cultural, developmental and digital engagement. This transformation is evident in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which demonstrate the use of infrastructure, development financing and economic cooperation as instruments of diplomacy, and in South Korea's Global Korea (Segyehwa) strategy and Hallyu (Korean Wave), which demonstrate the use of economic and cultural globalisation to enhance soft power and international influence.

Globalisation has also expanded the functions of diplomats, increased the participation of regional organisations and non-state actors, accelerated diplomatic communication through digital technologies, and encouraged the emergence of new institutional frameworks operating alongside traditional international institutions. These developments have created challenges for traditional legal frameworks, particularly the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 and Nigeria's Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962, which were developed within a more conventional state-to-state diplomatic environment. The study therefore examines the shift in modern diplomatic practice occasioned by globalisation, its implications for

traditional diplomatic relations and legal institutions, and the need for Nigeria to adapt its diplomatic and legal frameworks to the realities of an increasingly interconnected international system.

Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI)

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched by President Xi Jinping in 2013, is one of China's most significant economic and foreign policy initiatives in contemporary international relations^[1]. Originally referred to as "One Belt, One Road," the BRI aims to enhance connectivity between Asia, Europe, Africa, and other regions through infrastructure development, trade links, policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges^[2]. In essence, the BRI serves as a major component of China's economic diplomacy, using infrastructure investment and economic cooperation to strengthen international connectivity, advance strategic interests, and increase China's role in global economic affairs^[3].

It is important to recognise that the BRI represents a significant form of economic diplomacy. Through the financing and development of infrastructure projects, including ports, railways, highways, energy networks, industrial parks, and digital infrastructure across numerous countries, China has expanded economic cooperation and connectivity with partner states. These engagements have strengthened economic ties and contributed to China's growing role in international economic and diplomatic relations^[4]. The initiative operates through a combination of bilateral agreements and multilateral platforms, including

the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), reflecting China's approach of combining bilateral economic cooperation with broader multilateral engagement ^[5]. This approach has enabled China to strengthen its international engagement, expand economic partnerships, and enhance its influence in global affairs. Through the BRI, China has contributed to new forms of South-South cooperation by promoting infrastructure development, trade connectivity, and economic collaboration among developing countries within an increasingly interconnected global system ^[6]. The BRI demonstrates how globalization can be utilised as a tool of diplomacy. By supporting infrastructure development in developing countries, China has strengthened economic partnerships and increased its role as a development partner, thereby enhancing its diplomatic engagement beyond commercial relations. The initiative has also expanded China's presence in various regions and illustrates how economic cooperation can serve broader foreign policy objectives in an increasingly interconnected international system ^[7]. Globalisation has further expanded diplomatic functions into development financed diplomacy, where diplomats facilitate large-scale infrastructure financing, technology transfer and development cooperation ^[8]. China's Belt and Road Initiative exemplifies this new form of diplomacy, using development financing as a strategic tool of statecraft to build long-term partnerships and expand influence ^[9].

For Nigeria, development financed diplomacy is critical for infrastructure development and economic growth. Nigerian diplomats are increasingly involved in negotiating financing agreements and managing development partnerships ^[10]. These expansions of diplomatic functions beyond traditional political negotiation highlight the transformative impact of globalization on modern diplomatic practice. Traditional legal institutions must therefore evolve to accommodate these new realities while preserving the core protections necessary for the effective performance of diplomatic duties ^[11]. In essence, the Belt and Road Initiative demonstrates how a major power can strategically employ economic globalisation as a powerful instrument of diplomacy. It has enabled China to expand its global influence through infrastructure development and economic cooperation, while simultaneously testing the adaptability of traditional legal institutions of diplomatic practice in the face of new economic realities.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank established in 2015 at the initiative of China to address the massive infrastructure financing gap in Asia and beyond ^[12]. With 109-member countries as of 2026, including major Western economies such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Australia, the AIIB has rapidly emerged as a significant player in global economic governance and a key instrument of China's economic diplomacy under the broader Belt and Road Initiative ^[13]. In essence, the AIIB represents China's strategic use of globalization to create new multilateral financial institutions that complement and, in some respects, challenge the dominance of traditional Western-led institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank ^[14].

It is pertinent to note that the AIIB functions as a sophisticated tool of economic statecraft and globalization-

driven diplomacy. By providing financing for infrastructure projects in energy, transportation, telecommunications and urban development, the Bank enables China to expand its economic influence, secure access to markets and resources, and cultivate long-term diplomatic partnerships with borrowing countries ^[15]. Unlike traditional multilateral development banks, the AIIB emphasises speed of project approval, respect for the sovereignty of borrowing nations and a lean governance structure that gives greater voice to developing countries ^[16]. This approach has enhanced China's soft power and diplomatic leverage while positioning the AIIB as an alternative model of multilateral development finance in the globalised economy. The establishment and rapid growth of the AIIB illustrate how globalization can be deliberately harnessed as a form of diplomacy. Through the Bank, China has successfully brought together both developed and developing nations under a Chinese-led institution, thereby expanding its network of diplomatic and economic partners and demonstrating its capacity to shape global economic governance norms ^[17]. This has allowed China to project an image of a responsible global power committed to infrastructure-led development and South-South cooperation, thereby strengthening its diplomatic standing in the international system ^[18].

Global Korea (Segyehwa)

While the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 focuses primarily on political and economic representation, South Korea's experience shows how cultural and economic diplomacy can expand the functions of diplomats beyond traditional boundaries ^[19]. In essence, Global Korea (Segyehwa) stands as a successful model of how a state can strategically employ globalization as a comprehensive diplomatic tool. By integrating economic liberalisation with cultural diplomacy and active multilateral engagement, South Korea significantly enhanced its global standing and influence ^[20].

Hallyu (Korean wave)

Hallyu, commonly known as the Korean Wave, refers to the global popularity and dissemination of South Korean culture, encompassing K-pop music, Korean dramas (K-dramas), films, fashion, cuisine, beauty products, video games and digital content ^[21]. Emerging prominently in the late 1990s and accelerating dramatically in the 21st century, Hallyu has become one of the most successful cultural export phenomena in modern history, generating billions of dollars in revenue and significantly enhancing South Korea's global image and soft power ^[22]. In essence, Hallyu represents South Korea's masterful use of cultural globalization as a strategic instrument of diplomacy, transforming cultural products into powerful tools for nation branding, economic advancement and diplomatic influence ^[23].

It is pertinent to note that the Korean Wave was deliberately supported and promoted by the South Korean government as part of the broader Global Korea (Segyehwa) strategy. Successive administrations have provided institutional support through the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Korea Foundation and various public-private partnerships to facilitate the international dissemination of Korean cultural content ^[24]. This state-backed cultural diplomacy has enabled South Korea to project positive

national values such as creativity, modernity, resilience and harmony, thereby creating widespread goodwill and affinity among global audiences, particularly among younger generations ^[25]. The economic impact of Hallyu has also been substantial, contributing to export earnings, tourism and the internationalisation of Korean brands, thereby reinforcing the synergy between cultural and economic diplomacy ^[26].

Hallyu exemplifies how globalization can be harnessed as a sophisticated form of cultural diplomacy. By leveraging digital platforms, social media and streaming services, South Korea has successfully bypassed traditional diplomatic channels to reach global publics directly, creating emotional connections and long-term cultural affinity that translate into diplomatic and economic advantages ^[27]. This approach has enabled a relatively small middle power to exert disproportionate cultural influence on the global stage, demonstrating the potency of soft power in the era of globalization ^[28]. Hallyu (the Korean Wave) stands as a compelling example of how a state can strategically deploy cultural globalization as a powerful diplomatic instrument.

Key Implications

Globalization has fundamentally altered modern diplomatic practice, leading to several key implications for traditional diplomatic relations and the legal institutions that govern them. The experiences of China through the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and South Korea through Global Korea (Segyehwa) and Hallyu, illustrate how states can strategically harness globalization as a form of diplomacy. The following implications highlight the major shifts that have occurred.

1. Shift from Bilateral to Multilateral Diplomacy

Globalisation has significantly accelerated the shift from predominantly bilateral diplomacy to more complex multilateral diplomacy. States increasingly find that many contemporary challenges cannot be effectively addressed through bilateral channels alone, necessitating greater reliance on multilateral forums, regional organizations and collective decision-making processes. Traditional diplomatic laws was designed for state-to-state bilateral relations. Globalization has precipitated Regionalized diplomacy, Multilateral crises management and participation of Non-state Actors (MNCs, NGOs, Regional bodies) in diplomatic channels.

1.1 Regionalized diplomacy (For example, ECOWAS in Gambia, GCC in Yemen).

One major dimension of this shift is the rise of regionalized diplomacy. Regional organisations have become critical platforms for addressing political, economic and security issues ^[29]. For example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) played a central role in mediating and resolving the political crisis in The Gambia in 2016–2017, leading to the peaceful transfer of power ^[30]. Similarly, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has been actively involved in diplomatic efforts concerning the crisis in Yemen ^[31]. These examples demonstrate how globalization has encouraged the regionalisation of diplomatic responses to crises, allowing states to pool resources and coordinate positions more effectively than through purely bilateral engagements ^[32]. For Nigeria, this

underscores the importance of strengthening its leadership role within ECOWAS and the African Union in a globalised environment.

1.2 Multilateral Crises Management (for example Syrian crises).

Globalization has also intensified the need for multilateral crisis management. Complex transnational crises often require coordinated international responses that transcend bilateral diplomacy. A prominent example is the Syrian crisis, which has involved multilateral diplomatic efforts through the United Nations, the Arab League and various contact groups, even though progress has been limited ^[33]. Globalization, through increased media coverage, refugee flows and regional spillover effects, has made such crises truly global concerns that demand sustained multilateral diplomatic engagement. This shift challenges traditional bilateral diplomatic frameworks and requires diplomats to develop greater expertise in multilateral negotiation and coalition-building ^[34].

1.3 Participation of Non-State Actors (MNCs, NGOs,) in Diplomatic Channels.

Another significant implication is the increasing participation of non-state actors in diplomatic channels. Multinational corporations (MNCs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and civil society groups now actively influence and sometimes participate directly in diplomatic processes ^[35]. Globalization has empowered these actors through enhanced communication, funding and transnational networks, thereby diluting the traditional monopoly of states in diplomatic relations ^[36]. In *R (Corner House Research) v Director of the Serious Fraud Office* ^[37], where Corner House Research, a UK-based anti-corruption NGO, challenged the decision of the Director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) to discontinue an investigation into allegations of corruption involving a major international arms deal (the Al-Yamamah arms contract between the UK and Saudi Arabia). The case confirmed that prosecutorial discretion may lawfully take account of diplomatic pressure and national security considerations, even in corruption investigations, provided the decision is rational and made in good faith.

In Nigeria, this reality is evident in the growing involvement of NGOs in humanitarian diplomacy and MNCs in economic diplomacy, requiring the country to adapt its diplomatic strategies to engage effectively with these new stakeholders while preserving the primacy of state sovereignty ^[38]. International organisations also have roles to play and even enjoy certain immunities and privileges. In *African Reinsurance Corporation v Abate Fantaye* ^[39], it was established that International organisations enjoy jurisdictional immunity in Nigeria, and such immunity can only be waived by clear, express, and unequivocal terms, it cannot be inferred from ambiguous treaty provisions or conduct.

These shifts from bilateral to multilateral diplomacy highlight the transformative impact of globalization on modern diplomatic practice and the urgent need for traditional legal institutions to evolve in order to accommodate these new realities.

2. Erosion of Diplomatic Immunity Sanctity

The core principle of absolute diplomatic immunity, as enshrined in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic

Relations 1961, faces significant challenges in the era of globalization. While immunities and privileges remain essential for the efficient performance of diplomatic functions, globalization has introduced new tensions that test the sanctity and practical application of these traditional protections. The Vienna Conventions core principle- Absolute diplomatic immunity- faces challenges such as tension between immunity and access to justice/human rights claims, Abuse of immunity (For example unpaid debts, criminal conducts) creates accountability gaps, and digital surveillance and information flow which undermine traditional diplomatic confidentiality.

3. Expansion of Diplomatic Function beyond Political Negotiation

Article 3 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 defines the functions of a diplomatic mission in relatively narrow terms, primarily focusing on representation, protection of interests, negotiation, reporting and the promotion of friendly relations. However, globalisation has significantly expanded these functions far beyond traditional political negotiation. Diplomats are now required to engage in a much broader range of activities that reflect the multifaceted nature of contemporary international relations. Art 3 of the VCCR defines diplomatic functions narrowly. Globalization expands them to Economic diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, development financed diplomacy

3.1 Economic Diplomacy-Trade Agreements, Investment Promotion, Market Access

Globalization has elevated economic diplomacy as one of the most critical expanded functions of modern diplomats. Diplomats are now actively involved in negotiating trade agreements, promoting foreign direct investment, facilitating market access for domestic businesses, and resolving commercial disputes ^[40]. This shift is evident in the experiences of China through the Belt and Road Initiative and South Korea through its economic liberalisation under Segyehwa. In both cases, diplomats have become key actors in advancing national economic interests through globalisation ^[41]. In the Nigerian context, economic diplomacy has become central to the 4D foreign policy framework. Nigerian diplomats are increasingly tasked with negotiating trade deals, attracting investment and supporting Nigerian businesses abroad, particularly under the African Continental Free Trade Area ^[42]. This expansion challenges traditional legal institutions, as the Vienna Convention and Nigeria's Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962 were not primarily designed to support such intensive commercial engagement.

3.2 Cultural Diplomacy- Language Centers, Cultural Exports (Hallyu)

Globalization has also expanded diplomatic functions into the realm of cultural diplomacy. Diplomats now play active roles in promoting national culture, establishing language centres, supporting cultural exports and managing people-to-people relations ^[43]. South Korea's Hallyu (Korean Wave) provides a compelling example of how cultural exports have been strategically used as a tool of diplomacy to enhance soft power and national branding globally ^[44]. Nigeria has similar potential through Nollywood and Afrobeats. Cultural diplomacy has become an important

component of the 4D foreign policy, with diplomats promoting Nigerian culture to strengthen international goodwill and economic opportunities ^[45]. This expansion requires traditional legal institutions to adapt in order to adequately support and protect cultural attaches and cultural promotion activities in the digital age.

4. Time/Space Compression in Diplomatic Practice

Globalization has significantly compressed both time and space in diplomatic practice through the rapid flow of information and the advancement of communication technologies. This compression has fundamentally transformed the pace, methods and channels of diplomacy, creating new opportunities as well as challenges for traditional diplomatic institutions. The rapid flow of information has transformed diplomacy thus:

4.1 Changes in time (Real time communication) have more impact than spatial changes

One of the most profound effects of globalization on diplomacy is the compression of time. Real-time communication enabled by the internet, satellite technology and instant messaging platforms has dramatically accelerated the speed at which diplomatic information is transmitted and decisions are made ^[46]. Unlike spatial changes, which merely reduce geographical distance, temporal compression means that diplomats and foreign ministries must respond to global events almost instantaneously, often before traditional diplomatic channels can fully process information ^[47].

It is pertinent to note that this real-time pressure has transformed diplomacy from a deliberative and measured process into a more reactive and fast-paced activity. Diplomats are now expected to provide immediate analysis, statements and responses to unfolding crises, public statements by foreign leaders, or breaking news that can rapidly influence public opinion and negotiating positions ^[48]. In the Nigerian context, this temporal compression has placed considerable strain on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its missions abroad, requiring greater coordination and rapid response capabilities under the 4D foreign policy framework ^[49].

4.2 Digital diplomacy and social media- bypass traditional embassy channels

Globalization has enabled digital diplomacy and social media to increasingly bypass traditional embassy channels. Heads of state, foreign ministers and even diplomats now communicate directly with global audiences through platforms such as Twitter (X), Facebook and Instagram, sometimes making formal embassy communications secondary or redundant ^[50]. This development has democratised diplomatic communication but has also created challenges of coordination, message discipline and the management of official versus personal diplomatic voices ^[51].

It is pertinent to note that the ability of digital platforms to bypass traditional channels has weakened the gatekeeping role of embassies and foreign ministries. In some cases, important diplomatic signals are transmitted directly by political leaders, reducing the influence of professional diplomats and complicating the application of traditional diplomatic protocols ^[52]. For Nigeria, this reality requires a more sophisticated approach to digital diplomacy that

balances the opportunities of direct engagement with the need to maintain institutional coherence and message consistency.

4.3 Traditional Exequatur and Credentiaity Processes Become Slower Than Digital Diplomatic Engagements

Traditional processes such as the granting of exequatur for consular officers and the presentation of credentials for ambassadors have become comparatively slower than the speed of digital diplomatic engagements^[53]. While digital communication allows for almost instant interaction, the formal legal and ceremonial processes of diplomatic accreditation remain time-consuming and bureaucratic^[54]. This mismatch between the speed of digital diplomacy and the pace of traditional procedures has created operational challenges and sometimes leads to delays in the full exercise of diplomatic functions^[55].

It is pertinent to note that this tension challenges the relevance of certain aspects of traditional diplomatic law. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 and Nigeria's Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962 presuppose a more deliberate and formal process of accreditation that is increasingly out of step with the demands of real-time global diplomacy^[56]. Nigeria and other states may need to consider streamlining certain procedural aspects of diplomatic accreditation to better align with the realities of globalisation without compromising the legal integrity of the process.

These manifestations of time/space compression highlight how globalisation has transformed the operational dynamics of diplomacy, requiring traditional legal institutions to adapt to a much faster and more fluid diplomatic environment.

5. New Institutional Frameworks outside Traditional Law

China's AIIB and BRI create parallel governance structures that promote alongside (not within) Western-dominated institutions like the World Bank. Globalisation has led to the emergence of new institutional frameworks that operate alongside, and sometimes outside, the traditional Western-dominated international institutions. These parallel structures reflect a shift in global governance and represent a significant implication of globalisation on modern diplomatic practice^[57].

A prominent example is China's creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). These initiatives have established new mechanisms for development financing, infrastructure development and economic cooperation that function parallel to, rather than strictly within, long-established institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund^[58]. The AIIB, in particular, offers an alternative model of multilateral development finance with faster approval processes, greater emphasis on borrower sovereignty and a more inclusive governance structure that gives developing countries a stronger voice^[59].

It is pertinent to note that these new institutional frameworks challenge the monopoly of traditional global governance institutions and expand the avenues through which states conduct economic and development diplomacy. By creating parallel structures, China has demonstrated how globalization can be leveraged to reshape international economic architecture and diplomatic relations in ways that

better align with the interests of emerging powers and developing nations^[60]. This development has significant implications for traditional diplomatic practice, as states must now navigate a more plural and competitive institutional landscape.

In essence, the creation of new institutional frameworks by China through the AIIB and BRI exemplifies how globalization is fostering a more pluralistic global governance architecture. This development expands diplomatic options for states but also challenges traditional legal institutions to evolve in order to effectively support and regulate engagement with these emerging parallel structures.

6. The challenges of Globalization as an Agent of Diplomacy

While globalization has created new opportunities for diplomacy, it has also generated significant challenges to traditional diplomatic practice and its supporting legal institutions. The experiences of China and South Korea, though largely successful, highlight some of the broader difficulties that states face when leveraging globalization as a form of diplomacy. Two major challenges are discussed below.

6.1 The Monopoly of Traditional Diplomatic Recognition

One of the key challenges posed by globalization is the gradual erosion of the monopoly of traditional diplomatic recognition. Historically, diplomatic recognition and the establishment of formal relations were almost exclusively controlled by sovereign states through established procedures and the granting of exequatur. However, globalisation has empowered non-state actors, international organisations and even sub-national entities to engage in activities that resemble diplomatic functions^[61].

It is pertinent to note that this development challenges the traditional state-centric model of diplomatic recognition. Non-state actors such as multinational corporations, NGOs and regional bodies increasingly conclude agreements, establish liaison offices and engage in negotiations that have diplomatic character, even though they do not possess formal sovereign status^[62]. In some cases, powerful non-state actors exercise influences comparable to, or even greater than, smaller states in certain domains^[63]. This pluralisation weakens the monopoly of traditional diplomatic recognition and complicates the application of legal frameworks such as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961, which were designed primarily for state-to-state relations.

For Nigeria, this challenge is particularly relevant. As the country deepens its engagement with globalization, it must navigate a diplomatic environment where non-state actors play increasingly influential roles. Strengthening the legal and institutional capacity to manage interactions with these actors while preserving the primacy of state sovereignty remains a critical task.

6.2 Established Norms of Aid, Infrastructure and Logistics Governance

Globalization has also challenged established norms of aid, infrastructure and logistics governance. Traditional Western-dominated institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have historically set the

dominant standards for development aid, infrastructure financing and logistics governance ^[64]. However, new players such as China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank have introduced alternative norms that emphasise speed of delivery, respect for borrower sovereignty, and different conditionalities ^[65].

It is pertinent to note that this competition between established and emerging norms creates complexities for recipient countries. Nigeria, for instance, must carefully balance opportunities offered by new frameworks such as the BRI with the need to maintain sound debt management and governance standards ^[66]. The coexistence of multiple governance norms can lead to fragmented approaches to infrastructure development and aid coordination, potentially undermining policy coherence and long-term sustainability ^[67].

Furthermore, the emergence of these parallel norms challenges traditional legal institutions of diplomatic practice. The Vienna Convention and Nigeria's Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962 were not designed to address the complex legal issues arising from multi-layered development financing arrangements involving state, multilateral and private actors ^[68]. This situation requires Nigeria to strengthen its legal and regulatory frameworks to better manage the implications of competing governance norms in a globalised environment.

These challenges underscore the complexities of operating in a globalised diplomatic landscape and highlight the need for adaptive strategies and legal reforms to safeguard national interests while engaging constructively with the opportunities of globalization ^[69]. Finally, globalization as diplomacy transforms diplomatic practice from exclusive state-to-state legal relations (Vienna Conventions frameworks) to inclusive, multi-door, economically driven engagements. Traditional legal institutions must adapt to accommodate specific statecraft, cultural diplomacy, regional multilateralism and digital communication while preserving all protections for diplomatic agents.

Conclusion

Globalisation has significantly transformed modern diplomatic practice by expanding diplomacy beyond traditional state-centred and bilateral relations into economic, cultural, developmental, multilateral and digital forms of engagement. The experiences of China through the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and South Korea through Global Korea and Hallyu, demonstrate how economic and cultural globalisation can be strategically employed to advance diplomatic objectives. Globalisation has also increased the participation of regional organisations and non-state actors, accelerated diplomatic communication and encouraged the emergence of new institutional frameworks.

The study therefore concludes that globalisation has not displaced the fundamental principles of diplomacy but has significantly modified the context and methods through which diplomatic functions are performed. These developments have exposed limitations in traditional legal and institutional frameworks, including the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 and Nigeria's Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962. There is consequently a need for these frameworks to adapt to contemporary diplomatic realities while preserving the essential protections required for effective diplomatic relations. For Nigeria, this requires stronger capacity in economic, cultural, digital and multilateral diplomacy and

greater institutional preparedness to engage effectively within an increasingly interconnected international system.

Recommendations

1. Nigeria should periodically review the Diplomatic and Immunities Privileges Act 1962 and related legal and institutional frameworks to ensure that they adequately respond to contemporary developments in digital diplomacy, economic diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, development financing and the increasing participation of non-state actors. Such reforms should preserve the essential protections accorded to diplomatic agents while addressing emerging accountability and operational challenges.
2. Diplomatic missions should be better equipped to promote Nigerian trade, attract foreign investment, negotiate development-financing arrangements and facilitate market access for Nigerian businesses. This is particularly important within the African Continental Free Trade Area and Nigeria's expanding engagement with emerging economic powers.
3. Nigeria should strengthen its digital diplomatic capacity by developing clear institutional guidelines for the use of social media and other digital platforms by diplomatic representatives. Digital diplomacy should be coordinated with established foreign-policy objectives to ensure consistency of official messaging, effective crisis communication and protection of sensitive diplomatic information.
4. Diplomatic training should extend beyond conventional political negotiation to include international economic relations, technology, cybersecurity, digital communication, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, development finance and engagement with non-state actors. This would equip Nigerian diplomats to perform effectively within the increasingly complex environment created by globalisation.
5. Nigeria should develop a more coordinated cultural diplomacy strategy that systematically utilises Nollywood, Afrobeats, Nigerian literature, fashion, cuisine and other cultural industries to strengthen Nigeria's international image and soft power. Nigerian diplomatic missions should be supported in promoting cultural exchanges and partnerships as complementary instruments of foreign policy.

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