

FOREIGN POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON MODERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RAHMONZODA AZIMJON SHERALI

Assoc.Prof.(Dr.), Leading Researcher, Institute for Asian and European Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan.

Abstract *This article analyzes the concept and essence of foreign policy within the context of contemporary international processes. In a narrow sense, foreign policy is understood as the totality of relations between independent states and other actors in international relations, which together constitute political relations between countries. Political relations between states and other participants in the international system are aimed at establishing, maintaining, and developing various forms of interaction with other states, nations, and peoples. These political relations serve as a foundation for the development of other types of international cooperation, including economic, scientific-technical, and cultural relations.*

An analysis of scholarly sources reveals that the concepts of "foreign policy" and "international relations" differ in both essence and content. The term "foreign policy" is used to describe the political relations of individual states with other actors in the international arena; that is, the actions undertaken by one state toward another are considered its foreign policy. In contrast, "international relations" is a broader concept that encompasses not only political relations but also various other forms of interaction and communication among actors in the international system.

Keywords: *foreign policy, international relations, diplomatic relations, domestic policy, security, state, system, national interests, state interests.*

Introduction

Currently, scientific understanding of international relations is largely shaped by three key factors: the characteristics of the modern post-non-classical stage of scientific development; the general features of social sciences and humanities; and the specific nature of studying global political processes, international relations, and world politics. In the context of analyzing the foreign policy of states, it is important to consider those features that, in our view, are most significant in shaping the conditions for contemporary political science research in the field of international relations and world politics. In an integrated form, these features may be presented as follows.

Science at the post-non-classical stage has not undergone a radical rupture with previous paradigms but continues to develop



This is open-access article
distributed under the terms of
the **Creative Commons**
Attribution 4.0 International License

within a non-classical worldview. Its key feature is the increasing complexity of scientific understanding of reality, along with the recognition of the possibility of multiple, alternative interpretations of the same object of study, both in terms of content and methodological approaches.

The current stage of scientific development is characterized by an awareness of the extreme complexity of research objects, the limitations of intellectual and technical tools, and the growing integration of different scientific disciplines. The post-non-classical paradigm is also marked by a pronounced anthropocentric orientation, where social values and the goals of knowledge become an integral part of the research process and scientific cognition as a whole.

A distinctive feature of post-non-classical science is global (universal) evolutionism as a synthesis of evolutionary and systemic approaches [8, p. 331], alongside the widespread application of ideas and methods of synergetics.

It should be noted that the concept of "soft power" as a category in political science and international relations was introduced by the American political scientist J. Nye. Soft power refers to the ability to achieve desired outcomes not through coercion, but through attraction and voluntary compliance. Its key characteristic is that it is not directly dependent on the state as a coercive apparatus. In contrast, "hard power" is closely associated with state authority and the use of coercive instruments. Therefore, the use of soft power is often more complex and less predictable than hard power.

As a result, the effects of soft power, unlike those of economic sanctions or military force, are relatively indirect, difficult to measure, and challenging to plan precisely. Accordingly, a state's foreign policy may either enhance the effectiveness of soft power or, conversely, weaken its influence in the international arena.

The American political scientist J. Nye made a significant contribution to the development of the concept of power, introducing the widely discussed notion of "soft power" and highlighting the traditional importance of coercive forms of influence [15, p. 27]. It is well known that military and economic capabilities can compel other actors to change their positions. Hard power is generally based on coercion, pressure, and threats.

However, in certain cases, desired outcomes can be achieved without the use of coercive instruments.

In this regard, the use of force has historically occupied a central place in international relations. Nevertheless, in contemporary conditions, the use of military force is increasingly viewed as less acceptable in the international arena. Experts in international relations and world politics argue that, under conditions of globalization, the importance of soft power is steadily increasing. This is due to the fact that modern states, including developed ones, are often unable to address both domestic and global challenges through military means alone. Therefore, according to J. Nye, the attractiveness of a state has become more important than its military capabilities [15, p. 28].

Based on Nye's approach, key elements of soft power include diplomacy, culture, and political ideology [4, p. 16]. Alongside military, economic, scientific, and technological factors, cultural influence is identified as one of the most important components of a country's international standing and global influence [2, p. 111].

In contemporary international relations, culture as an element of soft power has gained increasing importance, exerting a significant impact on global socio-economic processes and interstate relations. For this reason, many states actively utilize foreign cultural policy as an instrument for enhancing the effectiveness of their foreign policy strategies. Cultural diplomacy can serve as a tool for promoting a broader foreign policy agenda and for creating a stable foundation for the realization and protection of national interests in the international arena.

An analysis of individual states' practices in the field of foreign cultural policy shows that it is implemented through the coordinated activities of governmental institutions in education, science, and culture, as well as through the use of mass media. To enhance the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy, states organize educational and cultural exchange programs, exhibitions, international forums, and academic conferences. Media channels are also widely used to improve a state's image and international reputation, as well as to build trust with potential allies and partners. In some cases, however, media instruments may also be used as tools to shape perceptions and, at times, to obscure the state's true interests and strategic objectives.

Social media has also gained a special position in this regard, being seen as a factor in foreign policy effectiveness but also posing a serious threat because it allows for the easy and effective manipulation of public opinion. Thus, through various cultural events and the dissemination of necessary information in the interests of the state and government, the effectiveness of a state's foreign policy is ensured.

In the system of international relations, military force has long been considered a decisive instrument for achieving goals. Over time, with the emergence of new characteristics in relations between countries, another means of achieving foreign policy goals—diplomacy—emerged alongside the use of force.

In the sphere of diplomacy, diplomatic methods have attempted to demonstrate the opposition of individual states to dominant actors and thus complete their geopolitical space. In our view, under current conditions, states have not become friends and partners through diplomacy, so the use of military force cannot be ruled out.

Over time, relations between countries shift from one state to another—from conflict and confrontation to friendly relations and vice versa. In political practice, it is impossible to clearly and precisely distinguish between these two situations. Even in friendly relations between countries, there is a potential for latent conflict, which can escalate under any circumstances. An analysis of various scholarly sources shows that it is precisely in this situation that the role and position of diplomacy manifests itself.

When diplomacy is used, its effectiveness and usefulness as a guaranteed method of maintaining friendly relations in a state's foreign policy are tested. Defense diplomacy, whose main goal is to understand in advance the possible outcome of events in relations between countries, has traditionally retained its significance. It is precisely by fulfilling this task that it will be possible to be informed in advance of the onset of a dangerous situation. As most researchers note, this area of diplomacy is less developed.

The main reason for the increasing importance and status of diplomacy and negotiation is the growing interdependence of global processes and the emergence of global problems. Thus, this situation facilitates the formation of international functional and institutional cooperation, which is considered an integral part of

diplomacy. These ideas were embodied in structuralist concepts that explained the different nature of the use of force, developed by theorists R. Cohen and J. Noah.

In our view, diplomacy in modern times is not merely the implementation of a state's foreign policy or the activities of diplomatic missions, but also a skillfully planned strategy, the success of which determines the image of a state's foreign policy in the international arena. Developed countries are actively pursuing strategic diplomacy, which is considered the embodiment of a state's strategic doctrines that serve national and state interests.

Thus, in modern times, most countries conduct their diplomatic activities in accordance with strategic goals. However, despite this, the diplomatic strategies of these countries do not always achieve successful results.

It should be noted that scholarly sources contain conflicting opinions on diplomacy. G. Morgenthau notes that diplomacy is a fundamental element of state power. Diplomatic activity that leads to scandal is considered unsuccessful because it failed to achieve its primary goal—that is, to satisfy national interests through non-military means [13, p. 41].

Thus, diplomacy is considered one of the fundamental elements of the application of "light power" and offers non-military ways and means of solving existing problems. In the current context of international relations, most researchers consider this tool an important factor in the effectiveness of individual states' foreign policy. The use of strategic diplomacy allows a country to direct its foreign policy in accordance with national and state interests.

Another element of "bright power" is political ideology, which is viewed as a set of ideas, a system of political actors' views on power and state structure, and the rational motivation and value of political activity. Each state implements its own foreign policy and promotes its own political ideology, which, as a result, shapes certain perceptions in society [1, p. 98].

It should be noted that existing political theories distinguish three levels of political ideology implementation. The first level is the theoretical and conceptual level, where the fundamental principles representing the interests of the nation and classes of states are defined. The transformation of ideas and principles into specific

programs occurs at the second level, which is called programmatic-political. The third level is primarily practical in nature, where the level of achievement of goals, principles, and ideology as a whole is determined. In modern conditions, developed countries are attempting to spread their ideology throughout the world. Thus, diplomacy, culture, and political ideology are important factors and elements in ensuring the effectiveness of a particular state's foreign policy. Therefore, to achieve their foreign economic goals at a high level, individual countries strive to make extensive use of these factors and launch special programs to develop them.

Another important factor influencing the effectiveness of foreign policy is economic instruments. Economic means refer to the ability of a state to utilize its economic potential in order to achieve its foreign policy and foreign economic objectives. A strong and technologically advanced economy, capable of implementing innovations both domestically and internationally, enables even relatively small states to secure a significant position in the international system.

Economic instruments of foreign policy include sanctions, embargoes, the expansion of trade relations, and financial assistance. In scholarly literature, targeted restrictions such as entry bans on government officials are also considered specific economic measures. At the same time, a blockade is regarded as a more radical form of economic coercion, often associated with the use of "economic power."

It is important to emphasize that states increasingly rely on economic instruments in international relations. Many researchers note that economic power represents one of the key mechanisms for the implementation of foreign policy. As has been observed, "under contemporary conditions, major powers tend to strengthen their economic influence, considering it a primary tool of foreign policy rather than relying solely on military force" [14, p. 254].

Through key economic components such as investment, foreign trade, and economic presence in other countries, states are able to influence the domestic and foreign policies of partner countries in line with their own interests. Countries engaged in economic cooperation are often motivated by mutual benefits, including job creation, development of production capacities abroad, and technological advancement. Such economic relations generally contribute to the overall development of national economies.

However, economic interdependence also creates opportunities for political influence. Partner states may use economic relations to impose certain conditions and shape policy outcomes in their favor. In the contemporary world, the regulation and management of financial and trade flows have become crucial instruments of foreign policy implementation. Many scholars emphasize that not only the volume of trade relations but also their structure plays a decisive role in determining economic influence.

Countries endowed with rich natural resources often export raw materials to global markets and meet domestic needs through the revenues generated. This provides them with significant economic leverage, which in turn strengthens their position in the international system. Empirical observations confirm that resource-rich states frequently act as key actors in contemporary international relations.

Among the economic factors driving foreign policy implementation, greater direct investment is particularly noteworthy, as it is considered a powerful factor in expanding the influence of economically developed countries. It is also important to note that direct investment plays a role in advancing the foreign policy direction of individual states.

Analysis of academic sources shows that there are several forms of foreign investment. In the first form, high levels of foreign investment can create an "infrastructure of dependence." Thus, the country receiving the investment loses some of its political independence. This is because economic development and the well-being of its citizens depend to a greater extent on foreign companies. Important economic and political decisions on important national issues are made abroad, as foreign investors capture certain sectors of the economy. Furthermore, the presence of foreign capital creates a political elite that relies on foreign states and companies and, accordingly, pursues policies that serve the interests of such foreign entities. For this reason, a state receiving foreign investment must consider the political perspectives of foreign companies and states. Another form of using foreign direct investment for political purposes occurs when the investing country supports the economic development of countries within its sphere of interest. However, when government policy is unacceptable to the investing country, there is no room for economic development. Therefore, developing countries must exercise caution when influencing investment in this way, as

significant financial dependence prevents them from pursuing foreign policy in line with national and state interests.

Another form of using foreign investment is aimed at influencing authoritarian regimes in developing countries. By investing in the public sector, foreign influence merely stabilizes the existing political regime by increasing the profit base. When investing in the private sector, which is not directly controlled by the state, investments can play a dual role: on the one hand, they increase the state's tax base, and on the other, they increase economic profits. Influence and, consequently, political power in the country is linked to this investment and is redistributed among the subjects. Thus, it can be concluded that foreign investment cannot ensure economic development in countries that rely more on exports, and cannot produce great results in countries that have taken a course on the domestic market.

Another key element within the economic factor of foreign policy is the provision of foreign aid, typically in the form of loans or grants. State-sponsored economic assistance programs are strategically designed to achieve various political objectives, including the fight against corruption and terrorism, the enhancement of governance, the promotion of democracy, and the strengthening of civil society. These aid initiatives serve as an important tool for fostering international cooperation and advancing the interests of the donor state.

The continued use of economic factors in foreign policy, including economic aid, underscores the enduring relevance of "economic power" within the modern international system. Despite the evolution of global politics, economic power remains a vital mechanism through which states exert influence and pursue their foreign policy goals.

Conclusion

In summary, the analysis of a state's foreign economic activity remains an essential aspect of understanding global dynamics and political processes. Research in this domain offers a detailed examination of the key factors influencing foreign policy formation, development, and effectiveness. The primary objective of any state is to conduct foreign policy that aligns with its national interests and objectives. As such, an objective and clear classification of national interests is vital for ensuring the state's security and prosperity. The accurate identification of these

interests is foundational to the survival and well-being of both the state and its citizens.

It is worth noting that the success of foreign policy directly influences a state's reputation and domestic policy. To preserve sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, a nation must strategically formulate and consistently defend its national interests on the international stage.

In today's geopolitical landscape, the leading powers cannot rely solely on military means to resolve global challenges. Instead, they increasingly focus on bolstering their economic power, which is regarded as one of the central tools for achieving foreign economic objectives. Economic power, along with "soft power," has emerged as a critical element of modern statecraft.

The concept of "smart power" has gained significant traction, especially in contemporary foreign policy. This approach combines hard power (military), soft power (diplomacy and culture), and economic power, allowing states to effectively leverage all available resources and mechanisms to achieve their objectives. In this context, "smart power" reflects a more strategic and nuanced application of state power.

In the international system, states can generally be categorized based on their power capacities—military, economic, and ideological. Countries with strong military, economic, and ideological influence primarily rely on geostrategic tools to implement their foreign policy. States in the second category, while lacking the comprehensive power of the first, still attempt to employ geostrategic methods to exert influence. Finally, states in the third category, though officially independent, often find themselves acting in alignment with powerful international actors due to their relative lack of influence.

Ultimately, all countries with an independent foreign policy use geostrategic tools to navigate the international arena. These factors are of paramount importance in the foreign economic activities of these nations. As full members of the global community, they aim to foster interstate relations based on the principles of cooperation, equality, and trust—principles that provide the foundation for their security and long-term prosperity in a complex international environment.

Another key element within the economic factor of foreign policy is the provision of foreign aid, typically in the form of loans or grants. State-sponsored economic assistance programs are strategically designed to achieve various political objectives, including the fight against corruption and terrorism, the enhancement of governance, the promotion of democracy, and the strengthening of civil society. These aid initiatives serve as an important tool for fostering international cooperation and advancing the interests of the donor state.

The continued use of economic factors in foreign policy, including economic aid, underscores the enduring relevance of "economic power" within the modern international system. Despite the evolution of global politics, economic power remains a vital mechanism through which states exert influence and pursue their foreign policy goals.

In summary, the analysis of a state's foreign economic activity remains an essential aspect of understanding global dynamics and political processes. Research in this domain offers a detailed examination of the key factors influencing foreign policy formation, development, and effectiveness. The primary objective of any state is to conduct foreign policy that aligns with its national interests and objectives. As such, an objective and clear classification of national interests is vital for ensuring the state's security and prosperity. The accurate identification of these interests is foundational to the survival and well-being of both the state and its citizens.

It is worth noting that the success of foreign policy directly influences a state's reputation and domestic policy. To preserve sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, a nation must strategically formulate and consistently defend its national interests on the international stage.

In today's geopolitical landscape, the leading powers cannot rely solely on military means to resolve global challenges. Instead, they increasingly focus on bolstering their economic power, which is regarded as one of the central tools for achieving foreign economic objectives. Economic power, along with "soft power," has emerged as a critical element of modern statecraft.

The concept of "smart power" has gained significant traction, especially in contemporary foreign policy. This approach combines hard power (military), soft power (diplomacy and culture), and

economic power, allowing states to effectively leverage all available resources and mechanisms to achieve their objectives. In this context, "smart power" reflects a more strategic and nuanced application of state power.

In the international system, states can generally be categorized based on their power capacities—military, economic, and ideological. Countries with strong military, economic, and ideological influence primarily rely on geostrategic tools to implement their foreign policy. States in the second category, while lacking the comprehensive power of the first, still attempt to employ geostrategic methods to exert influence. Finally, states in the third category, though officially independent, often find themselves acting in alignment with powerful international actors due to their relative lack of influence.

Ultimately, all countries with an independent foreign policy use geostrategic tools to navigate the international arena. These factors are of paramount importance in the foreign economic activities of these nations. As full members of the global community, they aim to foster interstate relations based on the principles of cooperation, equality, and trust—principles that provide the foundation for their security and long-term prosperity in a complex international environment.

Thus, the author believes that the main part of the above-presented foreign policy research algorithm should be conducted with the goal and format of selecting a scientific paradigm within which to analyze foreign policy. The remaining steps—reviewing and clearly formulating the fundamental concepts and terms used in the subject area of research, as well as identifying the most rational research methods and techniques that simultaneously allow for a comprehensive analysis—should be carried out based on the results obtained.

References

1. Барышников Д.Н. Идеология в мировой политике / Д.Н.Барышников // Политэкс. – 2006. – №4. –С. 97-107.
2. Бжезинский, Зб. Великая шахматная доска / Зб.Бжезинский. – М.: Международные отношения, 2009. – 448 с.
3. Геополитики и геостратегия. Хрестоматия. Часть V (кн. 2) // Современные российские геополитики / под ред. Б.А. Исаева. – СПб.: Изд-во БГТУ, 2004. – 226 с.
4. Гукасов, А.В. «Жесткая» и «мягкая» сила как инструменты внешней политики США // Вестник Института стратегических исследований ПГЛУ: Сб. научных трудов. – Выпуск I: Конфликты – безопасность – геополитика:

стратегический анализ современного мирового развития. – Ставрополь: Ставролит, 2011. – С.15-19.

5. Зеркин, Д. И. Политология / Д.И. Зеркин. - Ростов-на-Дону: Феникс, 2008. –544 с.
6. Поздняков Э.А. Нация. Национализм. Национальные интересы / Э.А.Поздняков – М.: Изд-во Прогресс-культура, 1994. – 123 с.
7. Рахмонзода А.Ш. Трансформации системы международных отношений Республики Таджикистан в условиях глобализации. Монография / А.ш. Рахмонзода. – Душанбе: «Дониш», 2024. – 222 с.
8. Степин В.С. Философия науки / В.С. Степин. Общие проблемы. – М. : Гардарики, 2006, – С. 331.
9. Мухаметов Р.С. Инструменты внешней политики России: сущность и форма реализации //Искусство управления. – 2010. –№ 2. – С. 133-139.
10. Торкунов, А.В. Современные международные отношения и мировая политика / А. В. Торкунов.– М.: Просвещение, 2004. – 422 с.
11. Яковенко И.Г. Российское государство: национальные интересы, границы, перспективы / И.Г. Яковенко. - М.: Изд-во Новый хронограф, 2008. – 320с .
12. Aron R. Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations / R.Aron. – N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2003. – P. 230 – 232.
13. Morgenthau H. Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace / H.Morgenthau. –N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1993. – P.31.
14. Nuechterlein, D. National Interests and Foreign Policy: A Conceptual Framework for Analysis and Decisionmaking / D.Nuechterlein // British Journal of International Studies. – 1976. – №2. –P.254.
15. Nye J. Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics / J.Nye. - N.Y.: Public Affairs, 2004. -P.27.
16. Rosenau J. The Study of World Politics: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges / J.Rosenau– N.Y.: Routledge, 2006. P.171-197.
17. Singer D. The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations / D.Singer // World Politics. – 1961. – №1. – P.77-92.