**E-Diplomacy**

In order to define E-diplomacy, we must be aware of our starting viewpoint, and who our audience is. Since this is a new, and complex theme, we would like to discuss the possibilities and current uses of e-diplomacy as we develop this definition.

We have heard the terms 'cyber diplomacy', 'digital diplomacy'… 'Internet diplomacy', 'online diplomacy' and 'electronic diplomacy' or 'e-diplomacy'.  None of them seems to be exactly the correct term, and our first e-diplomacy question was 'is e-diplomacy the phrase we should use to describe this phenomenon?' The question goes beyond semantics, and has an interesting analysis behind the choice.

The prefixes “e-,”, “cyber,” “virtual” and “digital” are used to describe various ICT/Internet developments. Their use originates in the 1990s and implied different social, economic, and political influences in the development of the Internet. For example, academics and Internet pioneers used both “cyber-” and “virtual” to highlight the novelty of the Internet and the emergence of a “brave, new world.” The prefix “e-” is usually associated with e-commerce and the commercialisation of the Internet in the late 1990s. “Digital” came into use primarily in technical fields and received prominence in the context of the “digital divide” discussion.

In the international arena, the prefix “cyber-” was used by the Council of Europe for the *Convention on Cybercrime*(Council of Europe, 2001). More recently, it has been used to describe cybersecurity issues. The ITU named its initiative in this field the “Global Cybesecurity Agenda”. The word “virtual” rarely appears in international documents.

The prefix “e-” has garnered particular favour in the EU, where it describes various policies related to e-science and e-health. In the World Summit on Information Society,  “e-” was introduced at the Pan-European Bucharest Regional (2002) Meeting and became predominant in all WSIS texts, including the final documents. The WSIS implementation is centred on action lines including e-government, e-business, e-learning, e-health, e-employment, e-agriculture and e-science.