

AI in International Relations: A Triumph for Progress or a Menace to Humanity?

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Abstract

The exponential growth of the development and use of artificial intelligence has resulted in much consideration for its eventual utilization in international relations. Its much-heralded reputation for its ability to assess information at a level almost akin to that of a human has enabled discussions to leverage its capacities to resolve current issues, be they geopolitical or environmental. Its capacity to break social and cultural barriers through automated data analysis, efficient coordination, and advanced interpretations has painted its reputation as an indispensable tool for diplomacy, a guideline for immigration control, and an antidote against climate change. However, even with such an array of benefits, its potential for misuse, excessive use of resources, and even weaponization has led many to question its true capacity or intentions. This paper is then devised as a response to the notion of continued use of AI in international affairs. It comprises a comprehensive and qualitative insight into its applications on three main aspects, namely diplomacy, immigration, and climate change, that is based on observations toward selected references. The findings made in this paper allude to the need for further regulations and human intervention to prevent potential misuse or negative exploitation.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; climate change; diplomacy; progress; change; immigration; global affairs

1. Introduction

There has been a substantial degree of technological advancement since the Industrial Revolution. What began as a venture to simplify agricultural and production processes through textiles manufacturing and foundry has resulted in the inherent need to advance human well-being and activities. This has resulted in an exponential decrease in the amount of time taken by humans to conduct day-to-day activities, which has been made possible by the introduction of technologies such as robotics, digital computers, and the internet; the latter of which brought upon a level of interconnectedness never seen before in the thousands of years since the first human civilization came to existence. Technological advancements and a progressive integration of social and economic activities through globalization have laid the foundation for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) on an international scale, which continues to undergo advancements to this day.

In this case, artificial intelligence can be distinguished as human-created machines capable of performing advanced functions that would otherwise be taxing for manually instructed machines. It has a wide range of potential applications that can be used to solve underlying issues. Yet, as its functions continually evolve in recent times, ethical concerns regarding its risks and underlying consequences on human society have grown, especially in the field of international relations, where it plays a huge role both in the practical conduct of interstate affairs and the expansion of legal definitions at an international level. The objective of this paper is to assess the impact artificial intelligence has had and will continue to impose on international relations with a particular focus on three scopes: AI on Diplomacy, AI on Immigration, and AI on Climate. It will also aim to analyze how artificial intelligence impacts key aspects of global politics, such as diplomacy, immigration, and climate change, explain how the use of artificial intelligence can both benefit and hinder progress in global politics, and provide suggestions to mitigate the risks of the use of artificial intelligence to ensure responsible and transparent utilization of tools.

2. Methods

This research is based on qualitative research, which involves using and analyzing newspaper journals and scholarly articles. It comprises sources that provide information on the application of artificial intelligence in international relations, including newspaper articles, reports from

intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and peer-reviewed journal articles and books. The paper will be based on an analytical framework that involves the assessment of potential benefits and risks of artificial intelligence in international relations, spanning a synthesis of literary sources on the three aforementioned scopes of focus, a discussion on how artificial intelligence is both advantageous and disadvantageous in its application on international affairs, suggestions on potential solutions, and a conclusion that summarizes the entire discussion.

3. Result and Discussion

AI in Diplomacy

Artificial intelligence provides a great deal of tools for the conduct of interstate affairs and relations, which is heavily reflected in the interactions and negotiations between said states. While traditional diplomacy has been instrumental in shaping modern global geopolitical dynamics, new challenges brought upon by globalization severely inhibit its effectiveness; a more interconnected world essentially forces worldwide cooperation over increasingly complex issues, such as cyber and asymmetrical warfare, pandemics, and contentious territorial disputes. Such large-scale cooperation can be severely hindered by still-persistent language barriers, lack of information-sharing, and increasingly vulnerable security frameworks that maintain the safety and transparency of interactions between states (Midfa, 2024).

As such, along with an increasing trend toward more accessible embassies via virtual platforms, artificial intelligence has also been regarded as a transformative tool in diplomacy. Unlike traditional means of decision-making, interpretation, and security, it can potentially reduce the bureaucracy in implementing international agreements and/or interpreting the meaning of treaties and conventions, further contributing to a more accessible array of solutions in global affairs. Decisions can now be easily made in most parts due to the virtually automatic collection of data through predictive analytics, made possible by applications such as Palantir Foundry and Microsoft Azure, which immensely reduces the time required to assess economic conditions or other political variables effectively. Translations can now be done automatically and almost seamlessly thanks to translation services and AI voice generators, such as Elevenlabs, that immediately dub a corresponding voice to another language with high accuracy. Other aspects, such as the creation of hypothetical scenarios for decision support and heightened cybersecurity, have also been further simplified through various applications, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT and cybersecurity initiatives (Midfa, 2024; Marta, 2023).

The application of artificial intelligence can provide an immense array of benefits, which helps reduce the complexities of diplomatic relations. First and foremost, this will result in a significant improvement of the quality of communications between states; as previously mentioned, AI's improved capabilities in seamlessly translating multiple languages and creating accurate interpretations of the meanings of diplomatic interactions do not only enhance the effectiveness of communication and decision-making, but it also allows AI to carefully consider various nuances that relate to the cultural undertones and the context of such interactions, which ensures better outreach for communications and the prevention of further misunderstandings that could lead to diplomatic incidents. Additionally, with better data gathering, information could be gathered promptly that allows for actionable and informed decisions that can be effective in resolving issues. Furthermore, this could lead to better decision-making in the part of diplomats and state leaders, aided by seemingly unlimited opportunities for scenario analysis that not only assesses risks and benefits of foreign policy decisions, but also allows for effective crisis management in the event of sudden issues.

However, this is severely dampened by several consequences. For a start, the array of information used to train AI models can pose an ethical issue that could potentially narrow the purpose of such technologies and risk generating discriminatory outcomes, not to mention the risk of plagiarism that could result in significant infringements toward intellectual properties. The lack of human intervention could serve as an antithesis toward AI's purported sensitivity towards cultural nuances and contexts, which could risk in tone-deaf interactions that can damage state relationships. Certain artificial intelligence technologies can also be used as a tool or weapon to damage the credibility of certain actors through deepfakes made by state or non-state actors, thus resulting in the escalation of tensions. Finally, it could also serve to amplify further issues it sought to resolve by increasing demands for resources and even pose questions regarding its role and ethical issues.

AI on Immigration

Along the same lines, artificial intelligence has also been used in increasing frequencies by authorities and parties working in the immigration field. Prior to the advent of artificial intelligence,

technologies such as facial recognition were recognized for their potential to ease the complexities of border control and reduce the need for authorities to trace suspicious individuals. However, the use of such technologies in the immigration field was limited at best, and it was not until the outset of conflicts in the early years of the 21st century, including the Syrian Civil War and the rise of ISIS, that the demand for technological advancement increased. Ongoing conflicts in every corner of the world, particularly countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, have resulted in a sudden influx of refugees and a slew of questions on what constitutes a refugee that threatened to realize the obsolescence of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

As such, the 21st century saw an increase in AI technologies being used in immigration systems to enhance efficiency, security, and communication. These technologies include the application of border security measures such as facial recognition (used to streamline border crossings by verifying the identities of travelers and migrants using records of their faces), biometric scanning (fingerprint and iris scanning), and anomaly detection systems that track and flag behaviors deemed unusual or suspicious. Additionally, decision-making is eased by allowing for automated risk assessment of each traveler or migrant through comprehensive analyses of criminal records, travel history, and other relevant data that might be of use during such inspections, which helps in fraud detection or identifying trends. Finally, as with the use of AI in diplomatic circumstances, language barriers can be reduced with the usage of multilingual chatbots and voice generators that automatically translate a sentence into another language. Such technologies provide immigration authorities and relevant parties with a variety of tools that can simplify the assessment of immigrant/refugee statuses and border control (Kabir, Sumi & Alam, 2023; Hamdi, Briando & Santiago, 2024).

Currently, there have been worldwide efforts to integrate such technologies into a comprehensive framework that allows for the reduction of bureaucracy in border control and immigration assessments. A prime example of this can be seen in the UNHCR’s Population Registration and Identity Management Eco System, abbreviated as PRIMES, which combines the use of AI and transformative structural measures to ensure the enhancement of immigration systems and to remove strain on governments that are currently burdened with migrant or refugee issues. The system achieves this by relying on the assessment of repositories of migrants’ data, which are gathered through points of entry or during humanitarian crises, and by using said data to facilitate the registration processes required for every migrant or refugee to enter foreign territory. This data is then shared with partners to ensure effective coordination in the process. Aside from the application of the previously mentioned technologies, it also ensures continued human intervention by supporting the management of individual cases and the distribution of aid, which is designed to lessen the strains of the process on both immigration authorities and applicants (UNHCR, n.d.).

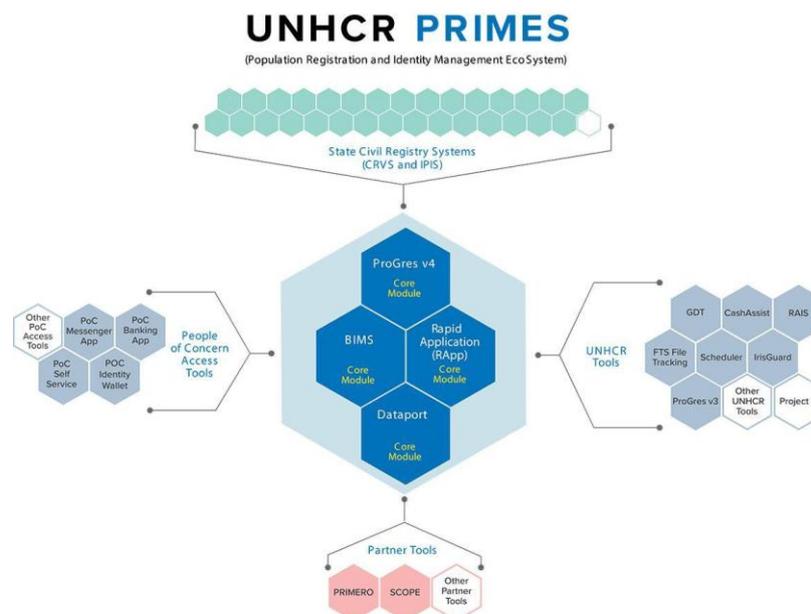


Figure 1. The diagram of the UNHCR’s PRIMES system
Source: UNHCR, “Planning and Preparing Registration and Identity Management Systems”

The use of AI in immigration affairs has a clear range of benefits. First, an automated system that allows for easier identification of travelers effectively enables a more streamlined process, reducing the time required to verify identities accurately and eliminating the need for long wait times, accompanied by faster decisions. It also helps reduce significant strains on especially limited immigration caps by optimizing the allocation of resources to assist in applications and necessary aid, as well as to reduce potential cases of fraud. By having artificial intelligence, it also becomes easier to standardize the criteria for each prospective entrant, allowing for faster evaluations of visa and residency applications as well as automated identifications of potential security risks. Finally, AI's capabilities in language translation and interpretation helps break language barriers that could inhibit productive interactions with foreign travelers, which not only allows for easier communications but also better integration among immigrants by matching their qualifications and providing them with adequate job opportunities.

However, this does not eliminate the possibility of its misuse, which could lead to several far-reaching consequences. First, biases in training AI models can still happen, which could lead to a very narrow dataset that could be used in one-sided situations against immigrants; such models can only amplify present biases that persist among immigration authorities and could lead to discriminatory outcomes that are disadvantageous toward immigrants. This is also usually the result of a lack of any transparency, stemming from the limited knowledge or choice that most immigrants have during the collection of data. Second, the use of AI could implicate various privacy infringements, as such large datasets require the collection and analysis of sensitive personal information. Consequently, this could also be misused by authorities with malicious intent, such as targeted surveillance or even policies that deliberately put immigrants at a disadvantage. Third, while AI excels at applying datasets into a standardized mechanism to effectively control the flow of immigration, the lack of human control or authority could result in an outright neglect of various nuances. Human understanding – even empathy – has always been the backbone of the assessment of complicated cases, and is a driving factor in humanitarian efforts to aid disadvantaged migrants and refugees. An overreliance on objectivity over subjectivity could be counterproductive and may inversely result in further inefficiencies and injustices toward immigrants.

AI on Climate Change

The rise of artificial intelligence coincided with rising carbon emissions and greenhouse gases that have resulted in record-high temperatures in contemporary times. As a brief overview, there have been direct observations and empiric findings that allude to such changing conditions; global temperatures have increased about 1.55 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels, which has not only resulted in hotter weathers but also longer transitions to colder seasons, as notably seen in the months-long absence of snow atop Mount Fuji in Japan (World Meteorological Organization, 2025; Ewe, 2024). As a consequence of human actions, deforestation has also reached its highest rate, with over 6.4 million hectares of forests damaged in 2023 alone (Carrington, 2024). The alarming rate with which climate change is taking place has led to the international community scrambling to find definitive solutions, which culminated in the signing and ratification of the Paris Agreement by all of its parties in 2015. Despite this seemingly hopeful development, the agreement has yet to effectively reach its ultimate goal; no country has been able to reach their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) due to its lenient policies that essentially render it purely voluntary, and those that continue to comply have been needlessly criticized for not doing enough by leading signatories, often due to the lack of commitment or resources (Maizland, 2023). Its effectiveness has also been severely undermined by the United States' withdrawal from the agreement in 2017 and again in 2025, which shows fundamental flaws in the agreement's ability for binding provisions (Daly and Borenstein, 2025).

As such, technologies are now largely considered to be the most effective avenue of solutions against climate change, and artificial intelligence models primarily focused on combating climate change are no exceptions to this. In fact, applications of artificial intelligence are now widespread in private and national efforts to prevent further climate destruction. Technologies that involve the use of data algorithms are especially useful in creating models to predict climate patterns using existing data, which helps to improve the effectiveness of monitoring processes that are crucial to understanding the extent of such conditions. Predictive analytics also enable AI to model predictions for the patterns of natural disasters that stem from past records of environmental conditions, as well as to generate hypothetical scenarios to improve crisis management capabilities. In this regard, it has been able to competently assess both the efficiency and implementation of renewable energy systems, as well as the development of carbon markets that contribute to reductions in carbon emissions (Lewis, Toney & Shi,

2024). AI systems have also been used in precision agriculture tools, such as drones and sensors, to reduce the use of water and optimize crop yields without imposing unnecessary damages toward the environment, as well as to identify more sustainable farming practices to ensure optimal efficiency. Finally, AI has been particularly helpful in the preservation of biodiversity through image recognition and tracking systems to monitor wildlife populations by identifying and tracking down each species, especially those that are endangered and vulnerable to further depopulation; this helps to ensure that conservationists can identify potential risks and preserve certain ecosystems in a preventative manner (Reynolds et al, 2024).

Currently, there have been considerable efforts both from state governments, intergovernmental organizations, and third parties to integrate AI's potential into systems designed to curb the risks of climate change. Non-governmental organizations such as Climate TRACE have been using AI to improve the accuracy of analyses and estimations of global emissions. Climate TRACE alone has over 300 satellites and 11,000 sensors, along with AI algorithms, to establish clearer assessments of carbon emissions. Some of its measures include the use of satellites and sensors to gather data to be processed by AI algorithms, the fusion of similar datasets to estimate greenhouse gas emissions precisely, as well as the use of a public platform to ensure wide public access toward said data, contributing to well-informed decision-making processes for governments and organizations alike (Climate TRACE, n.d.)

Much like the last two aspects, and to the optimism of every party involved, AI's implementation in climate change efforts have yielded significant benefits to the cause. Risk management can be improved significantly through accurate predictions of weather patterns through the collection of past records and natural disasters, as well as the generation of climate-related scenarios through GPTs or manual assessment to ensure that current climate efforts can be accommodated to address current issues. This, in turn, can lead to easier containment of climate-related threats by monitoring the effects of greenhouse gas emissions on the quality of air, water, and land, as well as to ensure that certain vulnerabilities can be addressed in advance. The data it yields and the sheer capabilities it offers also make it a particularly crucial addition to the drafting of international frameworks on climate change prevention, as the formulation of policies drifts further toward adherence to data accuracy; this ensures that such agreements are well-equipped with informed policies and to ensure that its parties can be adequately informed to make decisions pertaining to said frameworks, leading to improved coordination and more effective monitoring of the frameworks' progress. Finally, its benefits on biodiversity can ensure that resources can be managed more efficiently by providing insights on energy consumption and water usage; it also allows for better agricultural practices by recommending potential courses of action and helps promote practices such as irrigation schedules for crops to ensure that water waste can be minimized.

However, it also has certain inverse effects that not only showcase its vulnerabilities, but could also be potentially damaging to the environment. First, despite its purported benefits, it still demands a significant amount of energy to compute and manage data, which could result in a higher carbon footprint; this is further exacerbated by the fact that AI often requires designated data centers that are energy-driven. These data centers are prone to higher carbon footprints due to the lack of any renewable energy sources, electronic waste such as mercury and lead, excessive use of water both during construction and under operational circumstances, as well as the consumption of limited resources such as rare earth elements. Additionally, the availability of the data used by AI can easily be limited due to its focus on remote or under-monitored areas, not to mention the potential risk of biased data that could result in distorted interpretations of effective measures to curb the effects of climate change; this can lead to both inaccurate predictions and recommendations, which could generate both misguided actions and distrust among relevant parties. In the same note, unequal access to data can result in a very disproportionate impact on particularly vulnerable communities, as AI might be driven by data gathered from wealthier areas as opposed to rural areas that are more vulnerable toward the climate change risks. Finally, over-reliance on AI could result in decisions overlooking social factors, as certain data could result in the reduction of emissions but risk displacing indigenous communities as a consequence (UN Environmental Programme, 2024).

4. Conclusions

The use of AI can be beneficial in assessing global issues and bringing about solutions. Yet, there is a clear limit to the extent of its use. It can revolutionize how human society interacts with each other and how it solves crucial issues such as climate change and immigration laws, yet every benefit comes with an equally far-reaching consequence that may often seem too high of a price to pay; high efficiency in gathering and processing data requires too much energy and resources to consume, a

standardized criteria in managing day-to-day affairs requires sacrificing subjectivity in favor of cold and calculated objectivity, and so forth. It requires a delicate balance of maximizing its utility while being wary of and anticipating its inevitable issues, prioritizing the benefits of AI in practice whilst mitigating its consequences on human society, as well as adjusting goals and methods used for said AI models. If human civilization is actively producing and utilizing a machine that is capable of conducting activities that are otherwise unthinkable by the standards of the average human mind, then it must also determine how it is used, who is using it, what it is used for, and why it must be used.

A key solution to resolving the implications of AI in global affairs lie in the effectiveness of responsible regulation. There remains a necessity for the international community to establish any standards whatsoever for the use of AI in every particular aspect. Therefore, it can leverage its capacity for international cooperation to formulate an international framework that regulates the use of AI, comprising global standards and agreements that ensure the responsible development and use of AI across borders, and prevent malicious exploitation of both its technological prowess and regulatory loopholes by criminals or rogue states. The international community could also establish domestic regulatory agencies, as has been the case for issues such as drug abuse and internet regulation, to ensure that AI applications are according to domestic ethical and legal standards, as well as to ensure that every misuse or felonies that stem from the use of AI can be penalized. A balance between strict limitations and progressive encouragement of AI must also be in place; applications such as GPTs or voice generators must be regulated to ensure that issues such as plagiarism or illegal deepfakes can be prevented, while governmental training and literacy programs toward AI can be implemented to improve further understanding and knowledge regarding both the beneficial and consequential uses of AI.

As such, artificial intelligence in International Relations can be a complicated and delicate manner. It is only reasonable that human society can be relieved in its capacity to develop a potentially revolutionary technology that can be used for good, yet it must be cautious in its reliance on said technologies, lest it wishes to yield a destructive outcome that threatens its stability and existence. Its potential evolution to artificial general intelligence, which could result in its surpassing of human intelligence, depends entirely on how it wishes to regulate and define the limits to which AI can operate. Therefore, governments and relevant parties alike must consider the delicate balance involved. Humanity must be able to revel on its capacity for ingenuity, however, it must apply restraint to ensure that it is not a doomed venture as it is often depicted.

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