

Научная статья

УДК 32,327

<https://doi.org/10.37493/2307-910X.2026.2.19>

Гуманитарная помощь как инструмент влияния в стратегической перспективе

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*Автор, ответственный за переписку

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается использование гуманитарной помощи в стратегической перспективе, которое может предполагать взаимодействие как с политическими союзниками, так и с политическими противниками. В теории то или иное государство может воспользоваться стихийным бедствием, произошедшем на территории своего противника, чтобы улучшить свои стратегические позиции. Однако этого на практике не происходит, потому что подобные действия связаны с долгосрочными издержками и выходят за рамки социально приемлемого поведения в условиях стихийных бедствий. При этом государства, как правило, отказываются и бездействуют, когда их противников постигает трагедия. Наоборот, они демонстрируют готовность оказать помощь своим стратегическим противникам. Автор доказывает, что конкуренция между крупными международными игроками за благоприятное, позитивное восприятие в глобальном общественном мнении сохраняет свою остроту. Такой род конкуренции становится одной из ключевых особенностей формирующегося нового мирового порядка, основанного на принципе многообразия. Стремление создать позитивный имидж в глазах иностранной общественности объясняется тем, что он играет заметную роль в достижении государствами различных внешнеполитических целей и реализации международных инициатив. Одним из эффективных инструментов для формирования имиджа, как подчеркивается в статье, называется иностранная гуманитарная помощь. Государства могут предоставлять гуманитарную помощь на различных основаниях. Она может оказываться исходя из альтруистических соображений для улучшения социально-экономической ситуации в развивающихся странах или из экономических соображений для получения дополнительной прибыли. Вместе с тем она может рассматриваться как средство влияния на политическую элиту стран-реципиентов, которое служит продвижению внешнеполитических интересов доноров и интересам формирования о стране-доноре благоприятного общественного мнения в странах-реципиентах и на глобальной арене.

Ключевые слова: гуманитарная помощь, глобальная политика, стратегические интересы, инструменты влияния, политический гуманитаризм

Для цитирования: Шумова Н. Ю. Гуманитарная помощь как инструмент влияния в стратегической перспективе // Современная наука и инновации. 2026. № 2. С. 193–198. <https://doi.org/10.37493/2307-910X.2026.2.19>

Конфликт интересов: автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Статья поступила в редакцию 01.12.2025;
одобрена после рецензирования 01.04.2026;
принята к публикации 01.06.2026.

Humanitarian aid as an instrument of influence in a strategic perspective

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Abstract. This article examines the strategic use of humanitarian aid, which may involve interactions with both political allies and political adversaries. In theory, a state could exploit a natural disaster occurring on the territory of its adversary to enhance its strategic position. However, in practice, this does not occur because such actions are associated with long-term costs and go beyond the bounds of socially acceptable behavior in disaster situations. Furthermore, states typically refuse to act when their adversaries suffer a tragedy. On the contrary, they demonstrate a willingness to provide assistance to their strategic opponents. The author demonstrates that competition among major international players for favorable, positive perceptions in global public opinion remains intense. This type of competition is becoming a key feature of the emerging new world order based on the principle of diversity. The desire to create a positive image in the eyes of the foreign public is explained by the fact that it plays a significant role in the achievement of various foreign policy goals and the implementation of international initiatives. The article highlights foreign humanitarian aid as an effective tool for image-building. States may provide humanitarian aid for various reasons. It may be provided for altruistic reasons, to improve the socioeconomic situation in developing countries, or for economic reasons, to generate additional profit. At the same time, it can be seen as a means of influencing the political elite of recipient countries, which serves to advance the foreign policy interests of donors and to foster favorable public opinion of the donor country in recipient countries and on the global stage.

Keywords: humanitarian aid, global politics, strategic interests, instruments of influence, political humanitarianism

For citation: Shumova NYu. Humanitarian aid as an instrument of influence in a strategic perspective. *Modern Science and Innovations*. 2026;(2):193-198. <https://doi.org/10.37493/2307-910X.2026.2.19>

Conflict of interest: the author declares no conflicts of interests.

The article was submitted 01.12.2025;

approved after reviewing 01.04.2026;

accepted for publication 01.06.2026.

Introduction. As crises in global politics intensify, the scope of humanitarian issues is expanding, not only generating the need for larger-scale humanitarian operations and missions but also creating additional risks and opportunities for political influence. In this context, it is necessary to understand these risks and opportunities, their nature, and their specific nature.

There are two main types of foreign aid: economic and humanitarian. While economic aid, as many researchers agree, almost always correlates with the interests of donor countries, the situation with humanitarian aid is less clear [6, p. 3]. The prevailing view today is that humanitarian aid, which in theory should be provided solely based on needs, is also vulnerable to the influence of the political and strategic interests of donor countries.

Many authors studying the practice of providing humanitarian aid conclude that it is motivated not so much by altruistic as by egoistic considerations. Aid may be motivated by the need for economic and social development in recipient countries, as well as the need to reward them for the effectiveness of their political institutions [7, pp. 2-4]. However, the economic and socio-political development of recipient countries can serve, and often does, only as a declared goal. For example, low levels of economic development in recipient countries imply increased migration flows to donor countries, so the latter are interested in increasing per capita income in the former not only for altruistic reasons, but also for purely practical ones.

Many studies show that donor countries provide more aid to their trading partners or to countries with which they have closer trade ties [7, p. 4]. This implies that the aid sender enters into an implicit agreement with the recipient, which requires that donors allocate financial resources that recipients must use to purchase their export products.

Other studies demonstrate that donor countries view aid as a tool for achieving their foreign policy objectives. Aid is used by donor countries to "buy" allies and geopolitically significant countries [5, p. 1932]. Typically, large amounts of aid are allocated to countries willing to support the donor country's position in the UN, or to countries that were once colonially dependent on the donor country.

In their study, P. Raschki and M. Schwindt concluded that donor countries, when deciding whether to provide aid after natural disasters, are guided not only by the scale of the tragedy and the needs of recipient countries, but also by their own strategic considerations. In addressing the objectives of their study, these scholars distinguish between aid delivery channels (bilateral and multilateral) and aid types (cash and in-kind). In their opinion, bilateral and cash transfers are typically used as a means to realize strategic interests, while multilateral and in-kind transfers are chosen when it is necessary to prevent the misuse of funds in recipient countries [14, p. ii].

Materials and methods. The research materials include official strategic planning documents, reports from international organizations specializing in humanitarian aid, press releases from humanitarian organizations, etc.

The normative theory of international relations (C. Baitz, W. Bain, N. Rengger [3; 2; 15], etc.) served as the methodological foundation. The results of the study were influenced by the concept of political humanitarianism (H. Slim, V. Taleb, Sh. Elnaqib [16; 17; 8], etc.) and the concept of global politics (D. Bayliss, P. Owens, S. Smith, B. Whiteham, E. Heywood [13; 12], etc.). At the same time, the author turned to such methods as content analysis and case study analysis.

Results and discussion. According to the realist paradigm, all foreign aid remains and will continue to be an instrument of political power. Consequently, donor countries will prioritize aid so that it serves their own strategic interests. Thus, in the event of natural disasters, donor countries, following the tenets of realism, will direct aid to their strategic allies rather than adversaries. However, if we draw on the tenets of other theories, such as the normative theory, natural disasters can be viewed as an opportunity for donor countries to improve their relations with their adversaries.

It is well known that in identical situations, an actor's behavior can differ, determined by context. Natural disasters can change the context of relations between actors, prompting donor countries to increase aid to their strategic adversaries. The loss of life and destruction of infrastructure caused by natural disasters temporarily bring the humanitarian aspects of relations to the forefront, relegating the economic, political, and military aspects that dominate in normal times to the background [4, p. 944].

There is some evidence that aid provided in the event of natural disasters can contribute to humanization and improve relations between adversaries. T. Andrabi and D. Das found that international humanitarian aid sent to Pakistan after the 2005 earthquake increased the level of trust of the affected population in Europeans and Americans [1, p. 371].

Initially, a donor country cannot know how the government and population of the recipient country will react to its humanitarian initiatives and offers of aid. A natural disaster is merely a window of opportunity, offering a chance to improve interstate relations. If this opportunity is realized, the donor country can expect the recipient country to refrain from certain actions that run counter to its interests, and the population will be more receptive to certain of its decisions and behavior.

In theory, a state could take advantage of a natural disaster occurring on its adversary's territory to improve its strategic position. However, this does not happen in practice, because

such actions are associated with long-term costs and go beyond the bounds of socially acceptable behavior in disaster situations. Moreover, states typically refuse to remain inactive when their adversaries suffer a tragedy. On the contrary, they demonstrate a willingness to provide assistance to their strategic opponents. For example, during the 1994-1998 famine in North Korea, the main suppliers of food aid were the United States, South Korea, Japan, and the EU. Taiwan was listed as one of China's largest donors after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake [4, p. 942].

A. Fuchs and S. Sievers acknowledge that the degree of international political cooperation influences, to one degree or another, the speed of humanitarian aid during natural disasters [9, pp. 14-15]. On the one hand, donor countries are interested in providing assistance more quickly to their allies, which would demonstrate support and guarantee the survival of friendly governments in the event of threats to political stability caused by the scale of the disaster. On the other hand, they are also interested in giving priority to adversaries who distance themselves politically from them in this matter, with the aim of extracting certain concessions from them in the future, understanding that emergency aid is a more suitable means of obtaining political concessions than general development aid.

Competition among major international players for a favorable, positive perception in global public opinion remains intense. This type of competition is becoming one of the key features of the emerging new world order, based on the principle of diversity. The desire to create a positive image in the eyes of the foreign public is explained by the fact that it plays a significant role in the achievement of various foreign policy goals and the implementation of international initiatives by states.

Positive, favorable public opinion in a target country about a state attempting to exert influence simplifies its efforts. In other words, such opinion enhances the effectiveness of "soft power," the "currency" of which is culture, values, institutions, and past policies. B. Goldsmith and Y. Horiuchi, studying examples of the importance of public opinion, argue that public opinion about Washington's foreign policy in other countries influences the nature of their foreign policy toward the United States [10, p. 555]. In the minds of people around the world, foreign states, especially major powers, are associated with relatively stable images. Consequently, any new international political event will be interpreted in light of these already formed views. Therefore, major international players devote considerable time and resources to cultivating their positive images.

One effective tool for image-building is foreign humanitarian aid. States may provide humanitarian aid for various reasons. It may be provided for altruistic reasons, to improve the socioeconomic situation in developing countries, or for economic reasons, to generate additional profit. At the same time, it can be seen as a means of influencing the political elite of recipient countries, which serves to advance the foreign policy interests of donors and to foster favorable public opinion of the donor country in recipient countries and on the global stage.

By evoking gratitude from recipients or creating a general image of positive actions, aid can contribute to the development of a positive image of the donor country in recipient countries. However, many factors can hinder the desired results of aid. The immediate recipients may be unaware of the source of the aid; the donor country's motives may be perceived, fairly or unfairly, as selfish, positive feelings associated with aid may be incompatible with the negative associations previously formed by the donor country's foreign policy actions. Finally, aid may fail to produce the desired effects and therefore have no impact on the opinions of people who have not seen any improvement in their quality of life [11, pp. 89-91].

Conclusion. The strategic use of humanitarian aid can involve interactions with both political allies and political opponents. In the latter case, donor states hope to obtain certain concessions from recipient states in the future. States providing humanitarian aid strategically are motivated primarily by the need to foster a positive perception of themselves in global and local public opinion, as this facilitates the effective achievement of various foreign policy goals and facilitates the implementation of various international initiatives. The political rationale for providing aid complements other rationales, such as altruism and economics.

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Вклад авторов: автор провел исследования и привел результаты исследований.

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