EDITED BY
KISHAN S RANA & JOVAN KURBALIJA

FOREIGN MINISTRIES

MANAGING DIPLOMATIC NETWORKS AND OPTIMIZING VALUE

DiPLO

Foreign Ministries
Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value

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Kishan S. Rana and Jovan Kurbalija

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PREFACE

DIPLOFOUNDATION IS A SMALL INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT organization, funded by its sponsors, Switzerland and Malta, and other donors that support its teaching and other activities. It has a staff of 15, besides a part-time faculty of 12, and a similar number of teaching assistants and others. Its physical location is in Malta, Geneva, and Belgrade, but in keeping with its strong e-learning affiliation, the 'Diplo-team' functions from its distributed locations the world over.

The conference of foreign ministries that met in Geneva on 31 May and 1 June 2006 was several years in the making. We at DiploFoundation were motivated by the conviction that the reform and adaptation that foreign ministries have carried out in the past two decades deserve wide discussion. Diplomatic systems have much to gain from information sharing and benchmarking. We also believe that Diplo provides an unbiased platform for a serious discussion among both practitioners and scholars. Further, the conference responded to one of our core objectives, namely to help countries short of material and human resources to better participate in international affairs. We remain convinced that foreign ministries can profit from closer mutual dialogue on diplomacy-related issues, given the commonalities in their systems, methods, and work environment. It is for the reader to judge how far this collection of papers contributes to this goal of improved communication among all the specialists connected with diplomacy.

We are grateful to all those that attended the conference, and even more so to all those who presented papers and actively participated in the discussions. The authors of the papers took the trouble to revisit, revise, and polish their initial statements, giving them the shape in which they are presented in this volume.

Our warm thanks also to all those who worked to organize the conference, and those that subsequently assisted with the production of this volume.

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John Hemery

Since 1990, Mr Hemery is designer and director of programmes of training for the foreign ministries of more than forty developing and developed countries. Provider of training in political work and political negotiation for the UK FCO, and of specialist programmes of training in public diplomacy and trade diplomacy; training for EU integration and accession, and courses of specialist preparation for the EU Presidencies of the UK, Finland, and Slovenia. He is currently Chair of the European Diplomatic Training Initiative and Rapporteur of the International Forum on Diplomatic Training.

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Dietrich Kappeler served in the Swiss diplomatic service between 1957–65. He was a consultant for diplomatic training, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 1966–73, Research Fellow at Law Faculty, University of Geneva 1972–5, and a Professor of International Law and Diplomacy associated with IUHEI 1975–98, on secondment to University of Tehran 1975–7, and University of Nairobi 1977–90. He was also Founding Director (1990–3) and Chairman (1993–8) of the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Malta, and Director of Diplomatic Studies Programmes IUHEI 1993–8. He is a consultant since 1998, and is President of DiploFoundation since 2002.

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Born in Rome (Italy) in 1942, Aldo Matteucci has spent most of his working life in external trade policy and administration. In 1966 he graduated as an agronomist from the Federal Technology Institute in Zürich, followed by graduate work in Agricultural Economics (M.Sc.) at the University of California, Berkeley. He joined the Swiss Federal Office for External Economic Affairs in Berne and was seconded as Deputy Director of the EUREKA Secretariat (Brussels) and as Deputy Secretary-General of the European Free Trade Association (Geneva). He retired early upon the completion of this last assignment. He is Senior Fellow at DiploFoundation.

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JOHN O'KEEFE

Ambassador John O'Keefe, of Vienna, Virginia, is a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister Counselor. Before assuming his duties as Acting Director General in February 2006, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of the Director General, Bureau of Human Resources since April 2004. Prior to that, Ambassador O'Keefe headed the Office of Career Development and Assignments from July 2003 to April 2004. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan from August 2000 to July 2003. During his time in the Kyrgyz Republic, he negotiated a status of forces agreement to deploy combat and logistics air support for operations in Afghanistan, and helped create a six-person Advisory Council to attract investment, chaired by the Kyrgyz President.

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Introduction

Challenges for Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value

DIETRICH KAPPELER
President, DiploFoundation

ON 31 MAY AND 1 JUNE 2006, TWENTY-FIVE DIPLOMATS, ACADEMICS AND researchers discussed the challenges for foreign ministries with an interested professional public. Altogether there were 70 participants from 40 countries from all parts of the globe. As befitted its theme, the event was organized jointly by DiploFoundation, whose concern is the incidence of Information and Communications Technology on contemporary and future diplomacy and the Graduate Institute of International Studies of Geneva, which has been involved in teaching and research related to diplomacy for over 75 years.

The various chapters presented have now been put together under six main headings: Why Reform?, Country Experience, The Home Front, Functional Areas, Training, and The Future.

Under the first heading, *Why Reform?,* Brian Hocking presents the Foreign Ministry, what it was, what it has gradually become, and how it strives to adjust to ever-changing environments and challenges. To illustrate his case he has chosen the Foreign Ministry of Canada and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom. In the next contribution, Kishan Rana outlines some global trends in attempts to reform foreign ministries, which he distils from a survey he has conducted during the last few years.

Under *Country Experience,* Adam Blackwell describes a new Canadian approach he calls 'results-based diplomacy'. John O'Keefe explains what is meant by the US concept of 'transformational diplomacy', which

involves active interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Vitavas Srivihok indicates how Thailand is trying to meet the challenges of the internal management of external affairs by applying the concept of 'CEO Ambassador'. Lars-Göran Larsson shows the internal challenges that confront the modernization of foreign services using the example of Sweden. Fauzia Mohamed Taib explains how Malaysia is trying to alleviate the routine tasks of her foreign ministry by outsourcing them to private enterprises. The last study under this heading, by Jozef Batora, deals with the emerging new characteristics of diplomacy among member states within the European Union.

Under *The Home Front*, Alex Sceberras Trigona tackles the difficult task of diplomatic dealing with politicians at home. Tatiana Zonova relates Russia's experience with regional aspirations to participate in diplomatic activities, a problem that can lead to fragmentation marginalizing the central foreign ministry as shown by David Criekemans using the example of Flanders in Belgium.

Under the heading of *Functional Areas*, Benedict von Tscharner uses the example of Switzerland's bilateral agreements with the European Union to show the complexity of multilateral negotiation of an outsider with a group of insiders. Doru Romulus Costea uses his experience as permanent representative in Geneva to consider whether multilateralism is fading or changing. Markus Kummer has chosen Internet governance as an example of emerging multidisciplinary issues that contemporary diplomatic services have to tackle. Considerable attention is devoted to consular affairs. Algimantas Rimkunas describes how Lithuania is modernizing its consular service in response to global challenges. Maaike Heijmans and Jan Melissen show what these challenges are in the case of the Netherlands. Karl Paschke uses his vast experience to analyse the evolution of public diplomacy, and this is further illuminated by Ron Garsen with the example of Canada's online and interactive foreign ministry. John Mathiason examines the linking of diplomatic performance assessment to international results-based management.

Under the heading of *Training*, Rolando Stein reports his findings from a survey of diplomatic training around the world. Lichia Yiu and Raymond Saner explain how the application of the management system ISO 10015 helps to obtain better value from training, and John Hemery presents some innovations in diplomatic training.

Considering *The Future*, Aldo Matteucci shows how to survive budget cuts and thrive, Jovan Kurbalija discusses knowledge management. Finally, Aldo Matteucci speculates about what will emerge within a Horizon 2020.

The variety of issues dealt with and the views presented are a testimony to the great complexity of the tasks that contemporary foreign ministries have to face and also provide a glimpse at the even greater complexity looming ahead. Participants actively discussed the various presentations and added valuable considerations to the points raised in them. It would appear that foreign ministries are only beginning to realize the scope and speed of change that the world is experiencing, and the corresponding need to keep evolving and adjusting to this. Two consequences of recent developments might have merited more attention. One is the gradual disappearance of the dichotomy of foreign ministry–missions and posts abroad. ICT is now blending the two sides into a single instrument in which missions and central services interact in the conception as well as implementation of policies, and the control of performance and evaluation of results achieved. The other consequence is the continued need for a traditional approach to diplomacy as an interaction through trusted representatives meeting in private, and able to keep their discussions and their results confidential and removed from public scrutiny. The choice of such representatives is nowadays wide open and goes far beyond foreign service officers or other civil servants. But to be successful they will still need the traditional qualities of a diplomat: honesty, truthfulness, empathy, and discretion.

As can be seen, everything is in motion for foreign ministries, and the findings exposed at the conference can mostly be only provisional. To chart the course for the future, it might be useful to convene similar gatherings from time to time, whenever new insights and/or developments would suggest this to be advisable.

Why Reform?

What is the Foreign Ministry?

BRIAN HOCKING

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THE THEME OF THIS BOOK INVITES AN OBVIOUS BUT PERTINENT QUESTION: why should we be interested in the past, present, and future state of that part of the national bureaucracy designated as the 'ministry of foreign affairs' (MFA)? Why is it that conferences, workshops, and seminars should be devoted to the *foreign* ministry whilst ministries of agriculture and transport, for example, do not attract such attention? This is the point of departure for my discussion, since whereas there are sound reasons for engaging in this enterprise, they may not always be clearly articulated. Beyond this basic question, the chapter is concerned with what I suggest is a fundamental issue in appreciating the challenges that confront the MFA in the 21st century—namely its character as an organization and the significance of organizational culture in understanding this.

The analysis of any organization demands a consideration of its nature and role. It is this issue, encapsulated in the question, 'what is the foreign ministry?' that constitutes the core of this chapter. Here, my premise is that at least some of the conflicting observations as to the present and future state of MFAs are rooted in a failure to appreciate their nature as organizations and their patterns of evolution. More specifically, I suggest that many of their perceived problems (whether these are identified from within the foreign ministry or from outside it) can be better appreciated through the recognition that these are organizations located in distinctive environments. From here, the chapter proceeds to consider what its defining features are, how these are related to organizational culture, and

how this might explain some of the opaqueness that surrounds the debate on the status of MFAs.

WHY WORRY ABOUT MFAS?

There are several possible arguments for examining the pathology of MFAs. Perhaps the most compelling is their relationship to, and role in, the processes of diplomatic interaction, which remains a critical feature of the international system. In one sense, the debate about the MFA— what it does, and its significance—is a metaphor for the transformation of the international environment and helps one to appreciate significant phases of change in the system and how states have adapted to these changes.[1] As Jørgensen has suggested, foreign ministries, 'because they change form and content' and are 'historical–concrete and dynamic organizations', are informative indicators of international systemic change.[2]

A second reason for examining the MFA follows directly from this point. Given the fact that the MFA is the bureaucratic embodiment of the state's sovereign power in its relationship with the international environment, the patterns of change within its structure and operations should provide significant evidence as to how the state responds to external change. In the light of the debate concerning the impact of globalization and regionalization on the power, role and organization of government, the condition of that part of the bureaucracy most closely identified with the interface between the domestic and international *milieus* is, *prima facie,* of interest. Indeed, the changing role and status of the foreign ministry have constituted a continuing theme in discussions for the adaptation of international policy management. Thus the twin forces of globalization and regionalization have been portrayed as changing the structure and role of the MFA and, in particular, its relationship with and relative importance to other parts of the national bureaucracy. In the European Union (EU) context, for example, the theme of 'Europeanization' of the MFA is a familiar one as the impact of EU membership has

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[1] G.R. Winham, 'The Impact of System Change on International Diplomacy', paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Carleton University, Ottawa, June 1993.

[2] K.E. Jørgensen, 'Modern European Diplomacy', paper delivered at International Studies Association Convention, Toronto, March 1997.

demanded changes in the roles and relationships between government departments, including the MFA.[3]

INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE

But if there is a case for examining the MFA, this certainly does not imply a uniformity of opinion regarding its current—or even its historical—position within its international or domestic environments. This is hardly surprising given the complexity of the contemporary international system and the varying roles which diplomacy and its agents are portrayed as discharging. Henrikson, for example, identifies at least five scenarios which, whilst overlapping in certain respects, carry different implications for the future state of diplomacy and by implication, suggest differing roles for the MFA.[4] This is reinforced by the diversity of approaches to the analysis of International Relations as a field of academic enquiry. The emphasis on the growing significance of global governance, for example, emphasises the role of a diverse range of actors operating alongside, or even in place of the traditional diplomatic networks associated with the state system.[5] This is not the place to pursue this theme at any length, but it is important to note that evaluations of the MFA's place in its domestic and international settings reflect fundamental assumptions and differences as to the latter's nature in an era of profound change, and how we should conceptualize and analyse world politics.

Thus we find very different conclusions being drawn from similar bodies of evidence. At one end of the spectrum lie arguments which suggest that the MFA is irrelevant. In its international cloak, this is associated with (frequently confused) debates about the nature of contemporary diplomacy, reflected, for example in propositions concerning the role of

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[3] See, for example, H. Kassim, B. Guy Peters, and V. Wright, *The National Co-ordination of EU Policy: the Domestic Level.* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000; B. Hocking and D. Spence, *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats.* (revised edn) Houndmills, Palgrave, 2005.

[4] A.K. Henrikson, 'Diplomacy's possible futures', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy,* 1(1) 2006: pp. 3–27.

[5] R.A. O'Brien, M. Goetz, J.A. Scholte, M. Williams, *Contesting Global Governance: Multilateral Economic Institutions and Global Social Movements*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

bilateral diplomacy and its association with the foreign ministry and the network over which it presides. In its domestic guise, the case is linked to the changing relationship between 'domestic' departments and the MFA. On the one hand, it has long been noted that the conduct of diplomacy has been spread amongst a greater cast of bureaucratic players, whilst on the other, that the conduct of international policy has migrated to centralized bureaus, notably prime ministerial and presidential offices. In part, the confusion is reinforced by the dynamics of change within foreign ministries. Not only are they subject to bewildering internal structural changes, the precise implications of which often seem to be lost even to those who work in them,[6] a proliferation of data can be utilized to support quite different conclusions.[7] This is no small problem. Data which appear to suggest an enhancement of resources, for example, may reflect the assignation of new functions which are inadequately supported.

In part, of course, interpreting the impact of change depends on a greater precision as to the phenomena being investigated. Wesley's discussion of the impact of globalization on the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAT) is one instructive example.[8] Moving beyond the usual generalizations characteristic of such discussions, Wesley suggests a more nuanced evaluation which differentiates the impact of globalization in terms of four dimensions— such as diffusion in terms of policy agendas and actors, and the 'transformation' of international relations and the domestic environment. Unsurprisingly, a major facet in both cases is the enhanced significance of economics, and the demands imposed by the 'competition state' on the monitoring of the global economy. This leads him to identify three broad contextual changes that impinge on DFAT in differing ways: a politicization of its operational environment, challenges to its role as the dominant information system as rivals emerge and, third, pressure on resources. Each of these echo findings in other MFAs, but Wesley sees the

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[6] I have frequently been surprised when interviewing diplomatic staff, at how often they profess confusion about (or sometimes ignorance of) change in the MFA.

[7] This is very evident in Berridge's evaluation of the current state of the MFA which employs a range of statistics to support the argument that there has been a 'counter-revolution' in diplomatic practice. See G.R. Berridge, 'The counter-revolution in diplomatic practice', *Quaderni di Scienza Politica,* Year 12, new series 5 (1), April 2005: pp. 7–24.

[8] M. Wesley, 'Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the challenges of globalisation', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 56 (2) 2002: pp. 207–22.

consequences of them playing out in different ways, posing challenges in some senses whilst, on the other hand, offering the opportunity for task expansion and the development of new domestic constituencies.[9] Interestingly, however, he suggests that the key challenge for DFAT in an era of profound international change lies in a weakness in terms of its capacity for creative policy thinking in an increasingly unstable environment.

This analysis, whilst lacking detail, does point us in a useful direction. Not only is it the case that we need to be more precise about what the environmental changes and challenges impinging on MFAs are, but also how they are affecting its various roles. Rather than the former having a uniform effect on the latter, it is quite possible that the developments associated with globalization—such as the revolution in information technology—impact on different functions in different ways. MFAs are not identical, but one of their features is that by virtue of their evolution and place in the diplomatic network, they do possess notable similarities in terms of function. Thus whilst it is true that the orientation of some MFAs has tended towards specific roles—such as the Netherlands MFA whose origins stressed a commercial rationale[10]—there are broad generic functions which they share. As Morgan notes, organizations are not commonly established as ends in themselves but as the means to accomplish other goals.[11] In the case of MFAs, we can identify the following generic roles:

- A node in a communications system through which information is gathered, analysed and disseminated.
- A policy advice function, providing expertise to politicians, other parts of the bureaucracy and to non-governmental actors with interests in international policy.
- A memory bank, gathering and storing information. As Hill notes, 'without the capacity to relate myriad past commitments and treaties to the present, and to each other, decision-makers would be left floundering in chaos, given the complexity of the contemporary international system.'[12]

[9] Ibid., p. 220.
[10] D. Hellema, 'The Netherlands' in *Foreign Ministries*, Hocking and Spence, pp. 177–90.
[11] G. Morgan, *Images of Organization*, Thousand Oaks, CAL, Sage, 1997, p. 15.
[12] C. Hill, *the Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 77.

- A policy transfer function through which the channels of diplomatic communication are used to exchange information and ideas on a range of issues between countries on diverse issues. Some of these—such as combating international terrorism lie in the area of international policy, but many are firmly located in the domestic arena: education, pensions, environmental, and transport policy, for example.

It is the first two of these functions that are most commonly regarded as being challenged. As a communications system, the rapid dispersal of information through the electronic media is, however misleadingly, frequently regarded as rendering the diplomatic network redundant. Similarly, the emergence of rival sources of policy advice and expertise, both in other government departments and outside them, in the form of non-governmental organizations for example, is seen as threatening the role of the MFA as the pre-eminent source of expertise in an environment where specialist rather than generalist, diplomatic expertise is valued. On the other hand, the 'memory bank' function rarely if ever features in this debate, suggesting either that observers do not value it, are unaware of its existence, or accept that it is insulated from the pressures of exogenous change. The development of the 'policy transfer' role which similarly tends to be ignored in discussions of contemporary diplomacy functions can be interpreted as indicative of decline or adaptation to changing circumstances.

But all of these functions draw attention to one of the key features of the MFA, namely that it is located at the boundary of two linked systems. On the one hand, it is an inseparable component of the global diplomatic network—what Steiner terms 'a common field of diplomatic action'— through which much—but not all—international interactions are mediated.[13] On the other, it is a major element in the national diplomatic system—that is, the machinery through which governments seek to pursue their international policy goals. This bifurcated environment helps to explain the organizational culture of the foreign ministry, but it also explains its evolving character. I will develop this point below, but for the present want to suggest that this environmental ambiguity underpins the operation of the MFA. And one facet is of particular significance—namely the relationship between the foreign ministry and what are frequently referred to as OGDs—other government departments. Rather than a

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[13] Z. Steiner, Introduction, *The Times Survey of Foreign Ministries of the World*, London, Times Books, 1982, p. 11.

manifestation of globalization and regionalization, intra-bureaucratic relationships have long constituted a key feature of the MFA's role, both nationally and, through its diplomatic network, internationally. Thus there is an historical dimension to understanding what may be regarded as a contemporary phenomenon: the challenge to the claims of the MFA to perform the key functions identified above. The implications of this can be seen from a brief overview of the evolution of the British Foreign Office (FO) into what had become by 1968, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

It is worth noting in passing that prior to the emergence of the earliest foreign ministries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the norm was to combine the management of domestic and foreign policy within a single department.[14] It was the recognition by Richelieu of the need for continuity and coordination in the management of French foreign relations in the increasingly complex system of states that led to the emergence of a separate foreign ministry. In the case of Great Britain, up to 1782, the Northern and Southern Departments dealt with both domestic and foreign policy. From that date, the growing needs of dealing with the international environment and the inefficiencies and frictions that two often-competing Secretaries could create were recognized in the form of two departments, one for home affairs and the other for foreign affairs.[15] But the FO, defined as a department offering policy advice to the Secretary of State, did not emerge until the reforms of 1906. Until then, its role was largely clerical whilst foreign secretaries conducted policy:

> The functions of the staff were purely clerical; they were almost entirely confined to matters of routine. Even the Permanent Under Secretary had no higher duty than that of superintending the clerical work... Not only was high policy left entirely to the initiative of the Secretary of State, but he also wrote all the important dispatches himself.[16]

However, even after the 1906 reforms, the FO was by no means an uncontested mediator of Britain's external relations. Before 1914, its role

[14] K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration,* London, Routledge, 1995, p. 73.

[15] Sir John Tilley and S. Gaselee, *The Foreign Office,* London, Putnams, 1933, pp. 26–49; N. Hart, *The Foreign Secretary,* Lavenham, Dalton, 1987, pp. 9–27; V. Cromwell, 'The Foreign and Commonwealth Office', in Steiner, op.cit. pp. 542–51.

[16] V. Wellesley, *Diplomacy in Fetters*, London, Hutchinson, 1945, p. 191.

was being challenged, but the First World War presented new demands as the conduct of diplomacy adjusted to the imperatives of war. Commercial and propaganda work, for example, not only required new skills but elevated the status of bureaucratic rivals. In addition, the role of the Prime Minister's Office in the conduct of the war effort inevitably lessened the status of the Foreign Office. During the war, the foreign secretary, Balfour, was not a member of the War Cabinet and his successor, Curzon, frequently found himself at odds with Prime Minister Lloyd George as the latter pursued independent foreign policy initiatives, leaving the control of foreign policy in the Prime Minister's Office even after the disbandment of the War Cabinet in 1919. 'The result was that the Foreign Office was deprived of its monopolistic position as adviser to the Prime Minister.'[17]

During the inter-war years, the conduct of external policy became the subject of inter-bureaucratic conflict as the FO saw the work of its Commercial Department assumed by the newly created Department of Overseas Trade. More serious implications for the conduct of external policy lay in the conflict between the Foreign Office and the Treasury over the latter's insistence that post-war reparation issues lay firmly within its province. Despite an agreement whereby Treasury negotiators would keep the Foreign Office informed on the conduct of reparations negotiations, the latter knew nothing of the negotiations during 1921, which fixed the total German reparation debt or of Anglo-French negotiations on the Allied Financial Agreement of the same year. Against this background, an intensive exchange regarding the management of the growing interface between domestic and foreign policy developed, in which the FO, the Prime Minister's Office, and domestic departments jostled for advantage. Not surprisingly, the core issue was to which agency of government should primary oversight of the coordination processes deemed necessary to avoid conflict between objectives, be assigned. The politics of the situation ensured that issues of coordination and control became matters of departmental status more than techniques through which desirable policy objectives could be achieved.[18]

Bringing this brief narrative into the contemporary environment inhabited by the FCO, a major focus of attention, as with other EU member

[17] E. Maisel, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy. 1919–1926,* Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 1994, p. 63.

[18] Ibid, pp. 73–4.

state MFAs, has been the impact of Europeanization.[19] Here, the pattern of intra-bureaucratic relations is often located within a dynamic network framework comprising actors clustering around a common strategic agenda, and adapting to both external and internal stimuli. As James has demonstrated, the response of what is termed the 'core executive' [20] in the UK to the Europeanization process involves shifts in the relative power of each participant, not least the FCO. James' findings demonstrate just how fluid the position of an MFA can be in a complex policy environment: developments such as a shift in resources from the FCO to the Cabinet Office and UKRep (the UK Mission to the EU), together with the relative failure of attempts to strengthen the FCO's EU coordinating role through a Minister for Europe, have resulted in a more significant role for the Prime Minister's Office. At the same time, this has to be set against other developments—for example, the FCO's leadership of the Step Change initiative, intended to raise awareness of the UK's position in the EU and of other member states within the UK, and its production of an annual White Paper on EU policy objectives to which other government departments are required to respond.[21] In short, the history of the FO/FCO has been one of continual change, marked by a response to a dynamic external environment and a redefinition of its relationships with key bureaucratic actors sharing an interest in that environment.

This makes it hard to sustain simple zero-sum images of the role and status of the MFA alongside its bureaucratic competitors in the management of international policy. Rather, history seems to suggest that the location of the MFA at the cusp of two systems, the international diplomatic network and the national diplomatic system, creates a dynamic environment within which roles and relationships with other actors are

[19] John Dickie discusses the relationship between the FCO and other government departments in *The New Mandarins, How British Foreign Policy Works,* London, I.B. Tauris, 2004 (see chapter 11).

[20] S. James, 'The triumph of network governance? The Europeanization of the core executive since 1997', Political Studies Association (UK) conference, April 2006. Rhodes defines the core executive as 'those organizations and structures which coordinate central government, and act as the final arbiters of conflict between different parts of the government machine'. See R. Rhodes, 'From prime ministerial power to core executive', in R. Rhodes and P. Dunleavy (eds), *Prime Minister, Cabinet and Core Executive,* London, Macmillan, 1995, p. 12.

[21] James, *The triumph of network governance*, p. 12.

in a continual process of redefinition. But if role adaptation within fluid networks helps to define what the MFA is, its organizational culture is of equal significance.

THE CULTURE OF THE MFA

I want to develop this point in terms of a consideration of foreign ministries as organizations possessing a distinctive culture. Nearly all studies of organizations start with observations regarding their complexity. Handy, for example, provides a diagram comprising more than sixty variables impinging on any organizational condition.[22] Part of this complexity relates to organizational culture—that is to say the norms and values that characterize a system, its structures and processes. Schein emphasizes the significance of the organizational culture as a mode of coping with external adaptation and internal integration.[23] In other words, it assists the organization in dealing with the kinds of change that we have noted above. Pettigrew focuses on the significance of meaning and image: 'Culture is a system of publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time. This system of terms, forms categories and images interprets a people's own situation to themselves.'[24] Culture, however, is not externally imposed. Rather, organizational psychologists such as Weick argue that through processes of enactment, we create our own realities even whilst believing that these possess objective characteristics.[25] Narrative approaches to analysing organizational culture carry this idea further by suggesting that organizations develop stories or narratives about themselves and that how the story is told and by whom is as significant as its content.[26] Social constructionists suggest that people acquire knowledge by listening and telling stories and that studying these provides an important source of information about the organization.

[22] C. Handy, *Understanding Organisations* (fourth edition), London, Penguin, 1999, pp. 13–15.

[23] E. Schein, *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1999, p. 6.

[24] A. Pettigrew, 'On studying organizational culture', *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 24, 1979, p. 574.

[25] G. Morgan, *Images of Organization*, Thousand Oaks, CAL, 1997, pp. 140–1.

[26] M.J. Hatch with A.L. Cunliffe, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic and Postmodern Perspectives* (second edition), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 197.

Developing this point, what can we learn about the status of the MFA in terms of its culture?

As noted earlier, there are plenty of contributors to the debate about the state of contemporary diplomacy and its agents, and a good deal of this debate focuses on organizational culture. Generally, the MFA and its foreign service are portrayed as having a well-defined and 'strong' culture. This derives from the nature of the work, patterns of recruitment and, as noted above, the location of the MFA at the cusp of two environments, the international and the domestic. Serving overseas—particularly in an era when this poses very real security issues—creates amongst Australian diplomats, suggest Gyngell and Wesley, a culture akin to that of the military, based on shared experience and a sense of distinctiveness.[27] Moreover, as Wiseman notes, the diplomatic network possesses its own distinctive culture. Inevitably, this permeates the MFA environment.[28]

Put another way, the 'foreignness' of the MFA is a critical part of its culture. 'Foreign' is derived from the Latin word 'foris' meaning outside.[29] Not only is the MFA linked to the 'outside' defined in terms of the international, it is also portrayed as being an *outsider* in its own domestic environment, distinctive from other government departments and lacking natural constituencies on which it can draw for support in times of trial. These two modes of 'outsideness' are reinforcing. The role of the diplomat as part of the transnational diplomatic community feeds back into headquarters whose operations are attuned to the needs of servicing the overseas network. One of the current tensions in the operation of both the MFA and its network is the result of the need to cope with a challenge to this dimension of their culture as they respond to the demands of the 'public service' culture and a consequent 'consumerisation' of diplomacy. More mobile populations, experiencing the joys of global tourism and the threats of global terrorism, generate new expectations of diplomats and the services they provide.

It is not easy and may be oversimplistic to try to crystallize the ethos of the MFA in a neat formulation, but much of it accords—as I have

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[27] A. Gyngell and M. Wesley, *Making Australian Foreign Policy,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 71.

[28] G. Wiseman, 'Pax Americana: Bumping into Diplomatic Culture', *International Studies Perspectives,* 6 (4) 2005, pp. 409–30.

[29] Hill, *The changing politics of foreign policy*, p. 3.

argued elsewhere—with the concept of a *gatekeeper*, deriving from its location between the international and domestic environments. The term is a metaphor, and these, as Morgan argues, simplify reality, distort that which is being observed and create what he terms 'constructive falsehoods', which, nevertheless, can provide valuable insights in understanding an organization.[30] In this context, it suggests a narrative which explains the importance of the organization in terms of a filter through which messages between the two environments pass, its repository of skills in terms of policy advice on international issues and—although not usually emphasized as much—its role as the institutional memory in the conduct of international policy. What appears to be happening within the MFA and the world of diplomacy more generally, is an attempt to substitute for this narrative which, as I have suggested above, has dubious credentials in the sense that it fails to recognize the intra-bureaucratic conflicts which have usually surrounded the conduct of international policy, a new story aimed at reinterpreting its role and, most simply put, ensuring its survival in an increasingly challenging environment.

But what can we learn about the MFA in terms of this change of narratives? Several sources of evidence are available to us. One comes in the form of diplomatic memoirs which, whilst usually focused on policy and events, can cast shafts of light on how the overseas network operates, its relationship with headquarters and other parts of the political and bureaucratic machinery. Thus Christopher Meyer's description of his years at the British embassy in Washington DC recounts a number of stories about the role and value of diplomats, the character of the FCO and the embassy's relations with the Prime Minister's Office.[31] A second source comes from writings of former—less commonly serving—diplomats on contemporary diplomacy, how it is conducted and proposals for reform. Riordan and Copeland fall into each of these categories.[32] Albeit in different contexts, the messages that they convey are similar: a sense of closedness and conservatism; a failure to engage adequately with other government departments and societal actors; inattention to key domestic consistencies

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[30] Morgan, *Images of Organizations*, pp. 4–7.

[31] C. Meyer, *DC Confidential,* London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005.

[32] S. Riordan, *The New Diplomacy*, Cambridge, Polity, 2002; D. Copeland, 'New rabbits; old hats: international policy and Canada's foreign service in an era of reduced diplomatic resources', *International Journal*, 60(3), 2005.

and inadequate public diplomacy strategies. Typically, diplomacy itself is portrayed as in need of responding to changing international and domestic policy environments, the management of which requires networks rather than traditional hierarchical structures. Woven into all of this, of course, is the need to utilize information technology effectively and the impact of inadequate resourcing on the MFA and its overseas posts.[33] In one sense, this constitutes a *counterculture,* espousing values and beliefs that challenge the prevailing organizational culture.

There is a third source of narratives focusing on the MFA and its contemporary role in the form of the numerous papers that they themselves produce, analysing where they fit in a rapidly changing environment and how they are adapting to it. These are of interest because they are written by members of the organization itself, and therefore reflect the transformation of a culture that, in turn, can help us to understand what the MFA sees itself as doing in the 21st century. They are of added significance in the sense that they carry with them the political imprimatur of government, suggesting that the images they convey possess a degree of official acquiescence, if not approbation. One could select any number of reports of this kind. Usually they combine interpretations of the changing international environment with a redefinition of the responses that this demands of the national diplomatic system. To illustrate the point, I have taken two recent official documents, the White Paper on British foreign policy published in 2006[34] and Canada's International Policy Statement published one year earlier (see Table 1).[35] Embedded in both documents are the answers to a series of questions which are an attempt to explain to both itself and to external constituencies, what it is, and how it is attempting to redefine its role.

Although each set of narratives is determined by the specific circumstances of each country, one of the striking features is the degree of similarity between the two. One obvious function of the narrative is

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[33] The impact of developments in IT is dealt with in detail by Jozef Batora in 'Diplomacy.com or Diplomacy.gone? Foreign Affairs Administration in the Information Age', Dr Polit dissertation, University of Oslo, 2006.

[34] Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 'Active Diplomacy for a Changing World: The UK's International Priorities', White Paper, London, 28 March 2006.

[35] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement. A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Diplomacy*. Ottawa, 2005.

TABLE 1: MFA: Narratives of change

	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK) Adaptive Diplomacy (2006)	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada) International Policy Statement: Diplomacy (2005)
Who are we?	• A network of overseas posts. • A 'value for money' organization. • High-calibre staff with skills experience and expertise.	• 'Highly professional and globally engaged institution' comprising extensive overseas network.
Are we important?	• Yes. Demands of a globalizing world make our skills indispensable.	• Yes. Demands of a globalizing world make our skills indispensable.
What do we do?	• Influence developments overseas. • Provide services to business and citizens.	• 'Actively influence international developments in line with Canada's interests.'
What are our roles?	• Lead agency • Partner • Adviser • Knowledge transfer agent	• 'Foreign Affairs will provide leadership across government on international matters, both within and outside Canada'. • Interpreter of international events. • Articulator of Canadian international policy. • Integrator of Canada's international agenda and representation abroad. • Chief advocate of Canada's values and interests abroad.
What are our problems?	• Adjustment to change	• Loss of 'policy capacity'. Must be 'rebuilt'. 'Foreign policy leadership is key to bringing coherence to the international activity of the government'. • Only 25% of staff posted abroad.

(contd...)

Table 1 (continued)

How are we changing?	• Clearer strategic priorities. • Moving resources overseas • Refocusing representation. • Working more closely with other government departments. • Becoming more representative of society.	• Rebuilding 'policy capacity'. • Moving resources overseas. • Refocusing representation. • Increasing consular services. • Closer links with OGDs: senior positions in FAC open to OGDs. • Enhancing coordination at home: speaking with 'unified voice' abroad. • Strengthening public diplomacy.

to assert the importance of the organization and both MFAs are firm in their argument that globalization, rather than eroding it, makes new demands on and underscores the significance of the foreign ministry.

In response to the question 'who are we?', it is interesting to note that the prime referent is not the ministry *per se*, but the network. The web of overseas posts is regularly identified as the key value-addition that the MFA brings to the management of international policy, and yet this is not a coherent justification for the latter's role outside that of managing the network. Nor is it the case that the answer to the question 'what do we do?' is clearly related to the ministry in its domestic setting.

Answering the latter question in both cases produces assertions concerning the projection of national influence overseas, but a notable development creeps in here—in the form of 'service delivery' and the need to respond to the demands of a more mobile and internationalized public. This leads inevitably to the more difficult issue of how these aspirations are translated into actual roles. It is here that the gatekeeper narrative confronts the realities of a more diffused policy environment in terms of both issues and actors. In the case of the FCO, the picture is more nuanced in the sense that contrasting images are offered: 'lead agency' and 'partner' depending on the policy area and the government departments involved. In the Canadian case, role definition is made much more firmly, the key words being 'interpreter', 'articulator', 'integrator' and 'chief advocate'. Whilst in both cases, the core rationale of coordinator ('integrator' is the preferred word in the Canadian document) is present, both narratives appear to recognize its centrality in terms of justifying the

MFA's position, but equally are conscious that the activity of coordination is sensitive in both bureaucratic and political terms.

Whereas the UK document is not very forthcoming in the self-analysis of the FCO's problems, the one from Canada is much more forthright, particularly in acknowledging what it terms 'loss of policy capacity'. This is associated with, and justified by, the pleas for coherence in international policy, taking us back to the coordination role. But both narratives stress that the FCO and FAC are adaptive organizations: each has recognized the challenges confronting it and is responding in similar ways. Recognition of the need to work with other government departments, stressing service delivery, clarifying objectives, redefining structures of representation—these are not only significant in themselves but in the messages they are intended to deliver to the members of the organization and to its external stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Evaluating the challenges confronting the MFA requires us to recognize it for what it is—namely an organization. As such, it behaves as organizations instinctively do, attempting to maximize its autonomy by seeking to control its environment. In this sense, its actions have to be viewed outside the demands imposed on it by its functions, for it has a self-interest in survival and is the interpreter and articulator of these functions. As we have seen, a significant feature of the MFA as an organization is its location at the point of interface between two systems: the international diplomatic network and the national diplomatic system. One of the problems that this poses is to reconcile the needs of adaptation to the demands of both environments, where specific changes in one may not serve the interests of the other. In other words, a bifurcated but linked environment creates particular kinds of pressure, whilst also providing resources for coping with change.

Making sense of this is as much a challenge to observers and commentators as it is to diplomats themselves. It leads me to suggest, however, that the notion that MFAs over the last thirty years or so have experienced a revolution to which they have successfully launched a counter-revolution distorts both historical and present realities.[36] There

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[36] As noted above (note 8), this is Berridge's argument.

is no gainsaying that we have experienced huge changes in international and domestic affairs over this time. But much of the available evidence suggests that MFAs have always been challenged in terms of defining and protecting their roles in the management of international policy. This is simply a manifestation of the fluidity of the environments in which they work. I have suggested that this fluidity is reflected in the organizational culture and the narratives regarding the nature and role of the foreign ministry on which it rests and is projected. MFAs have potent and skilled narrators in the shape of their diplomatic personnel whose attributes can be turned as effectively to institutional preservation when the occasion demands, as to the management of conflict in the international arena.

The real, underlying challenge is not to the existence of the MFA. Despite frequent predictions concerning the imminent demise of both the MFA and its foreign service, they continue to operate. This may simply reflect bureaucratic interest and political inertia underscored by a realization that what the MFA does has to be done somewhere and by somebody and that the alternatives may simply recreate the MFA under another name and in a different location. But there is a challenge and this lies in the culture of the organization and escaping from the 'psychic prison'—a situation 'where people become trapped by their own thoughts, ideas, and beliefs or by the unconscious mind'.[37] Undoubtedly, this has been true of the MFA, whose dominant source of narratives about its role is rooted in an often fallacious set of claims as to its role as gatekeeper. I have suggested elsewhere that there are other images, other stories to be told which may offer a renewed vision for the MFA and the role of the diplomat.[38] These newer narratives emerge from a dialectic between a 'counterculture' in the form of critiques from present and former diplomats and the kind of documents produced by the FCO and FAC. Both seek, in some measure, to redefine what the MFA is and how it operates—or should operate—in an environment where domestic demands and international pressures associated with globalization and regionalization pose diverse and complex challenges.

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[37] Morgan, *Images of Organization*, p. 3.
[38] B. Hocking, 'Diplomacy', in W. Carlsnaes, H. Sjursen, and B. White, *Contemporary European Foreign Policy*, London, Sage, 2005.

MFA Reform
Global Trends

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RARE IS THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TODAY THAT IS NOT ENGAGED IN THE adaptation to what may be termed as 'globalized diplomacy'. A striking feature of this change is an urge to anticipate the future and to reorganize the diplomatic machinery structure and its methods to meet new challenges. Documents sketching this adaptation, such as 'Foresight 2010' and 'Vision 2015', are the order of the day.

Foreign ministries (MFAs), while outwardly similar in structure and practices, in conformity with international norms and usage, hide the different stages of development that they have reached. We may think of three broad clusters. First, some MFAs are post-modern, using the concepts, methods, and technologies that change the very process of inter-state dialogue—such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) formulation methods used by the European Union, or by a number of individual countries like Canada and the US. Their diplomatic services are radically altered: career loyalists rub shoulders with lateral entrants coming in at different hierarchy levels, some in short-term sojourns before taking flight to other vocations. A few such ministries encounter an unprecedented angst, even demoralization.

Second, in contrast, the establishments in developing countries fall into two groups. There are those where somnolence reigns; the forms of diplomacy are pursued with little regard for substantive content, or concern for national interests. These are the exceptions. More typically, where change has not taken place, owing to the weight of conservatism,

traditionalists occupy senior positions and are unable to move away from the concepts and methods that they imbibed at the start of their careers, often three decades back. In other states of the global South, ranging from Argentina to Zambia, propelled by an international demonstration effect, or through 'structural adjustment' guidelines imposed by international financial institutions—part of public service reform—many foreign ministries are reviewing their procedures to improve governance. A few look around to learn from others.

Third, the transition states of East and Central Europe and Central Asia are among the quick learners, unburdened by memory, having swept away their past, looking to quickly align themselves to the European standards that dominate their ambition—EU membership is a spur even to foreign ministries; those working actively for this goal place the foreign ministry in the frontline, a priority for modernization. The socialization process they are undergoing impels their personnel to absorb good practices from others.

In a word, foreign ministries everywhere are adapting themselves to the changing environment of world politics. Several recent studies have examined foreign ministries, focused on clusters of countries.[1] While their salience in world affairs is self-evident, detailed studies on many foreign ministries do not exist. This could be owing to difficulties that scholars face in obtaining information, and a relative scarcity of analytical or thematic writing by diplomacy practitioners, even after their retirement—besides customary memoirs.[2] Where published material and oral histories are

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[1] These are listed in the Select Bibliography.

[2] A study on the diplomatic process in five Asian countries on which the author has worked since 1999 is under finalization. *China*: there is a growing body of writing by former ambassadors in the Chinese language, by way of memoirs and narratives on particular incidents, but there is no comprehensive material in English, other than two major works: David Lampton, ed., *The Making of China's Foreign and Security* Policy (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000), and Liu Xiaohong, *Chinese Ambassadors: The Rise of Diplomatic Professionalism Since 1949* (Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 2001). *Japan*: No known recent work, even in Japanese. During a visit to Tokyo in 2001 the author was told by scholars at reputed thinktanks that 'the subject is difficult, because it is confidential'. But at the *Gaimusho* and elsewhere no difficulty was encountered in accessing information. *India*: only notable works are Shashi Tharoor, *Reasons of State* (New Delhi, 1981); Rana, *Inside Diplomacy* (New Delhi, Manas, 2000, revised paperback edition, 2003); J.N. Dixit, *The Indian Foreign Service: History and Challenge* (New Delhi, Konarak, 2005). *Singapore*: no published study on diplomacy, though fine studies on foreign policy exist. *Thailand*:

not available, one information source is interviews with practitioners and with personalities of the foreign affairs establishment, but this is time-consuming and expensive. A few Western foreign ministries have carried out their own comparative studies and benchmarking, but such internal documents are not publicly accessible.

THE REFORM ENVIRONMENT

The French Foreign Ministry declares: 'The *Directoire* and Napoleon had already identified the problem and, through laws that are still in force, gave the Ministry of "External Relations", a monopoly on contacts with foreigners. Nowadays, it is more a question of coordinating.'[3] The old gatekeepers of external contacts have become shepherds that try and keep the flock going to foreign pastures more or less together, attempting to push them to act with coherence.

The reform environment in MFAs and in diplomatic services is shaped by the following factors:

1. Reform of the entire public administration is a priority in most countries, to transform the bureaucracy, as also to improve governance and accountability. For instance, Thailand has established 'public sector divisions' and 'change management' units in each ministry, to implement new management methods.[4] France has changed its organic law concerning public finance, and with effect from 2006, ministries are required to provide quantified results that flow from public expenditure; the Quai d'Orsay is not exempt. Management techniques borrowed from business have entered many public services, and this demands continual adaptation by MFAs. Countries as varied as Ireland and the UAE have used management consultants, though not always to the desired effect.

2. The publics want greater transparency and information on foreign affairs. MFAs also find that engagement with parliament, the media, and with civil society has deepened. The result is expanding domestic

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a study on the foreign ministry was published some years back, available only in the Thai language.

[3] The website of the French Foreign Ministry.

[4] Thailand has created a new Public Sector Commission as a counterpart to the Civil Service Commission, to oversee reforms. Each ministry has a 'chief change officer' to handle the introduction of the new reform methods.

'public diplomacy'—though a more accurate term might be 'public relations outreach'. Winning support of domestic publics for the country's foreign policy, and for its diplomacy as well, impels countries such as Canada and the Bahamas to engage in town-hall meetings with citizens across the country, sometimes creating single-country 'focus groups' that bring together specialists and institutions interested in selected states, that the foreign ministry deems to be of contemporary importance.

3. The MFA is forced to network with many official and non-official actors, overcoming traditional inhibitions. These actors do not accept any pre-eminent 'right' of the MFA; they consult and coordinate because the MFA brings value to their specific concerns. This requires the MFA to track a wide range of non-political, low diplomacy issues, and to leverage its embassy network to work out the cross-linkages and potential leverages that help these varied actors. Many MFAs are on a learning curve.

4. The MFA's human resources have changed. In most countries new recruits now come from a wider catchment than before, in terms of the academic institutions and disciplines studied; the domination by social elites has reduced, be it in Brazil, India, or Japan. MFAs need skills that are *both* generalist and specialist; each official needs to be rooted in language and area knowledge, plus some functional specialties, but also requires the flexibility to handle multiple tasks.[5] S/he has to relate to specialists belonging to different agencies, a kind of 'big picture', broadband ability. The service as a whole needs specialists covering many disciplines, spread across hierarchy levels. The old notion that skills are accumulated on the job is no longer sufficient; mid-career and senior level training, adapted to the MFA's own requirements, has become the norm. Human resource management also involves updated methods for promotions and career planning, to ensure high motivation.

5. At the same time, in most Western countries, MFAs face budget cutbacks (the US reversed that trend in 2001); they are forced to learn to do more, with fewer financial and human resources. In the developing and transition states, the resource crunch is acute in some

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[5] Many large services now require diplomats to master two foreign languages; UK requires all diplomats to master French, besides at least one foreign language, while China and Japan do the same with English.

regions such as Africa and Latin America, but less so in parts of Asia. Everywhere, the media and publics insist on better accountability.

6.   Modern communications technology, coupled with the application of information technology (ICT) has integrated the MFA more closely with its network of embassies, qualitatively changing the diplomatic process. Germany has been a trend leader in this, consciously creating a seamless single diplomatic network, in place of the earlier conceptual division between the headquarters and the field units. This has been one result of the implementation of the innovative Paschke Report of September 2000.[6] Implementation throws up new challenges, but this significantly transforms the way the MFA and missions relate to one another (see below).

In the past, foreign ministries seldom engaged in the emulation or even study of their counterparts, despite obvious similarities. That is now changing, as some realize that many ideas and methods are transportable. Australia carried out a bench-marking study in 2000, approaching seven or eight comparable MFAs with a questionnaire that ran to over 200 pages. The results were not made public, but have produced a series of reforms. Canada carried out benchmarking in 2005. Thailand has done the same. Since 1993, China has carried out low-profile surveys of its own, looking closely to particular aspects of the diplomatic process in some countries; this is tied with evolutionary reform that has been underway in its *Waijiaobu* since that time. Croatia has looked at Finland and New Zealand, in its reform effort. The heads of administration of the Austrian and Swiss foreign ministries meet regularly. The EU is ahead of the game; since the late 1990s, its unified member-state dialogue includes periodic meetings of the heads of the central administration of foreign ministries. The result is a cross-fertilization of ideas. One and two-year exchanges of EU diplomatic personnel, to work in MFAs, help this process; even EU embassies implement short-term staff exchanges at third-country locations.[7]

The global South's study of other systems is inadequate; the exceptions are China, Thailand, and some Caribbean and Latin American states that have looked around the world. In 2005, Peru carried out a global

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[6] Kishan S. Rana, *The 21st Century Ambassador: Plenipotentiary to Chief Executive* (Malta, DiploFoundation, 2004; New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2005).

[7] No other group of countries implements such exchanges.

study of diplomatic training methods. Neither ASEAN, nor any other regional organization, includes foreign ministry reform in the ambit of regional cooperation.[8]

COMPARISON TOOLS

Comparative studies of MFAs would be easy if there were a simple way of measuring efficiency, but of course that is impossible. One window through which the achievements of MFAs are visible to the outside world is its public posture, the statements by ministers in parliament, to the media, and the published documents, including the treaties and agreements, the joint statements worked out with foreign governments and the like, as well as reports of parliamentary committees. A number of MFAs publish annual reports, but this is not standard practice even in democracies such as Germany or Singapore. Most key foreign ministry documents are internal, including the vast feedback generated by the network of ambassadors and their staff. These become accessible only when 'freedom of information' procedures kick-in, say under a typical thirty-year rule that UK and many other countries apply, releasing the bulk of diplomatic documentation. But there are other countries with no firm procedures for even delayed document release and others that have a thirty-year rule but do not implement it.[9]

One research method is to look at a major international issue, say the Prague Spring of 1968 and the subsequent Soviet clampdown, or the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979, and examine this through the documents in several foreign ministry archives, to gauge the quality of reportage and the prescience of observers.

For a current analysis we perforce rely on episodic data and impressions gathered through direct observation, including the perception of foreign partners of the country under study. Other devices offer an approximate comparative measurement of the way a foreign ministry works. The

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[8] An exception is the ASEAN+3 group that for the past three years holds annual meetings of the deans of diplomatic training, where ideas on human resource management, as well as training, are exchanged.

[9] India is a case in point, unwilling to release all but a handful of anodyne documents, on grounds of continuing sensitivity of documents, relating to the 1947–50 period, the first years of independence, or even the later years.

author in a recent essay has suggested some indices, though these reveal only a few points of comparison.[10] The information that we need includes:

- The relation between the resources provided to the MFA and the outcome, as a moving or dynamic picture, through data accumulated over some years. An analysis of changes in the budget and personnel figures in MFAs and their networks helps in estimating effectiveness.
- The range, depth and quality of the MFA's relationship with the other national actors, official and non-official, in its role as the coordinator and network operator within the country's foreign affairs community.
- The MFA's contribution to achieving targets in trade and investments, and its consular work and other public services—areas in which the quantification of results is possible.

This subject deserves more attention than it has hitherto received, and is a fit issue for dialogue among foreign ministries, as an aspect of performance management.

TRANSFORMATION WITHIN FOREIGN MINISTRIES

Let us consider the reforms taking place.

One. The foreign ministry as the diplomatic system's core and its field units, the embassies, almost unnoticed, are moving into a new relationship. The resident embassy is 'empowered' to co-manage bilateral relations. One reason: subject plurality and multiplicity of home actors—public and private—making it almost impossible for the MFA to keep track of all the dossiers that are in play.[11] The embassy abroad becomes the single best real-time source with a panoramic view all the issues, particularly in countries where the engagement is multilayered. In like fashion, in multilateral and regional diplomacy, the resident permanent mission has gained as the one agency where the full multiple dialogue is visible. This is the *rationale* for closer MFA–embassy integration.

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[10] See Kishan S. Rana, *Performance Management in Foreign Ministries: Corporate Techniques in the Diplomatic Services* ('Studies in Diplomacy' series of papers, Clingendael, July 2004), [www.clingendael.nl/cli/publ/diplomacy/pdf/issue93.pdf].

[11] This thesis has been presented in the author's works, starting with *Inside Diplomacy* (2000). The German Paschke Report of September 2000 comes to a similar conclusion; that report is available in English translation, through the courtesy of the German Foreign Office, at the website of the DiploFoundation, www.diplomacy.edu and at the website of Prof. G.R. Berridge, www.grberridge.co.uk.

The process is *aided* by technology, the 'intranet' or the 'virtual private networks' that most Western countries now operate, integrating missions and headquarters into a single, seamless communications network. This overcomes geography, and the simplistic notion that the embassy abroad is an implementing and listening agency, run from the centre. Some countries have recognized this and have reorganized their functioning, notably Austria, Canada, Germany and the UK. The German Paschke Report (2000) declared:

> ...is there much validity in the old argument that our headquarters staff, by reason of their familiarity with the whole spectrum of foreign policy automatically have the superior expertise?... The various documents needed in Berlin (briefings for the minister, draft speeches, reports, information for visiting politicians, dossiers contributions) should normally be prepared by embassies *and be recognizable as embassy products*. Any comments added or diverging opinion expressed by the responsible division in Berlin should likewise be recognizable as such... *Berlin should conduct the ongoing dialogue with embassies as if embassy staff were in fact members of the country division on the ground* [emphasis added].[12]

Since 2002, the German Foreign Office has implemented such concepts; one consequence is a gradual thinning out of the territorial units. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has done the same in the post-2000 reforms implemented.[13] Accepting that the bilateral embassy is in the best position to advise on relationship management, it has drastically reduced staff in the territorial departments, redeploying headquarters personnel for thematic tasks (see below).[14] Embassies are also involved in the management in other ways. The UK Permanent Under Secretary told a parliament committee:

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[12] Paschke Report (2000).

[13] John Dickie, *The New Mandarins: How British Foreign Policy Works* (London, I.B. Tauris, 2004); this is an excellent guide to the origin and the first phase of the UK reforms up to about 2003.

[14] Large British embassies have also reorganized themselves on a thematic basis; for instance, a task force on cultural diplomacy or on environmental issues may be led by an official in one of the consulates, bringing together staff located in other places, including the embassy. Again, the intranet makes this feasible.

I am working much more closely now with the key ambassadors and high commissioners overseas because they need to be brought into part of the corporate leadership. We now have every three months a meeting between the board [note: the 14-member Board of Management runs the FCO includes two private sector corporate chief executives] and the top most senior 20 ambassadors and high commissioners, plus a representative also of a smaller overseas post, in order that we can get the concept of leadership and changed management imbued, not just in the centre of London but more widely.[15]

Austria and Canada also recognize this, delegating more power to the envoy. Other major services may not have made similar changes, but the logic is clear.

Some risk is inherent in a closer fusing of embassies with the center. First, MFAs want that embassies sustain an objective, holistic vision, untainted by *localitis*, i.e. be guided by the center's perspective, not local considerations. A hollowed-out territorial department imposes a greater responsibility on the embassy. Second, the process is predicated on a reliable, truly private 24x7 communications network that permits such tight fusion of the embassy into the MFA decision process. Countries such as China, India, and Japan hesitate shifting to intranets, worried over security. Third, the system may lead to new confidential message exchange protocols, different from the traditional MFA–embassy cipher links (see below). Some doubt if this is desirable. Fourth, the territorial department no longer acts as the filter or second check on the embassy. It erodes the notion of a 'country director' at home, typical in the US State Department system. These factors may explain the caution in other countries.

Two. Foreign ministry structures are in flux in many countries. Some small ministries, such as the Malta Foreign Ministry, are abandoning the old single 'bilateral affairs department' and are embracing territorial units, in addition of course to their traditional functional departments.[16] Canada has moved the other way, merging several territorial departments,

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[15] Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament, 26 October 2005, uncorrected version from the Parliament website.

[16] Malta announced these changes in August 2005.

and now has just two, one dealing with the US and Mexico, and the other with the rest of the world. Splitting old departments and creating new ones is almost continuous in some foreign ministries.[17]

The British 'thematic' approach is one way of dealing with issues that do not fall into country or regional boxes, but involve cross-cutting interconnections. The themes handled may be as varied as public diplomacy, the EU budget, or hydrocarbon transport pipelines.[18] Sweden has appointed almost a dozen ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry to deal with similar cross-cutting issues such as the reduction of conventional arms. Thailand is doing the same. The US has a tradition of naming home-based ambassadors to cover regional or thematic issues. India has appointed, for almost the first time, several special envoys to cover different regions.[19]

The common aim of these changes is an intensification of the diplomatic process, concentrating on new priorities, such as energy diplomacy. This also involves the other actors taking matching actions, such as an oil ministry setting up advisory groups to pursue external opportunities for oil prospection, supply or marketing. The process works well when it uses a 'joined-up' method that brings together the ministries concerned, or when other forms of inter-ministerial cooperation are in good working order.

An invariable consequence of establishing a unified communications network within the foreign ministry (either a 'wide area network (WAN)' or a 'local area network' (LAN)) is that communication becomes flatter. The head of Germany's central administration declared in June 2002:

> We have changed the age-old rules about submissions. Before, submissions would advance up the hierarchy from the divisions [*Referate*], to the head of directorate [*Unterabteilungsleiter*], to the Director-General [*Abteilungsleiter*] and only then to the State Secretary. This cost valuable time. Now they are as a rule submitted from the divisions [*Referate*] directly to the State

[17] Thailand and India are two instances where such changes have been carried out.

[18] Thematic departments are a kind of functional department. As the French Foreign Ministry website declares: 'The organization of the Ministry has always oscillated between geographic and functional criteria.' Many foreign ministries are in such a situation.

[19] India has used retired ambassadors for these appointments; it appointed a special envoy in 2001–02 to deal with Afghan affairs.

Secretary, with copies going to the Director-General [*Abteilungsleiter*] and, if relevant, to a Commissioner [*Beauftragter*].[20]

Such changes affect the work culture, which makes some hesitate. Some foreign ministries are 'unconnected', having neither a WAN nor a LAN.[21]

One trend is the unification of diplomacy management. Around 20 countries have unified their ministries of foreign affairs and foreign trade (Australia, Mauritius, Swaziland, Sweden, among others). In 2004 Canada unzipped an earlier unification, to go back to two separate entities; they were joined up again in 2006. Others have unified their foreign aid activities into the MFA (Denmark, France, Japan). The wonder is that more countries do not unify foreign affairs and external commerce.

Sometimes countries separate what is interconnected activity. In 2004, India created a Ministry of Overseas Indians, with no organic connection with the Ministry of External Affairs (though this work was earlier handled in the Overseas Indians Division created in that ministry in 1982). The new ministry wants to set up overseas offices, which will duplicate the ethnic outreach currently handled by embassies.

In some systems, the foreign ministry structure is set by decree or law, as in Japan. In the US too, the creation of new units in the State Department is subject to Congressional scrutiny. At the other extreme, these structures are in constant flux, to the point that the foreign ministry cannot publish a chart that sets out the hierarchy of units and the span of control of the senior officials.

Three. Diplomatic networks are also metamorphosis, not just in coverage— which is normal, now accelerated because of world affairs flux—but also in conception. Several ideas are being tried out.
• Some countries are winding up embassies in peripheral locations (i.e. places of low importance), transferring staff to new priority posts, sometimes to strengthen regional 'hubs'.[22] Three years ago, Colombia

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[20] Speech by Steffen Rudolph, Director-General for Central Services to the Diplomatic Corps in Berlin, Tuesday, 19 June 2002.

[21] There exist several 'unconnected' foreign ministries in South Asia, including India. Concern with network security is one reason. Another is an old-fashioned mindset that views information as power, and loathes the sharing that IT networks represent.

[22] UK is closing down eight embassies in 2005–06, using the personnel to move to regional hubs, plus some to new posts.

closed 16 embassies in its network of 60 missions. Finland and Croatia are experimenting with shifting selected ambassadors to the home capital, having them travel periodically to the assignment capital, where a small office is maintained, headed by a junior diplomat; they believe that this will reduce costs without affecting results.

- Others use more intensively the concurrent accreditation method, with a senior ambassador responsible for a number of countries, a variation on the hub-and-spoke model.
- The 'non-resident ambassador' method, developed by Singapore and Malta, where the part-time envoy is based in the home capital; this is attracting notice in other counties.[23]
- Another formula is 'joint ambassadors', used by the nine Eastern Caribbean state group OECS. Some EU states have also talked of this formula. 'Co-location' is a more limited way, to share logistics, used by some EU states and by the Nordic group.
- Thinning out embassies is one option—by cutting staff, giving home staff positions to locally engaged personnel. For instance, Australia has handed over the jobs of trade commissioners in its consulates in the US to qualified local personnel, on the premise that they know best how to promote exports to the US market. New Zealand and Singapore have similarly cut overseas staff.
- UK has fully converted some of its consulates into local staff posts, notably its Consulate General in Milan. Few others want to go so far.

Sometimes the driving force is the public policy-mandated staff cuts that all ministries have to enforce. Another factor is the availability of well-trained local personnel in many countries, costing a fraction of the total expense on home-based personnel.

While this is happening, the diversity within the embassy has increased, in that they are host to representatives of a larger number of home agencies than before. Major US embassies have upwards of 30 different government departments represented within the embassy, so that the proportion of State Department personnel within their embassies is also declining, sometimes falling to a mere 25 to 30% of the total. Since it is the latter

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[23] Such non-resident envoys may be drawn from business or public life, or can be retired foreign service officials; they travel to the assignment country twice or thrice a year, accompanied by a desk-officer from the foreign ministry. It is possible to link this with a 'virtual envoy' method of Internet-based contacts, though this has not so far been tried by any state.

that handle logistics and the common services, the burden on them becomes acute. That is another contradiction that foreign ministries face in their overseas posts.

Federal states confront a different issue, a greater activity by their sub-state entities in the international process. The 19 German *Länder* run what amount to their embassies in Brussels, which is probably owing to the nature of the European Union as an integrating entity. The *Länder* engage in overseas promotion, sometimes with their own representative offices, bypassing or working in parallel with their embassies. Some US states also run their own promotional offices abroad in selected countries. We can expect more direct initiatives from sub-state units.

Four. The external policy process is more open in its non-official participation, and is more public than before. We see this in the way that foreign ministries report on their work and performance (see below); performance reporting has become a *mantra* for the public services.

The US State Department places on its website parts of the reports of the Foreign Service Inspectorate covering the inspection visits to embassies, and some portions excluded from these online documents are available to US citizens under the Right to Information Act. The full text of the proceedings of UK's Foreign Affairs Parliamentary committee is similarly available on the internet.

The French Foreign Ministry has a unit in its economic department that keeps in touch with major industrial and financial groups, helping them in external markets, with the Foreign Minister personally supporting this action. In 2005, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs created its first 'advisory committee' of about fifteen former envoys, journalists, academics, and others, meeting the Minister once a month. That Ministry also has extensive cooperation with the Indian commerce and industry associations, though this is not institutionalized through any permanent mechanism.[24] Japan, a latecomer in 'ethnic diplomacy', now gets its ambassador in the US and the consuls-general to periodically meet with Japanese-American leaders, in the presence of senior *Gaimusho* officials.

Another powerful public–private concept in bilateral and regional diplomacy is the 'eminent person' group, bringing together businessmen, scientists, scholars and others in public life, who meet bilaterally or in

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[24] The Indian Prime Minister's Office has an economic advisory council, but not the Ministry of External Affairs.

regional clusters, to brainstorm on ways to improve a set of relationships. While the method has been known for long (witness the Germany–US Atlantic Bridge, dating to the 1950s, or the UK–Germany Königswinter Group), it has come into extensive usage since the 1990s, but is relatively less known in Africa or Latin America. It opens up diplomacy to non-official inputs, winning support from influential domestic stakeholders.

NGOs, as representatives of civil society, are now the foreign ministry's dialogue partners, in the West and in many transition states; some recruit NGO specialists to work in the MFA. Traditional developing countries may lack a mechanism for such contact (a few do not yet have units to handle human rights).

Five. Public diplomacy is a hot topic, exemplified by the US effort to reach out internationally, especially to Arab and Islamic opinion, after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.[25] The US investment in its public diplomacy is enormous, e.g. the *Alhurra* satellite TV network; the BBC is about to launch its Arabic TV channel, addressing the same market. Examined closely, public diplomacy involves wider actions than evident at first sight.

Publics are involved in international affairs in different ways. The 1999 street riots in Seattle during the WTO conference signaled a surge of activism by the opponents of globalization, scenes that have been replicated at other similar gatherings, and at G-8 summits. NGO activists have created a 'World Social Forum' as their counterpoint to the World Economic Forum. Governments have reached out to these dissenters, to involve them in dialogue. Official trade negotiation and domestic socio-economic development networks now include NGOs as regular partners, some incorporate them in their delegations to global conferences. Foreign ministries in the West also use them as partners on world hunger and disaster relief, development aid and in relation to human rights advocacy. The NGOs, having gained a status as interlocutors, would like to become part of the policy formulation process; there are finite limits to how far foreign ministries can accommodate them in decision-making councils—they are special-interest groups, sometimes making conflicting demands.

[25] Public diplomacy has many definitions, but the common strands are: an effort by governments, and their home partners, to reach out to and persuade foreign publics on external issues; similar efforts to convince domestic publics are also included. Further, it covers efforts to influence and improve the country image, with actions in culture, publicity, education, and other fields that mould this image.

Developing states are reserved in their dealings with NGOs on international issues.

Public support has always been a factor in foreign affairs, as leaders have intuitively understood, long before we devised the 'public diplomacy' label. Roosevelt's fireside radio talks harked back to speeches at the senate in Ancient Greece, efforts by leaders to sway publics in favor of their position. Take the example of South Asia. In 2004, India and Pakistan engaged in 'cricket diplomacy', which shattered old ways of thinking and showed that in both countries ordinary people were weary of confrontation and possessed the goodwill to resolve intractable disputes. Subsequent New Delhi–Islamabad dialogue has been influenced by the invisible presence of these publics; both countries have embraced the methods of public diplomacy to the hilt.[26] In March 2004, the Chinese Foreign Ministry established a Department for Public Diplomacy, focused on home diplomacy; for some years now that Ministry has taken seriously the task of explaining foreign policy to the home population.

The French Foreign Ministry Secretary General heads a steering committee for information and communications policy. His British counterpart chairs a 'public diplomacy board' that similarly brings together organizations that are autonomous, but willing to listen to suggestions on projecting abroad a consistent message.[27] Such public diplomacy activities represent efforts to develop the country's soft power.

Six. Human talent is the only real resource in a foreign ministry. It is best amenable to management techniques borrowed from the corporate world. Some examples:

- Systems for evaluating performance have been modernized, with ideas such as '360° appraisals' (incorporating the observations of the persons that an official supervises). This has been customary in China for long; several Western MFAs use this now, including Japan since 2004. Germany applies a variation, using this as 'bottom-up' feedback that supervisors must take into account and discuss at an open staff meeting with all the officials under their control, but it does not enter their annual evaluation reports.

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[26] The relief efforts following the disastrous October 2005 earthquake in Kashmir has also been animated by concern in both countries to reaching out to the publics— one's own, as well as the other side's.

[27] In the UK, BBC, the British Council, and the Tourism Authority are among the autonomous agencies that accept such gentle guidance.

- A few countries have an official 'fast-track' promotion policy; Singapore is one of them, applying a unique 'current evaluated performance' method (borrowed from Shell) that annually estimates the level that officials are likely to reach after ten, fifteen, and twenty years, and then proceeds to groom the best for high office. This fits with the elite culture of the island-state. Most Western countries, and several others such as Brazil and Peru, apply highly selective procedures, including in-service exams, and rigorous interviews, to identify the best talent. Some require an official to apply for promotion (Australia, the US), and failure to win this over several years can mean an exit, under 'up-or-out' formulas. A key issue is transparency, which enables these countries to be highly selective, and yet maintain good morale. At the other end of the scale, some countries (India, Japan) stick to seniority, with unsatisfactory results.[28]

- Bidding for overseas and home assignments is applied in many systems, improving transparency and fairness in a process that is inherently unequal, given the huge disparities between the posts that have to be manned. In 2001, the UK introduced a point system for all its 450 'senior management' assignments (spread from 27 to 8 points); officials make a single-page application, underscoring their special competence for the job that they want. The system continues, but the point allocation for each job was abandoned in 2005, as it undervalued jobs with low points.[29]

- Enhanced demands on personnel skills make training a continuous process. This becomes a clear differentiator between the efficient systems and the others. The wider the range of courses offered, the better the prospect for skill enhancement. Canada and the US lead in e-learning, well suited to the dispersed cadres of diplomatic services.

- Training courses for ambassadors have emerged as another value-enhancement tool, used extensively by Canada, China, Denmark, Malaysia, and the US, among others. Leadership training is a priority. A few extend it to cover deputy chiefs of mission as well; disharmony between the head of mission and his/her deputy is a poorly hidden skeleton in many diplomatic services.

Human resource management has risen to the top of the agenda because it is impossible to run a public service simply on discipline and

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[28] The Indian Ministry of External Affairs uses the seniority standard, but has been considering shifting to some kind of a blended system.

[29] See Dickie, *The New Mandarins*, for details on this system.

authority. Team spirit hinges on participation by the entire team in the foreign policy delivery process, not just carrying out instructions from the top. Lateral and multi-direction communication is possible only when all contributors are respected, regardless of hierarchy. This is a hard lesson for the conservative diplomatic services.

Seven. Changes in information and communications technology (ICT) have altered the ways MFAs work. Information has become a 'commodity'; the priority is credible, user-specific analysis.

The intranet has produced a new kind of MFA–embassy communication, confidential messages sent by one official to another, often not copied to anyone else. Earlier, such messages went via the cipher system, which followed a fixed communication protocol (as per foreign ministry practice): copies of both incoming and outgoing cipher messages go to a predetermined set of recipients, depending on the subject and the originator of the message. This invariably includes the top hierarchy, from the head of government downwards (and their offices). Even cipher messages bearing a limited circulation motif, go to the top personalities. But this does not apply to the person-to-person confidential exchange via the intranet. This has consequences. On the plus side, it makes the dialogue more fluid; a ministry official may share a proposal at an inception stage with the bilateral embassy colleague, to gauge his or her reaction before that proposal is formalized—this means closer links with the embassy, as described earlier.[30] On the negative side: an ambassador may not know of exchanges carried out by an embassy colleague representing another ministry, who may quietly torpedo a proposal that the ambassador is developing, without giving the ambassador the benefit of fully explaining that proposal.[31] Put another way, such communication takes away a key MFA feature, the well-circulated cipher telegrams that are read by the top hierarchy, ensuring that at their traditional morning meetings, they are all on the same sheet of music.

Eight. 'Strategic objectives' has become a buzz-phrase in diplomacy. The British have broken new ground in applying this to their overseas network. In January 2003, all overseas ambassadors were called to London—the

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[30] A Western diplomat abroad described how he received a proposal from his headquarters as a trial balloon; he quickly pointed out the weak points in the idea, and it was dropped before it got any further.

[31] This comment, based on experience, came from a Western diplomat.

first such conference held by the FCO—one outcome was a document published in 2003 setting out the strategic objectives of foreign policy, again a first. These objectives are summarized in eight bullet-points. The FCO then asked all its embassies to re-examine their activities and report on the way their embassy contributed to one or more of the objectives. It was no longer sufficient to report that 'good relations were maintained' or that so many delegation visits had taken place. In the words of a senior British envoy: 'The system shifted from process to outcome.'

Is this a universal panacea? Some countries hesitate to narrate publicly their strategic objectives. Others may argue that such methods are relevant only for those countries that have global aims. But the real question is if such a shift, from universal principles of goodwill and peaceful cooperation, to a hard expression of self-interest, is useful in all situations. Even for the British, at some places the rationale for a resident embassy cannot be found in their contribution to hard goals.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management has become a buzz word in foreign ministries. Borrowed from the world of business, it relates to three areas: first, human resource management (see above); second, the management of subsidiary units, especially the embassies abroad; and third, reporting to publics, the parliament, and others on the functioning of the entire system. Foreign ministries are experimenting with different approaches.

For embassy supervision, the methods are:

- *Foreign service inspections*, used by large ministries for over fifty years, now sharpened by adding human resource management techniques (e.g. questionnaire-based interviews with staff, home-based and local; examining the mission's work performance in a range of functional areas; scrutiny of all communications from the embassy over several months).[32] The best services ensure that all missions are inspected at least once in three to five years. In France

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[32] When I received our Inspectors (administration officials who handle this as an add-on task) for the first time at Algiers in 1976 they were pleasantly surprised to receive written briefs on the state of bilateral relations and the issues under dialogue; one of them remarked that this was not normally provided to them. By the time I met my last set of Inspectors at Bonn in 1993, they demanded full data on the embassy's role in bilateral relations, viewing as a key task their assessment of the embassy's performance. India is yet to establish a permanent Inspectorate.

and elsewhere, the Inspectorate functions directly under the Minister, reflecting its importance.

- The simplest new device, popular since the 1990s, is for missions to produce *annual action plans*, or *corporate plans*, usually in consultation with the headquarters. They set out objectives and targets, prioritizing the activity areas on which the mission is to focus. This has spread to many African countries, applied with varying efficacy. UK links these with the FCO's master plan on 'public performance targets', published on its website;[33] missions designate their own 'milestones', as target outcomes. Other countries attempt to quantify the goals as far as possible. Singapore ties resources to the plans, giving autonomy to missions on their allotted budgets, as long as the assigned targets are met; large bonus payments are tied in. The US works on a 'mission program plan' that focuses on the resources applied in pursuit of the assigned key priorities of missions. Tunisia has annual plans for embassies that are monitored through three-monthly reports on a matrix format, supervised by both the Foreign Ministry and the President's Office.

- Australia and Canada supplement their annual plans with '*program management agreements*' signed by ambassadors and other senior officials that tie in with the goals set out by the foreign ministry in cascading fashion. They specify targets in quantifiable areas and outcomes in others. Not everyone in the system concerned is impressed with the result; one encounters a comment that the agreements are anodyne in content, and most officials play it safe with generalities.

- Sometimes the payment of bonus is tied with the results achieved by individuals. The Swiss have applied this method since the early 1990s, but found that paying an extra 3% to some, by reducing payment to the under-performers was unpopular, and the system fell into disuse. But Singapore shows that sizable payments do work.

- The French pioneered a system of '*ambassador's instructions*': custom-designed, these are handed over immediately prior to the ambassador's departure for a new assignment by the *Quai d'Orsay* Secretary General; the consolidated document covers the priorities of all the ministries that have a stake in that target country. The ambassador returns within six months with his own 'plan of action' to implement these. The

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[33] Published by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office since 1997, initially called *Department Report on the Government Expenditure Plans,* the latest is now called *FCO Department Report 2005*. These reports are a model of clarity and brevity.

method provides an overarching set of goals and tactics for the duration of the envoy's assignment. Japan has a similar system in the first part; after its 2002 reforms, it has added the second element, i.e. the envoy's action plan. Germany and Italy are implementing a system that emulates France, with mixed results.

- Germany tried out a *controlling method*, applying a costing yardstick to the activities performed by missions, to apply accurate expenditure norms. 'In summer of last year (2001) we introduced a resource management and planning system (*controlling*) which, once fully operational, will enable us to check whether resources are being used in line with agreed goals.'[34] They hoped that calculating the cost would make it easier to weed out unproductive activity. In 2005, this was abandoned as unproductive.

- A few diplomatic systems have obtained *ISO 9000 certification* for the services they provide, in a bid to respond to 'customer expectations'.[35] Thailand obtained this certification for its consular services, and France for its economic services. One may expect others to follow suit.

The second dimension of performance management is reportage to publics on the MFA's contribution, i.e. good governance. Some models are:

- The UK was the first to report on the FCO's performance, in the mid-1990s, as part of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's transparency policy. A feature common to these and the other performance reports since introduced (e.g. Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, the US) is the three-level narrative presentation: the *strategic goals*, the *targets*, and the *performance*. Countries use different words, but that three-level matrix is uniform. Another common point: the manner of narration at the third level—some results are shown as hard targets, others as descriptive 'outcomes'.

- The US Annual Performance Plan Report is especially detailed, providing a colour-coded bird's eye view of the results; this is also the most exhaustive report.[36]

[34] Rudolph, Berlin, 2002. The concept had come from a German management consultant hired by the Foreign Office in 1999.

[35] Senior officials of the Thai Foreign Ministry used this term in describing their approach, as part of a government-wide reform of the administration.

[36] These reports are available at the website of the US State Department, as are similar reports at the websites of the concerned MFAs.

- A French system went into effect in 2006, as a result of a 2001 organic law on public finance; all ministries must furnish to the National Assembly a statement on the concrete *results achieved from the use of public funds*. This implies a quantification of results, though it is not clear as yet how the *Quai d'Orsay* will implement this.
- India introduced 'output budgeting' in 2005, as an adjunct to the traditional expenditure budget. The first Output Budget, presented by the Indian Finance Minister in August 2005, covered 'plan expenditure', and left out the Ministries of External Affairs (MEA), Defense, and Home. In 2006, non-plan expenditure is to be covered, which will challenge MEA to narrate its achievements in a new format, listing 'targets' and 'outcomes'.

The above methods raise some questions. First, is performance in diplomacy measurable? There is no unanimity of practice; some focus on outcomes rather than quantified targets. While the result of export promotion drives, or the foreign investment mobilization is visible, this depends on efforts by a myriad agencies, most outside the control of the embassy team; the latter's contribution is a matter of subjective judgment. Yet, setting a hard target focuses the embassy's attention in a way that a vague formula cannot. Therefore targets are desirable, provided the results are interpreted in a balanced, non-mechanical way. Second, what is the object of the exercise—management control by the ministry or performance enhancement? While some sanctions should apply to compulsive non-performers, the real aim should be to raise the average output of embassies. That means that the headquarters has to assist and encourage, rather than wield the big stick. Third, the world of theory and practice finds a meeting ground in such activity. We should treat this experimentation as an aspect of foreign affairs' democratization and the much-in-vogue public diplomacy.

Can we identify the efficient foreign ministry? In 2004 a method was devised by Deloitte, comparing the budgets of foreign ministries with the total number of personnel, with due weightage for the range of the task handled.[37] That identified the average cost of officials and the ministry, but said nothing of the quality of services delivered. A matrix analysis or a survey by observers qualified to make assessments is another way, for instance like the way world rankings on competitiveness or investment attractiveness are calculated. This concept awaits further research.

[37] *Danish Foreign Ministry Annual Report*, Annex I.

DEVELOPING AND TRANSITION COUNTRIES

Many developing countries have been slow learners in the adaptation process, whereas some of the transition states of East and Central Europe and Central Asia have been proactive in carrying out changes, as noted earlier. Perhaps this is because their institutions are new and thus more flexible.

The process of change, or at least the examination of change should begin with a simple truth: the efficient MFA delivers huge value to the country and its citizens across a range of external activities, not just in political relations, but in trade, investments, tourism, and the service industry; it does this in harmony with official and private agencies, catalysing and expanding their overseas activities. We live in a time when diplomacy is in a renaissance, because countries need to forge durable partnerships around the world, taking advantage of a congruence of interests, wherever these are to be found. Adapting the MFA to perform as best as possible should thus be a priority goal.

The MFA can provide leadership to public and private agencies at home in managing the country image, which in turn can produce multiple benefits; this is its natural role in our globalized world.

One comparative difficulty that developing and/or smaller countries face is in obtaining authentic information on the reforms implemented by other foreign ministries, even when ideas and methods are easily 'transportable'. This gives salience to the comparative study of foreign ministries. The subject has unexplored facets, meriting a partnership between scholars and practitioners.

REFORM METHODS AND PITFALLS

A word on reform methods: in 1999, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook was persuaded to try an experiment, to let the young diplomatic service members network among themselves to suggest reform; the result—some 1,000 officials at home and abroad participated in over 100 contact groups looking at eight themes, producing in six months their 103-page report, 'Foresight 2010'.[38] Dickie's book *The New Mandarins* (2004) gives a fascinating account, e.g. how the Permanent Under Secretary designated senior officials to act as coordinators, to keep the process from going off

[38] This document has not been published by the British Foreign Office.

track, but not to block new ideas. Dickie adds that the reform proposals took the establishment by surprise. The Germans did something similar in 2001.

> We set up a chat room on our intranet, which generated hundreds of messages and suggestions for reform. The Minister and State Secretary Dr Pleuger held a series of open meetings at the Auswärtiges Amt and at many of our missions. Ad hoc groups sprang up and produced proposals covering virtually every aspect of our work. Employees of all ranks wrote to us often with very specific suggestions for reform.[39]

A bottom-up process has the obvious advantage that it captures the vision, and enthusiasm, of current practitioners. Those at the apex of the system may not necessarily have the best view of the future, and may even be out of tune with the ground realities. It also automatically facilitates implementation.

Is it possible to have too much of reform? Some examples given above narrate major changes carried out and abandoned a few years later. Implementing radically new ideas without trial is unwise; too much experimentation is a real danger, the more so without studying the experience of others. Some systems with an excess of reform have seen churning, and demoralization. Those that start late have the opportunity to learn from the errors of others, if only they can access this information.

CONCLUSION

'All countries still perceive their foreign relations in bilateral terms...(there is) an "illusion of familiarity" among politicians.'[40] While this is the viewpoint of a seasoned German practitioner, academic scholars, even those with some experience in contributing to policy formulation take divergent views. At Wilton Park (2005) the different perspectives were summed up in the conference report:

> A key need is to strike the right balance between multilateral approaches to foreign policy and bilateral connections based on a resident embassy. Three distinct perspectives emerged at the conference. The first held that

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[39] Rudolph speech, 19 June 2002.
[40] Karl Th. Paschke, at the Wilton Park conference, January 2003, unpublished notes.

the need for posts had been greatly reduced by the potential of information communications technology (ICT), which is facilitating direct desk-to-desk communications between relevant officials in different countries without the need for intermediaries. A second view was that more use might be made of hub and spoke arrangements which are being used by some EU members. The third view was that far from being undermined by multilateralism, strong bilateral relations are more vital than ever as the key lever for achieving goals at the supra national level. Similarly, bilateral relations between the major actors and medium-level powers remain the key means of engaging those who are outside the G8 and P5 but are significant regional and global actors in their own right.[41]

More comparative studies relating to MFAs and diplomatic services should improve our understanding of this segment of international affairs and the evolution that is taking place. It would also open up the subject to wider debate.

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Country Experiences

Results-based Diplomacy

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LIKE MANY OTHER FOREIGN MINISTRIES, THE CANADIAN DEPARTMENT OF Foreign Affairs and International Trade is coping with continuous change. In this chapter, I would like to explore how we are using the reality of change to move towards a results-based diplomacy.

I should note that while I am writing from the Canadian perspective and experience, I believe that much of what I have to say will find a certain resonance with my colleagues from other foreign ministries.

While we acknowledge that the political environment, both domestically and internationally, is a driving force for change within the foreign ministry, we found we also needed a close diagnostic of the problems within the inherited structure of our foreign ministry, and we needed a plan to attain a strategic coherence as we went about implementing change. In terms of the Canadian experience, I hope to give a synopsis of where we are along this route, with an emphasis on achieving coherence, getting results, and ensuring that our foreign ministry represents the perspectives and priorities of the whole of government. I will also attempt to point out some of our next steps as well as the challenges we face in this endeavour.

In any analysis of a foreign ministry today, we must take into account the changing international landscape. We are being faced with a multiplicity of actors brought about by more countries and the dissolution of monolithic blocs at the end of the cold war. The power centers are shifting, with Brazil, Russia, India, and China taking on new significance in geopolitical considerations.

The new global challenges now facing us include terrorism, environmental concerns, and health security. While these challenges may not be really new, we are living in an era of a media that brings these issues immediately to the laptop, the television and the ipod. We must also take into account the complexity of influences brought about by a dominant superpower and shifting regional centers.

Within Canada, we find ourselves facing change as well. Canadians have become much more aware, concerned and active internationally. We find that other government departments and other levels of government such as provinces and cities have developed their own international agendas, often in isolation from the official foreign policy of the federal government.

These drivers of change in turn bring about demands that a renewed diplomatic service must address. These include a greater coherence within the foreign ministry to address the multiplicity of actors both at home and abroad. A strengthened policy capacity is needed to address horizontal issues and enhanced advocacy to deal with the complexity of influence.

We need a closer engagement with Canadian citizens and a better service delivery to meet the demand of an increasingly diverse population with international linkages and interests, and we need to be able to better deliver our programs in an era of domestic and international interdependence.

Looking at the departmental structure which we inherited, we found significant problems. Among others we identified the loss of geographic capacity with functional branches dominating the bilateral agenda (for example, our concern over India's nuclear ambitions so dominated our agenda that we missed other opportunities for fruitful dialogue).

We realized that our department was often operating in silos with little dialogue between branches, which led to an inability to focus (even at the country level). The traditional Headquarters/Mission relationship was highly symmetrical, with headquarters creating policy, and missions implementing it. We found that all missions, regardless of size and importance, received more or less the same missives and taskings from headquarters. Perhaps most damaging was the severe curtailing of mission creativity which leads to the development of *localitis* and the promotion of the particular bilateral relationship as an end in itself outside of any context of national strategy or priorities.

We found that the foreign ministry was in a growing confrontational relationship with domestic departments who were eager to further develop

the international aspects of their own set of priorities. We realized that our ability to plan programs to support foreign policy (as opposed to development) priorities was severely limited. We noted that evolving and new important issues (environment, health security, etc) had no place in traditional structures. Perhaps most significantly, we found that at the very core of all of this lay a lack of clear foreign policy priorities.

We also noted an inability or a reluctance to effectively embrace new technologies such as the Internet as a diplomatic tool, or using the Intranet to build collaborative networks.

While our own analysis indicated that change was necessary, there were also changes being imposed upon us. Successive governments in the last few years have altered the structure and mandate of the foreign ministry.

In 2004 the trade ministry was separated from the foreign policy function, creating Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada. Earlier in 2006 a new government reunited the two, but not quite in the same configuration. While these structural changes may have been disruptive, they also provided an impetus to reconsider the essential role that both sides of the foreign ministry faced.

During this period we identified six imperatives for change:
- Strengthen our policy capacity
- Renew core professional skills
- Increase agility, reduce rigidity
- Maximize assets in the field
- Connect with wider networks
- Mainstream public diplomacy

We also restructured internally, collapsing our regional geographic branches into a North American branch and a Bilateral Affairs branch which would allow more coherent planning and a reallocation of resources according to shifting needs and priorities. A Global Issues branch was also created to unite the various functional divisions that dealt with cross-cutting issues.

During this process we defined the core mandate of the Foreign Ministry function as:
- *An interpreter* of international events and trends for the government and for Canadians, recognizing the growing importance of globalization on Canadians' daily life;
- *An articulator* of a distinctive Canadian foreign policy which expresses Canadians' view of the world in which they wish to live;

- *An integrator* of the government's international agenda and its representation abroad;
- *An advocate* of Canada's values and interests in the international arena;
- *A provider* of world-class consular and passport services to Canadians;
- And a responsible *steward* of public funds, charged with delivering common services abroad on behalf of all government departments.

In addition to the mandate we also considered what the deliverables of a refocused and re-equipped foreign ministry would be, and these included:

- **Delivering results** vis-à-vis the government's international agenda, with particular attention to the priorities and international role of the Prime Minister,
- **Analysing and interpreting** international developments that affect Canada as a whole,
- **Ensuring the development and execution of Canada's foreign policy**, notably on issues of international peace and security, international economic relations and global issues,
- **Employing the new diplomacy to promote and defend Canada's interests** in other countries and in international organizations,
- **Harmonizing and coordinating the activities of federal departments and agencies** at country/regional level and in international fora,
- **Assisting Canadians abroad,**

Now I would like to describe how we are getting along in this process.

We have implemented a Country Strategy process to set overall strategic goals and priorities for each of our missions abroad. I will return to this in a moment.

We have developed a significant programming role. The Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) is now planning strategically to identify areas in which Canada can play a meaningful role in failed and fragile states, in counter-terrorism capacity building, and in human security initiatives.

The transfer of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives from our development agency to the foreign ministry gives new programming capacity and allows embassies to strategically support local initiatives in countries of accreditation which are in line with Canadian values and priorities.

Programming funds can help us build the whole of government strategies and capabilities. The global issues branch is coordinating economic, environmental, aboriginal, scientific, and international organization

issues. Most importantly we have refocused our resources on priorities and results.

We can already see the cascading effect of this focus as our e-communications and public diplomacy activities are being aligned more closely to priorities. From what seemed like a plethora of competing priorities, we are working to bring coherence to our international agenda.

We found that we had to first of all address the discipline of internal coherence—making our own short list of priorities. With these in mind, we could develop all of the government country strategies, coordinated by geographic branches and missions, and all of the government multilateral strategies coordinated by functional branches and missions.

We must then ensure that Heads of Mission and missions focused their resources on promoting interests as defined by those strategies, not just on promoting the bilateral relationship.

So, how do we transfer all of this into results-based diplomacy?

First of all, the priorities set in broadly consulted Country Strategies become the base line for the embassies and missions with consequential considerations. With these strategies, the allocation and reallocation of funds and human resources can be based on priorities and on actions to meet these priorities. This demands that missions develop strategic objectives with clear action plans.

It follows that strategic advocacy, public diplomacy plans, and our Internet presence must support and flow from these objectives. Reporting agreements not only ensure a follow-up on priorities but also limit unnecessary or overly lengthy reports. The aim is to bring about a more proactive diplomacy, not simply reporting on the status quo but getting out of the office, using our resources, public diplomacy, the Canada Fund, our web presence, and other tools to try and help influence events and deliver on the country strategy action plan.

Heads of Mission now receive mandate letters based on the strategies and priorities as outlined in the country strategy. At a time of transition, hand-over notes are expected to clearly outline the current status of the strategy, action plan, and consequential considerations. Performance management assessments of heads of mission are being made in the light of strategies, reporting, and operating procedures.

Country strategies are assessed in light of clear and comparable criteria. Mid-year reviews allow for not only fine-tuning strategies, but also for re-allocations where appropriate. We are rationalizing the reporting of

consulates through embassies to ensure coherence and a chain of responsibility for country strategies.

The Country Strategy Process is the key to much of our renewed focus on priorities and results. While it is part of a wider 'Alignment' agenda to ensure that priorities are focused upon, it is *the* part that our diplomats abroad are responsible for.

To recap:

- The country strategies are consequential and reallocation is based on priorities and action plans defined by these strategies.
- The country strategies are not simply an option; every mission has to produce one.
- The country strategies ensure that Head of Mission objectives are aligned to Whole of Government agenda, and Performance Management Assessments reflect these priorities.
- Mission categorization ensures that strategies are not one-size-fits-all but tailored to the category of the respective mission.
- The Country strategy is the basis for advocacy, public diplomacy, Internet presence and other planning, and these program elements are judged against the country strategy.
- It is expected that there will be a full involvement of partners and of functional branches in the process.

Ensuring the participation of the whole of government in the process may not be easy but is essential for the long-term credibility of the foreign ministry's ability to speak for the country. Regular dialogue with partner departments on international issues affecting their concerns is a starting point, not an end in itself.

Opening up Head of Mission assignments to executives from partner departments encourages the cross-pollination of experience that can bring new life to international concerns of domestic departments. Ensuring that reporting agreements cover partner interests in a clear and concise manner goes a long way to building the relationship.

The foreign ministry assists other branches of government by coordinating tasking to posts—ensuring that the request is precise, focused and targeted to get the best results without over-burdening posts with trivial or unnecessary requests. By inviting partner departments to participation in mid-year reviews of country strategies, we can ensure their continued interest and involvement. We are working to better

integrate internationally focused web content from partners in our mission websites.

We are working to better equip our diplomats through enhanced training and support including mandatory training programs for all heads of mission and all program managers. Training is focused on planning and results-based management skills as well as on diplomacy. We need to ensure the skills are there to move us away from reactive crisis management. We can no longer simply deliver technical skills; we must also influence a way of thinking. We are enhancing foreign-language training and cross-cultural awareness.

We have also moved to take into account that most of our posts are considered to be at some level of hardship, whereas our Foreign Service directives in the past have been geared toward the classic mission in a Western capital.

Hardship and danger are very real for many of our diplomats, a fact that was brought home to Canadians with the loss of diplomat Glen Berry, who was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan.

I want to stress that we are by no means finished in our quest for coherence and results-based diplomacy. We are very much still working on getting it right.

Recent structural changes mean that we need to reintegrate trade and foreign policy into one department. We realize that ensuring buy-in by partners is a long-term endeavor. We have found that the best way to exploit our network of missions is not through central direction but through a collaborative effort and co-option of our dispersed capabilities, allowing the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish in a coherent manner.

A culture of performance and priority in the foreign ministry is taking root but needs to be cultivated. We are committed to continuing the renewal of the Political, Economic, and Public Affairs (PERPA) function in light of country strategies. The Management and Consular functions must be renewed and better integrated into the departmental structure. And we need to continue the development of effective and targeted web-based diplomacy.

The challenges we face include implementing the priorities of a new government, our third in three years. We must also address the reorganization fatigue that is setting in as changes seem circular to many (DFAIT to FAC to DFAIT again...). In the face of process fatigue we must work

to maintain consistency and to keep the discipline necessary to stay the course.

Any meaningful change will face some internal resistance and inertia. By making strategies consequential and related to performance, we can influence a change in behavior.

We must continue our efforts to smooth out some difficult relationships with central agencies, which have been clouded by old perceptions of the foreign ministry, and we must also realize that limited resource allocations will require further hard decisions.

Yet these challenges are also opportunities to demonstrate that we can apply new rigor to the foreign ministry by focusing on priorities and results. We know that many of our colleagues from other foreign ministries have faced similar challenges, and we look forward to the sharing of strategies and experiences.

Transformational Diplomacy

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IN JANUARY 2006, US SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZA RICE GAVE A SPEECH at Georgetown University on transformational diplomacy. As a historian, Dr Rice took the long view and said that if you look at the fork of events in the latter part of the twentieth century, leading up to where we are now, you had a bipolar world: East and West, Europe/US/Canada and others and the Soviet Bloc, and to a certain extent China. And this structure often defined third-country relationships. So, if the Soviets got interested in a country in Africa, we got interested in a country neighboring that particular country in Africa. We danced a minuet with a certain amount of rules and a kind of stability that we don't see so much today. When the Soviet Union broke up, we had another set of challenges. This bipolar world disappeared. The center did fall apart and a tide of inattentiveness descended on certain parts of the world. The US became more disengaged in areas that we had previously focused on because of Soviet presence.

But the slow realization of the trans-national danger created by groups that operated in countries where control beyond the capital was limited or which tolerated terrorists' presence, formed the challenges we face today.

As a result, Secretary Rice has formed a long-term strategy to deal with this new structure in the world—a world where Westphalian relationships form only a part of how we all conduct the business of looking after the interests of our respective countries.

As she said in that speech at Georgetown:

I would define the objective of Transformational Diplomacy in this way: To work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people—and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. Transformation diplomacy is rooted in partnership, not paternalism—in doing things with people, not for them. We seek to use America's diplomatic power to help foreign citizens to better their own lives, and to build their own nations and to transform their own futures.

Transformational diplomacy requires us to move our diplomatic presence out of foreign capitals and to spread it more widely across countries. We must work the front lines of domestic reform as well as in the back rooms of foreign ministries.

The objective to support and to sustain democratic, well-governed states is more nuanced than one might think at first glance. Not every country has reached a degree of democracy as others have. Some lie along the continuum from deep and strong democracies to full-blown dictatorships. We must deal with each of them, often to prevent or reduce widespread abuse, even genocide. And the interest of the community of democracies is to bring more towards nations the democratic side of this scale. So while we nurture and sustain those moving to the democratic side of the ledger, we must promote those parts of society which share that hope even if their government is repressive.

Turning back to changes we have in the last decade and a half, we can see emerging regional leading countries that hold promise not only for themselves but for neighboring states as well. The Secretary has stressed in her remarks that when you project this arc of history further into the twenty-first century, you can see power relationships developing in these countries. They will play critical roles in whether we have a fairly stable system of international relations among countries—where trans-national threats are minimized, and stability and prosperity are the controlling trends. The countries that she had mentioned: China, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Brazil, and a number of others will be the key players. The Secretary discussed what transformational diplomacy means practically for us, and laid out long-term objectives. At the heart of her concept is

that while diplomacy is traditionally associated with managing relations between states, Transformation Diplomacy aims to work with our partners to improve conditions within states.

If, as the old saying goes, nations have interests not friends, and I am not sure that is true, Transformational Diplomacy supports the goals of democratic nations because their interests thrive best where fundamental values are shared. Furthermore, countries that respond to the needs of their citizens tend to be more stable, and countries that understand and are committed to democratic practices and goals tend to be the strongest partners for peace and progress.

So if we hope to form partnerships with more nations based on these ideals, what are the practical steps? First, you have to move people to these emerging influential states. The Secretary mentioned that there would be a hundred positions moving out from Europe and from the US this year, with more following. At the State Department, we have six regional bureaus. If you look at any of those regions, you will note that some countries are staffed based on old relationships, not just in Europe but elsewhere. In addition to shifting staff from some of our European missions, we told the regional bureaus that we would want them to reprogram themselves. So, China may get more positions, but the East-Asia Pacific Bureau has to take a percentage of those positions from somewhere within its staffing. There will be fewer foreign service positions in Washington, fewer in Europe, and more in the other regions where we have a presence.

Second, the Secretary emphasized the need to get out of the walls of the embassy. With the number of terrorist attacks we have had over the years, we have become, regrettably, fortresses. And a fortress mentality means that you don't get out and move around and about as you really should if you're going to understand the country that you're in and be able to represent the interest of your own country within that context. And so the idea is: get out, get about, do a lot more work with press, and have your presence known. Reach beyond the capital to the major population, business, and intellectual hubs. We are expanding our presence across India; we hope to establish additional presence in cities in China, and we are training our staff to be effective communicators who analyse where and to whom to reach out to.

There are a lot of ways besides a physical presence to create a good

outreach program. Technology has given us the tools if we know how to use them. Using technology to get messages out, to rapidly respond to events, to enable others within a country to promote democracy and human rights, is very effective. We have also set up virtual presence posts and American presence posts.　In virtual presence posts, a member of the staff at the embassy establishes personal contact with those of a particular city or region, then uses websites, blogs, emails to deepen the contact and create a dialogue.

Third, if you want people to do this kind of outreach, they have to be prepared to be a lot more flexible, so we have changed our requirements for career development. Diplomats know that they will be required to be experts in at least two regions and fluent in one language in order to be promoted to the senior ranks. Fluency in a second language is strongly encouraged and will become, we believe, the norm over time. We are also putting in incentives for critical-needs languages, such as Farsi, Arabic, Turkic languages, Indic languages, and Chinese.

We also expect professional development. That means that we want people to not just take jobs at embassies and in the State Department. We want them to go out and work at our Treasury Department, for example, or do a year of academic work. Once you are in for seven to ten years, it is that extra broadening experience that is really going to make you much more effective and less hide-bound in the way you think. There are a number of requirements for career development.

Finally, one of our shortcomings is that our foreign assistance programs, running around US$20 billion, have not really connected well to our policy side, and we are taking a new approach, so that the person who is in charge of international development is also the senior advisor to the Secretary on assistance matters. The idea behind it is that if you're looking at your assistance programs, you need to link them to transformational diplomacy and the five objectives on the assistance side: peace and security, governing justly and democratically, investing in people, economic growth, and humanitarian assistance.　One of the problems that we have is that, in fact, foreign assistance has not yet adjusted to the challenges of transformational diplomacy.　For example, the 25 wealthiest recipient countries receive over 20 per cent of all foreign assistance.

In sum, Transformational Diplomacy recognizes the quickly changing face of the international order; it requires that we shift resources to those

regions and countries that are emerging to more greatly influence the turn of events in this century. On a practical level, we must reach out, understand the country that we are in, make sure that the interests of our country are best served by whatever means that are appropriate within the kinds of activites that we are allowed to engage in. Technology helps to get the message out, but there is nothing that can replace a person on the spot, fluent in the language, with the skills to get things done.

The CEO Ambassador
Challenges of the Internal
Management of External Affairs

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THE FUNDAMENTALS

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THAILAND CELEBRATED THE 131ST Anniversary of its establishment in April 2006. The diplomatic history of the country, however, dates back to the seventh century, to the Nan-Chao Period. At that time, envoys were dispatched to neighboring countries, and treaties of friendship were signed. History shows no evidence of Thailand existing in isolation, but always keeping her doors open to the outside world.

Despite the changes of time and context, the imperatives of Thai foreign policy remain unaltered, i.e. to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity, to protect and promote the interests of the nation and its people, to maintain goodwill and friendly international relations, and to play an active role in the international community.

The conduct of Thai foreign policy has yielded favorable results thus far. Today, Thailand has emerged as one of the significant players in the region. Her constructive role has been recognized regionally and internationally. Every year, the country receives higher rankings from global rating agencies. It is of the utmost importance that Thailand enjoys stable and cordial relationships with all its neighboring countries. The situation along our long borders also remains stable and peaceful, facilitating frequent people-to-people contacts.

The Thai Foreign Office is fairly small in terms of its personnel. Currently, there are 1,608 staff working for the Ministry, 990 of whom

are career diplomats and the other 618 are supporting staff. As for the gender ratio, 685 are men and 923 are women. Currently, we have 14 outstanding women ambassadors and expect the number to increase in the near future. Almost 30% of the staff (1,065) serve abroad, while the rest perform the 'back office' roles at headquarters, mainly because we run very lean embassies and consulates abroad. We recruit, every year, well-qualified and energetic young people to the Thai Foreign Service. And since 1991, we have granted scholarships to 226 students, more than half of whom have already graduated and returned to work for the Ministry while the rest continue their studies abroad. This younger generation of diplomats will soon change the 'human resources landscape' of the Ministry.

The Ministry is expanding its coverage worldwide and currently has 90 posts in 62 countries. These missions play crucial roles in making our presence felt in every region and cultivating our relationships with counterparts around the world.

RATIONALE FOR REFORM

If everything seems to be on the right track as mentioned above, why do we need reform?

This is because the world never stops, and the essence of foreign affairs is the ability both to keep one's own country relevant to, and for it to benefit from, the changing world. The Foreign Ministry cannot be on the defensive, but must effectively anticipate and respond to change, particularly in the current situation in which globalization has propelled change at breathtaking speed.

Globalization is the force that drives the world today. The Thai Government likes to think of globalization as characterized by free flows in relation to four areas: people; goods and services; capital; technology and knowledge. This view has allowed Thailand to take action and put into place the requisite infrastructure as well as rules and regulations that help us deal with globalization. Foreign policy and Foreign Service reform are instrumental in these efforts to deal with globalization.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a learning organization. Constant change is in our culture. We adapt our management style from the private sector. We learn from the best practices of the foreign services of other countries. We go through the trial-and-error process and constantly fine

tune. Like us, foreign ministries worldwide are on the move towards reform and restructuring; even the great powers like the United States of America and the United Kingdom are no exception. We are enthusiastic to learn more about the American 'Transformational Diplomacy' and the English 'Active Diplomacy'.

As a foundation, the Ministry indicated its vision and mission as the guidelines for its work and reform. The vision is:

> To become the leading organization in promoting Thailand's role and position in the international arena with a view to enhancing the country's honor, dignity, political stability, prosperity, social development, and to exploit the opportunities from globalization for the benefit of the Thai society.

The mission is to effectively and efficiently conduct the Ministry's pivotal roles, i.e.

> ... Diplomatic representation; Negotiation; Provision of policy; Strategic and legal advice; Professional diplomatic development and training; Consular service; Conduct of Public diplomacy; Protocol service and; Conduct of International Development Cooperation in both bilateral and multilateral levels.

INTERNAL MANAGEMENT OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Globalization and the change in the international strategic landscape result in the necessity to conduct foreign policy in different ways. International affairs involve multi-dimensional issues which are invariably intertwined. The conduct of foreign policy hence needs a thorough understanding of this complexity and an integrated approach to deal with.

Moreover, a globalized society like ours is highly sensitive to the repercussions of international affairs which now, as never before, can have an immediate impact on all walks of life. More agencies, governmental and non-governmental, are involved in the conduct of foreign policy. They are not 'affairs' to be handled by the Foreign Ministry alone anymore. Nonetheless, the Foreign Ministry continues to provide the main input into foreign-policy decisions and is the chief executor of foreign policy. And despite the increasing number of actors in Thai foreign affairs, there is only one foreign policy for all to adhere to in conducting their international businesses.

'*Internal Management of External Relations*' is therefore vital in these circumstances. In the past, the structure of the Thai bureaucracy was mainly based on a clear division of responsibilities. Agencies worked according to their specialization and the issues ran vertically within the organization concerned, not cutting across ministries. This structure is, however, irrelevant to the increasingly complicated and interrelated international issues which one agency, alone, cannot handle in a comprehensive way. Integration is therefore a key factor for success.

In March 2002, the Thai Government initiated the so-called '*CEO scheme*', adapting a business model to its bureaucratic system. The ultimate goal is to increase Thailand's competitiveness amidst the tide of globalization and push forward the country's strategies in a more integrated and efficient way.

During the initial period, six embassies were chosen to run a pilot project, namely Brussels, Tokyo, Beijing, New Delhi, Washington D.C., and Vientiane. The six Ambassadors were required to present to the Prime Minister their visions and strategies towards the respective countries based on a SWOT Analysis. An academic team was invited to evaluate the effectiveness of the CEO scheme and provide useful advice. Later in October 2003, the CEO scheme was extended to all of Thailand's missions worldwide.

CEO or Chief Executive Officer in this case is the Ambassador. The emphasis is on leadership and teamwork, as well as shared vision, mission and strategies. Management skills, responsibility, and accountability are also vital. 60 Ambassadors—equipped with authority, teams, and resources—perform as assistants to the Prime Minister in carrying out government policies overseas.

The role of the diplomat has changed in accordance with the change in the conduct of foreign policy. He/she is required to perform strategic and managerial roles, in addition to his/her traditional core competencies of representation and negotiation. In most cases, the diplomat is the door-knocker or pathfinder who utilizes his/her professionalism in establishing a close relationship with foreign countries and easy access to foreign counterparts, paving the way for further cooperation.

Representatives of the agencies attached to the embassies or consulates-general abroad serve on the '*Executive Board of Thailand*' working as a team under the authority and direction of the '*CEO Ambassador*'. A board meeting is held almost every week for strategic planning, problem solving, and information sharing. The team needs to collectively formulate a

strategic framework and an annual plan of action. Through this process, agencies are able to compare notes on their activities and avoid duplication of their work plans. A number of key performance indicators (KPIs) are set as benchmarks for team achievement.

In 2003, the Prime Minister himself chaired a series of six of the so-called 'revamp' meetings to restructure Thailand's overseas missions and ensure that CEO Ambassadors are supported by good teams. The bilateral strategy of Thailand towards each country determines the priorities given, thereby indicating the quality and quantity of personnel needed for each mission.

As human and financial resources remain scarce, all agencies have been encouraged to think out of the box in making '*maximum coverage with minimum resources*'. New methods applied include sending mobile units, outsourcing, opening one-man offices, hiring more professional local staff, and appointing roving ambassadors.

Under the CEO scheme, overseas missions need to focus on *strategic-based budgeting* to ensure that the activities of each agency complement, not duplicate, one another in moving forward the overall strategic framework. Currently, a '*strategic fund*' has been set up to equip the overseas missions with an operational budget for team activities under the leadership of the CEO Ambassador, in addition to the annual budget of each agency. The pilot project of this strategic fund will run through the fiscal year 2007 with close supervision and evaluation.

In addition to the above, related rules and regulations have been issued or amended in line with the CEO scheme and to support the leadership role of the CEO Ambassador.

In sum, the efficiencies of the four dimensions of the management of foreign affairs become more focused and have been upgraded under the CEO scheme, i.e. strategy, personnel, budget, as well as rules and regulations, in order to facilitate the success of the scheme.

The Foreign Ministry at Headquarters performs a '*back office*' role by providing 'Team Thailand' with full support. Integration of work overseas cannot be fully realized unless there is a unity at Headquarters. This task is much more difficult.

As mentioned earlier, the structure of the Thai bureaucracy in former days was based on the clear division of responsibilities according to the specialization of each agency. Bureaucrats got used to this system and enjoyed full authority in their responsible fields. Most of their

representatives abroad have always followed the instruction of their Headquarters. Strategies have mainly been formulated by the inside-out approach. Now, the authority of these agencies is being challenged. There have been calls for more proactive roles for local representatives and a better balance between inside-out and outside-in approaches.

To strengthen unity at Headquarters, the *National Committee on Foreign Affairs Strategy*, chaired by the Prime Minister of Thailand, was established in 2004. The Committee, with the Foreign Ministry in the driver's seat, oversees and pushes forward the greater unity and efficiency in the conduct of foreign affairs as well as the integration of bilateral strategy and human and financial resources.

In addition, a streamlined ICT network was introduced to facilitate frequent and speedy contacts between the Ministry and overseas missions. The MFA web portal, e-library and e-submission were also launched to beef up the Ministry's efficiency and capacity to perform a leading role in foreign affairs as well as a coordinating and supporting role for the CEO scheme.

THE WAY FORWARD

After four years of implementation, the CEO scheme is now well established. However, reform is neither easy nor quick. Change is being carried out not only on the structural level, but also on the attitudinal level. And attitudes are notoriously hard to change.

The fact that the CEO scheme is a top-down process, which has received the full attention and participation from the Prime Minister, has generated enthusiasm and cooperation from all agencies concerned. Nonetheless, such a reform process needs to be sustainable and that requires proper management change and the positive attitude of all people involved. It will certainly need more time, but the Ministry is confident that we are taking the right path.

There are several *challenges* that we discovered during our reform journey. Key performance indicators are a case in point. Most of the outcomes of the conduct of foreign affairs cannot be quantified in numbers. Most of the issues take time to yield fruitful results. Our work is abstract, but we really can make a difference. We have been successful in maintaining cordial ties and peaceful borders with our neighboring countries, but how can we measure this 'comfort level' between us and

our neighbors? How can we evaluate the image that one country has of us, even though our missions overseas have been successful in making Thailand and so-called 'Thai-ness' increasingly well known by our friends around the world?

Accepting evaluation by KPIs imposed on us by others is not only impractical, but also dilutes the real thrust of our profession. The Ministry is now attempting to establish *a set of our own KPIs* by learning from our past experiences and best practices of other countries.

In addition, we will soon begin to use an *Inspector-General system* to promote good governance in the conduct of foreign affairs. This will also help upgrade the productivity and cost-effectiveness of the Ministry's work.

Last but not least, *creating the right work culture and human resources development* are at the heart of our reform process. The Ministry is now reviewing its human resources strategy to ensure that the staff is well taken care of from recruitment to retirement. A merit-based system needs to be in place.

The development and training of our human resources at all levels need to be strengthened. The diplomat must not only have his/her leadership and be visionary, but need to be competitive in world-class diplomacy. This year the Prince Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs will be established for this purpose. Apart from in-house training, the Institute will also provide training for personnel from other agencies to create a better understanding of foreign affairs and promote a more constructive participation from all involved. We would like to invite the foreign affairs institute and the diplomatic academy of every country to be our partners.

Modernizing Foreign Services*
Facing the Internal Challenge

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WHEN SETTING OFF ON A JOURNEY OF MODERNIZATION, THE MAIN INTERNAL challenge to be dealt with is within the leaders themselves. This is the most difficult internal challenge of all. It can even be said to decide the journey's success or failure.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide some insight into what—in my view—it takes for leaders to successfully plan, launch, and carry out a modernization program in, as in this case, a foreign service. Leadership has many definitions. The one that I use here is simply the *ability to focus on the right things and align people around a strategy*. There is no doubt that leaders are fundamental to making modernization happen, but unfortunately the opposite is also true. They are also fundamental to making it not happen...

A leader has no choice but to found his or her contribution to success or failure upon his or her personal *capability* and *volition*. For a leader it is essential to fathom the true state of these two qualities within him or her self. Once they are brought into play, it is equally important to make sure that they contribute to, and do not counteract, the fulfilment of the mission ahead. More than anything, it takes *focus*.

* Paper presented at the DiploFoundation international conference 'Challenges for Foreign Ministries—Managing Networks and Optimising Value', Geneva, 31 May–1 June 2006)

WHY MODERNIZATION?

The complexity of conducting foreign policy has grown immensely since the end of the Cold War's relatively predictable bipolar world order. Accelerating globalization, IT revolutions and new international threats and possibilities, have all changed the prerequisites for conducting foreign policy and indeed also many of its tools. Foreign policy can no longer be run the same way as before. Though many distinctive characteristics of diplomacy will remain, it is likely that the foreign services willing and able to develop a sharp matter-of-fact efficiency are the ones that stand the greatest chance of becoming champions of the international stage (providing of course they have the 'right' ideas). The closely related defence sector realized long ago that its future success will not be built on gallantry, but on operational efficiency and agility in the field.

In many countries public administration is undergoing dramatic change. This chapter is not the place to describe the development of public sectors and how governance issues have reached the top of the agenda for many governments. But foreign services are generally not at the forefront of this movement. There are many reasons for this. One is that the people working in foreign services generally do not perceive themselves as being part of public administration; instead, they bear the stimulating and yet exclusive intellectual and traditional burden of saving the world, rather than providing simple public goods. With the possible exceptions of consular, migration, or trade promotion issues, the customers are rarely met face to face (the problem of the semantics around 'customers' is even sometimes a reason in itself for not buying in to the concept of 'us creating value for somebody else'). Until now any pressure to increase efficiency has generally been exerted by finance ministries or by lean bureaucracy advocates in parliament. Thus, the demand for efficiency was long perceived as a problem in itself, not as an opportunity to get more done with less. Also, the common belief that the results of foreign policy cannot be measured has probably many times 'saved' foreign services from being forced to take internal action and left foreign services with the feeling of having been 'let off the hook'.

Today, reality has caught up with foreign services as well. The need to be efficient in order to be effective is simply too evident.

A proactive stance not only enhances the achievement of great international deeds, but can also improve the standing of the service—

and its leaders—in society. No wonder modernization has risen to the top of the agenda for many foreign services. Who does not want to be at the forefront of a new era for conducting foreign policy?

HOSTING THE LAUNCH

Who is crucial in leading a modernization program? In some foreign services it is clearly a top civil servant, often a permanent under-secretary or the equivalent, who is supposed to run the shop and deliver results to the minister. Other foreign services are run primarily by politicians and top civil servants in conjunction, which clearly puts the politicians in the driving seat of the modernization program. The objective and subjective answers to the question above are often equally important. It is however of great importance that they coincide. If people in the organization believe that the politicians are crucial, then these politicians cannot substitute themselves with civil servants. Remember that we are talking about foreign services, which are staffed by people whose job it is to be very good at picking up on signals. It is they, if anybody, who can tell where the crucial leaders' real focus lies. If it appears as if modernization is not really at the top of the politicians' agenda, the staff simply won't prioritize it over everyday foreign policy work.

BEFORE THE LAUNCH

Capability

Explicit modernization programs are launched for various reasons: as part of an overall general plan for modernizing public administration, due to an increasing realization that things can and should improve, or simply because everybody else seems to be doing it. Often the reasons lie in all three categories.

   The challenge ahead is often severely underestimated, no matter what the reason behind modernization is. The latter two types of reason of course give more room for manoeuvre, which in reality makes the challenge even greater. If demanded by a government program for modernizing public administration, there is still some room for the organization to choose its own path in implementing the general outlines provided. However, the more normative the program is, the less room there is

to manoeuvre. But even in such a case, modernization does not happen by itself.

Often, the predominant sense in foreign services seems to be that their combined intellectual capabilities are sufficient to get the job done. External professional expertise in managing change often collides with a deep-rooted sense of exclusiveness (not limited to foreign services): 'our people will not be told by others about their alleged shortcomings'. In a misguided sense of leadership, the leaders are tempted to show that they are on top of things, rejecting external expertise and thus reinforcing the 'we can fix it ourselves' notion.

Heads of departments and other executives in foreign ministries have in most cases reached their positions by being experts in fields of foreign policy. Their only management training is often a result of on-the-job-training, and having learnt from elder peers. The situation differs between foreign ministries, though. I suggest however that the foreign ministries able to establish modern management competencies, succeed in utilizing the executives for the modernization work. In cases where such skills simply aren't well developed, the uphill struggle ahead is rather self-inflicted.

An understanding of the organization's strengths and weaknesses, and an idea of what has to improve, must emanate from both the internal foreign policy experts *and* from experts in efficient management and change. Most importantly, the two perspectives must meet. To build an understanding on only one of these sets of expertise without focusing on the right things, will inevitably lead to false starts, with each start barely clearing the launch pad. This is an effective recipe for growing frustration among the avant-garde, and equally among the reluctant.

Before launching a modernization program, it is important to have a clear picture of what capabilities the organization must have in order to carry it through, and if it does not have these capabilities, to find out how to get them.

Capability is ultimately about making sure that you have the right people by your side.

Volition

The thesaurus[1] gives the following definition of *volition*. It is:

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[1] See www.thesaurus.com

– the act of willing, choosing, or resolving, exercise of willing,
– a choice or decision made by the will,
– the power of willing, will.

All of these definitions apply to this context.

A leader has to decide on the *level of ambition* of the mission ahead, its place on the scale between minor adjustments and radical reform. After having made your choice, you must consciously measure up to your level of ambition. If you want radical reforms, are you ready for the consequences of the measures connected to this ambition? If you want to see some minor improvements, are you ready to face those who want more? Volition is about making a conscious decision and sticking to it.

If your will is weak from the start, you are set on a road to failure. If you don't believe deep inside, in the modernization that you are about to launch, or distrust its chances of actually taking place, you should either stop the launch, or step aside for someone else. If you carry on, despite this advice, be sure that it is merely a question of time before you will be disclosed. People, in most cases, have a well-developed ability to discover a falsehood, and there judgment falls hard. You have spent their time and dedication for a purpose that was hollow from the start. Don't go there.

There will be many temptations for you to quit. Most modernization or change programs are abandoned just when they are about to take off. At that point, most time, money and energy have been spent, with few visible results. The ratio between cost and benefit is at its lowest point. This is a vital moment to persevere. As faith is said to be able to move mountains, so can true resolve.

Breaking new ground means taking risks. Are you ready to put your credentials on the line?

Focus

Without focus, capability and volition are useless. Without focus, a lot of energy will be diverted to unnecessary and indeed damaging sidetracks. In addition, without focus you never know where you will end up. If you are lucky, it will be close to what you had imagined, if you are unlucky you will have created havoc.

Focus is about two things: making sure a) that the things you want to see happen are the *right things*, and b) that the right things *really do happen*.

If there is focus, the capability and the volition to carry the work through will follow. With focus present you will make sure that you are capable, and along with this, hopefully, your volition will grow.

No such thing as a free launch

Successful leaders during a period of change divert a substantial part of their energy *from* their external agenda, *to* an internal agenda of reform. I am sorry, but there is no other way. To believe that you can lead a modernization program without de-prioritizing other work, means having learnt nothing from the great reformers of yesterday and of our own time.

A severe consequence of launching a modernization program is that leaders have to stick with it. The role of a leader is essential in making change happen. And it is your responsibility to act according to that role. You cannot, for any reason, switch to a less exposed role midway through the program or make yourself invisible, without negatively affecting the mission. In that sense, as a leader, you are no longer 'free'.

Once you are up and running, you have to remain focused. Concentrate on the things that are fundamental. These things are most likely about governance. It is not a quick fix. At the same time, you must therefore also deliver on some visible and useful improvements for everyday work. But beware of spending too much effort on just visible things. The great possibilities lay in the major and long-term governance issues. Time will show that these investments pay off. Unfortunately time is a limited commodity. Patience must therefore be widely recognized in your organization as an important virtue for implementing lasting modernization.

Many will try to make you abandon what you have started, for the benefit of their own interests. Do listen, and do change if you are convinced. But be careful not to get lured into something that might not at all be very well thought out. There is nothing more terrible than resolute ignorance. As opposed to the situation concerning regular external work, where no one would dream of expressing shallow amateur advice, many regard themselves as instant experts in internal affairs.

A leader must listen and pay attention to the insecurities and even fears that many will feel. Without these abilities, a leader will not be able to align other leaders and staff around the strategy. Dialogue is essential, as it is shown that most protests against change are often not directed

against substance, but against procedure. But beware of letting the least common denominator be your guiding star. After all, a leader's mission is to lead. Along the way, it is inevitable that you will lose some people, or actively have to cut loose some people.

All that you do has to be a consequence of the choice that you have made. The decisions in daily affairs must support your plan's chances to succeed. Doing what you say is fundamental to building trust. Losing this connection can be fatal to the mission. A leader must proactively make sure that his or her deeds are in line with the mission, and communicate this.

Internal focus

Focusing takes training. For some people it comes more naturally than for others, but it doesn't come free for anybody. Great leaders have realized their internal purpose and managed to connect it to an external mission, and in this way, developed their ability to focus. In the hectic and fast-paced-results-oriented world we live in today, it is a challenge to achieve this. However, it doesn't take life-long contemplation. It can be acquired by more simple means.

The ability to focus comes from within. At this point some readers may start to feel uncomfortable. It is easier to think of focus as being about establishing a well-structured list of things to do or think about, than as being about things taking place in your brain and in your soul. But, as a matter of fact, this is what it all boils down to.

The former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, a person of high 'spiritual intelligence', had a well-known and solid foundation on which to build an ability to face his challenges. Many such people come to mind. No matter what such a foundation consists of, that it exists at all is the point. These existential questions can only be raised through an internal (individual) dialogue.

The connection between individual purpose and the external mission is potentially explosive. If the two coincide, great energy is developed, but if they counteract each other, you will soon be on the road to failure. All around us and in world politics, we understand this when we see it. We recognize calamities of leaders whose internal compasses, and as a result their foci, were clearly not set on their declared mission but on other matters. At the same time, we recognize the powerful force that came from aligning the individual purposes of persons like Mahatma Gandhi,

Dag Hammarskjöld, Nelson Mandela, or Mother Teresa, with their external missions. But we have great difficulty in seeing this as something we can learn from. Instead of learning from great people, we idolize them. We tend to believe that we humble beings do not move in the same dimensions, and that modernizing, changing, improving (or whatever you want to call it) an organization, is a rather trite mission. I do not suggest that you must try to be Mother Teresa. Yet modernization affects a lot of people, and even changes their worlds. It is a mission that is important enough. It deserves to be taken seriously, and therefore its leaders must be ready.

Experiences drawn from and benchmarking against many private and public organizations, including foreign services around the world, suggest that successful modernization programs depend on leaders whose individual purposes and external missions coincide. Of course, a lot of valuable work can be done without this, but the odds of real success are probably not great.

Foreign services have a lot to gain from sharing with other organizations, learning from others and using the wisdom available. Every organization, every leader, will have to find their own path, but this doesn't mean that common human experiences must be reinvented. The fundamentals are rather simple, but should not be over-simplified. The simple things are often the most difficult to fathom. The reason is that we don't give them enough attention. We should.

Privatizing Diplomacy—
the Way Forward

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SCOPE OF WORK OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

AS AN INSTITUTION OF THE NATION-STATE, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) is still the primary actor in world politics. In fact some global economic and political developments actually bolster its role rather than diminish it. The core business of the MFA must be about conducting diplomacy through the promotion of peace and security. The main function of the MFA must therefore be to keep in touch with all aspects of foreign policy and be up-to-date with all significant global events. The ultimate objective is to defend and promote its country's national interests. The diplomatic officer should spend the major part of his time formulating national positions, interacting, outreaching, and negotiating with others for that purpose. All other activities are secondary.

The MFA's role is important as a primary custodian of democracy, social policy, security and peace. But increasingly and ironically, this main focus has been distracted by activities related to it. On a daily basis, a number of tasks carried out by the MFA have to do with operational work. These include the delivery of medical supplies for humanitarian relief, the delivery of newspapers and other documents to overseas missions, the handling of diplomatic bags and cargos, ticketing, as well as consular and protocol work.

Apart from these daily activities, several events such as the hosting of international conferences and preparing for dignitaries' visits are taking

a toll on the resources and time of the diplomatic officer and distracting him from the core of his function. Steeped in the culture and tradition of making their guests feel at home—which is emblematic of Asians— Asian MFAs in particular, engage in more elaborate preparations than their counterparts in the West. Such activities require months of preparatory work, which involves the setting up of various committees that are required to organize, prepare budgets, make purchases, deploy manpower, set up information and communications technology (ICT) and other conference services facilities, book air tickets, find appropriate accommodation for delegates, meet security and transport requirements, promote publicity, not to mention conducting a series of dry runs and food tasting—all of which are necessary for the success of an international event at home or a visit by an important foreign dignitary.

To continue to be effective in carrying out its core functions, the MFA will need to share the stage with the private sector. Corporations owe a larger debt to society beyond simply making profits. Business leaders actively address social and environmental issues, and businesses are increasingly judged by their reliability as civic partners. This does not mean that they should abandon profit-making, but with time we hope to see more and more businesses that respond to civic and social demands. This process of privatizing some aspects of diplomacy can be hastened if governments bring them in to share the burden together.

The scope of activities mentioned above can be contracted out to companies. Many of these activities will have to be farmed out. The MFA will still hold the starring role but the co-stars will help it look good.

CONCERNS

The idea of privatizing diplomacy has provoked uneasy reactions among some within the MFA. Some see it as a disturbing trend where the involvement of the private sector leads to the rise of alternative authorities, more efficient than the government. Companies can often perform event management and training more efficiently than the government, although this is not necessarily the case all the time, and governments have shown themselves to be just as good, if not better.

Some worry that these co-stars will challenge the supremacy of the ministry and will seek to be stars themselves. Others worry that by not exposing young diplomats to the grind of diplomacy, they will never learn

nor master the mundane but important activities. This is especially worrying when they will be at assignments abroad, where all activities have to be shouldered by them.

We should, however, not see the process as one of decline of its authority or a weakening of tradition and institution. The change is far more interesting than that. It should rather be seen as a *transformation* of authority, where new ideas and new ways of doing things make the parent institution more reputable.

As far as our citizens are concerned, the MFA is a consular service. They are generally not aware of the core duties of the ministry. They expect the consular officer to identify bodies—some badly injured, some decomposed. They want our officers to visit their families in prisons, some of whom are to be executed. Protocol duty is another aspect that the MFA is reluctant to let go. A *faux pas* in handling dignitaries can sometimes cause a diplomatic blunder. The ministry has to decide which to keep and which to let go so that all of its officials collaborate more easily and become more effective.

Since the role given to the private sector will be relatively insignificant, the weakening of the MFA's authority is not likely to happen. The MFA needs to sell the idea to the private sector, and to themselves, that we are creating mutual and collective responsibility. A collaboration with public relations firms, the non-governmental organizations, and the media can also be mutually beneficial.

Also, the likelihood of the diplomat disappearing is slim. As long as there is a need for summits and conferences, there is still a need for the backroom boys to do the work as leaders do not negotiate the nitty-gritty. The issues involved are complex and summit leaders cannot resolve complex details. They do not normally negotiate the terms of treaties or agreements. They usually endorse and formalize what has already been negotiated by their experts and fine-tuned by their ministers.

SOLUTIONS

The transformation of authority can be double-edged. It alienates those whose strength is in the periphery of diplomacy. But the question arises: why should those whose business is not the core of diplomacy be in that business? The participation of non-state actors requires trust on the part of the MFA and the willingness to let go some of its responsibility. It calls

for the need to trust our jobs to those who do not share our mindset and the way we do work. And the process has already begun.

The question will be to what extent and in what areas should we allow others to assume our responsibilities? Event managers, consular work, diplomatic bag, training, are some of these areas that are amenable to such delegation.

The Malaysian MFA, for example, has about 50 per cent of its employees under its payroll doing work that is related to development projects, communication, ICT, security, protocol, and consular work. This is also not to suggest that we do away completely with the peripheral departments within the ministry, but advocate that we trim down manpower, allowing only a skeletal number of officers to oversee areas such as protocol, issuance of visas, and other consular work, administration, and budgeting, as we farm out such activities.

CONCLUSION

The conflict over this trend will continue for some time, but eventually the idea will be generally accepted, because the scope of the work of the MFA is so wide that it cannot afford to do it alone. In this way, the diplomat cannot only concentrate on his core function of conducting diplomacy, but this process can also promote a culture of teamwork and commitment within the organization. Other aspects such as the welfare of officers and their families can then be looked into. This includes paying more attention to the problems of school-going children who confront problems living apart from their parents, who are out on a long foreign assignment.

The world today is one in which technologies will become cheaper, lighter, smaller, more personal, mobile, digital, and virtual. For instance, Royal Dutch Shell with over 100,000 employees is one of the biggest companies on earth, and it is trying to get very small. The challenge for the MFA is to get smaller and better.

We need to wake up to the fact that there is a fundamental change in the way we go about doing business today. The focus today is on efficiency, collaboration, and on staying sharp. We have to privatize diplomacy to move forward.

Intra-EU Diplomacy
A Conceptual Challenge

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INTRODUCTION

THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A POLITY-IN-THE-MAKING IN WHICH CENTURIES-OLD premises of inter-state relations are challenged (Duchêne 1973, Krasner 1995, 2004, Olsen 1996, 2004, Schmitter 1996, Keohane 2002, Cooper 2002, Fossum 2002, Kagan 2002, Linklater 2005). This development is likely to have implications for the organization and conduct of *bilateral* diplomatic representation among the EU member states (intra-EU diplomacy). There is a growing sense that diplomacy is conducted and organized differently *inside* the EU among the member states as opposed to *outside* the EU. While a few academic analyses have touched upon this *problématique* in recent years (i.e. Nilsen 2001, Hocking and Spence 2002, 2005, Keukeleire 2003, Bátora 2003, 2005, Blair 2004, Hocking 2004, Jönsson and Hall 2005, Henrikson 2006), assessments of the change dynamics vary quite substantially and by and large remain at the level of abstract theorizing and/or insightful but preliminary observations. What is more, besides the seminal report by Ambassador Karl Paschke (2000), change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy has not been subjected to any comprehensive research. The goal of this article is therefore to point to a set of emerging research questions regarding the change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy.

The chapter proceeds in four steps. The first part sets the stage for the discussion by outlining characteristics of the EU as an emerging political order on the intersection between the intra-state spheres and the inter-

state sphere. The second part reviews some preliminary observations on diplomacy inside the EU. In the third part, questions for future research are formulated. Conclusions follow.

THE EU AS AN INTERSTITIAL ORDER BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND DIPLOMACY

It is a common understanding that intra-state and inter-state politics happen in rather different environments. The domestic political environments are characterized by institutional density, hierarchical relationships, shared interests, and strong collective identities, while in the international political environment there is a lack of strong institutions, few rules, and conflicting interests and identities (March and Olsen 1998: 944). Most theories of international relations hence envision interstate interaction as a two-stage process. In the first stage, coherent state actors are created from multiple individuals and sub-state entities through the organized and institutionalized interplay in the domestic political processes including political socialization, participation, and discourse. In the second stage, the coherent state actors cooperate and compete in an inter-state sphere with few rules and no overarching structure of authority. Political order is then 'defined primarily in terms of negotiated connections among externally autonomous and internally integrated sovereigns' (ibid.: 945). The two spheres are governed by two different sets of expectations and institutionalized arrangements structuring political action. In the intra-state environment these can be subsumed under the set of institutionalized processes associated with *democracy*, while in the inter-state environment, the overarching institution is *diplomacy*. While the former rests on the principles of representation and popular participation and control, the latter is the prerogative of selected experts working behind layers of secrecy and exercising a considerable amount of fiat in decision-making. A fundamental difference between the intra-state spheres and the international sphere is related to the nature of authorization of representatives. In intra-state political representation, representatives are authorized by citizens through elections, a process which Pitkin (1967: 43) describes as 'vesting authority'. Authorization of diplomatic representatives, however, is a prerogative of the head of state (in some countries still a monarch) in whose hands political responsibility for external representation formally rests. Moreover, the authorization to

act on behalf of the state is also embedded within the institution of the foreign service itself—when somebody becomes a member of the diplomatic service, s/he is by the nature of becoming a member of the professional group of state officials also authorized to represent his/her state externally. Somewhat simplified, diplomats are hence in principle not authorized to act on behalf of their state by the domestic political constituency, but by the authority of the head of state using his/her prerogatives in the foreign policy realm. Hence, diplomatic representatives are only indirectly exposed to electoral accountability, but more held accountable by what Pollak (2006: 115) refers to as *administrative responsibility* related to soundness of financial resource management, the observation of legal rules and procedures, and goal attainment.

The process of European integration leads to a growing blurring of the boundaries between the intra-state- and inter-state environments. As Bartolini (2005: 375) argues, European integration results in a process of de-differentiation of European polities following several centuries of differentiation in the national legal systems, administrative orders, economic transactions, and social and political practices. Yet while the coincidence of administrative, political, cultural, and economic boundaries of the state are being disjointed, the integration process seems unable to produce any new form of closure and overlapping boundaries at the European level. Policy-making processes in the EU evolve in a complex system of multi-level governance in which national democratic systems interact with each other and with the EU institutions in multiple forums and in multiple ways (see for instance Kohler Koch 1999, 2003, Nugent, 2003, Hix 2005, Egeberg 2006). Sovereignty in the EU is *pooled* among member states, which prompts political leaders and national bureaucrats to act according to established notions of appropriate conduct encouraging 'rationalist and unheroic' arts of bureaucratic compromise (Keohane 2002: 760). The EU is hence an inter-governmental forum in which states are 'much more linked than in other international regimes' (Magnette 2005: 192). Simplifying somewhat, it is no longer obvious what in the relations between the member states constitutes 'high politics' traditionally managed by diplomats following the specific rules and norms of diplomacy and what, on the other hand, represents the more mundane kinds of 'domestic' political processes subject to the procedures and rules of democracy in the respective member states. The effects of this blurring are reinforced by the decreasing ability of member states' governments

to work according to specific national timetables, which as Magnus Ekengren (1998) reports in his seminal analysis, are increasingly supplanted by a multitude of policy-specific EU-wide timetables and deadlines connecting civil servants throughout the EU in administrative networks hammering out policies. Overall, these developments generate an emergent intra-EU order, in which the two traditionally disjointed spheres of state—democracy and diplomacy—increasingly overlap, leading to what François Duchêne (1973) refers to as the *domestication* of relations between member states. The challenge faced by analysts, as Claes' (2003) study of the impact of the European Economic Area agreement on Norway had shown, is that the legal framework of the EU and the institutionalized political processes associated with it, structure politics in ways which cannot be satisfactorily explained, neither from an intra-state perspective focusing on democratic processes nor from a purely inter-state perspective placing the premium on diplomatic processes. EU governance can hence be better comprehended as 'political organization in the field of tension between democracy and diplomacy' (ibid.: 277; my translation).

From an organization theory perspective, such overlaps of institutionalized spheres or organizational fields each featuring a different set of norms, rules, structures, and practices may lead to *institutional collisions*. These are situations, where several logics of appropriateness might be evoked and actors are forced to choose between competing institutional sets of criteria guiding action (for elaborations see Thelen 1999, Clemens and Cook 1999, Orren and Skowronek 2004, Olsen 2004). Institutional collisions have transformational potential as they may lead to the mobilization of particular actors rallying in defense of particular institutional orders and/or attempts to export symbols and practices of one institution in order to transform another (Friedland and Alford 1991: 255).

The development of political or social structures between or across established institutional spheres or organizational fields may also lead to institutional innovation and change in a process which Morrill (2006) terms *interstitial emergence*. In this process, new kinds of practices gradually evolve through the rise of 'alternative practice frames' by *elasticity* of existing frames and/or by 'borrowing' and gradually institutionalizing practices, norms and structures from other institutionalized spheres or fields.[1] This involves the shaping of rules, structures, norms and practices

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[1] Morrill (2006) defines an *interstice* as 'a mesolevel location that forms from overlapping resource networks across multiple organizational fields in which the

applied within each of the respective institutionalized spheres. It may also lead to the innovation in established notions of appropriate organizing, rules, and practices in a gradual process of *recombination*, *refunctionality* and *catalysis* (Padgett 2001, Padgett and McLean 2006).[2] In such processes, established sources of legitimacy and power are recast and new modes of organizing political life are structured.

At the center of the overlap between the institutionalized spheres of diplomacy and democracy are the foreign ministries. The very raison d'être of these agencies of state is to manage the intersection between the intra-state sphere and the inter-state sphere. Their organizational units located abroad (embassies, consulates and missions to international organizations) perform the function of diplomatic representation, and the MFA is a support mechanism in this respect. At the same time, the MFA is an integral part of the government and thereby operating in the context of intra-state political representation with all the respective procedural consequences and expectations of political accountability. The overlaps within the EU of the institutionalized intra-state and inter-state spheres challenge the role and functions of foreign ministries and embassies in the conduct of intra-EU diplomacy. The next section addresses the emerging challenges in more detail.

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authority of the dominant resource network does not prevail. Interstices typically arise when problems or issues persistently spill over from one organizational field to another'. He further identifies three stages of *interstitial emergence*: '*innovation*, when interstitial networks of players experiment with alternative practices to solve problems affecting multiple organizational fields. [...] A second *mobilization* stage requires the development of critical masses of supporters and resonant frames for alternative practices. A third *structuration* stage occurs to the extent that alternative practitioners are able to carve out legitimated social spaces for their practices. [...] Structuration ultimately can modify the institutionalized narratives used to account for formal, organizational practices and reconfigure the institutional context by creating new organizational fields that compete with and modify established fields.'

[2] Padgett and McLean (2006: 1468) situate organizational invention in the dynamics of reproduction of multiple networks and identify three steps in the process. First, *recombination*, which is produced 'when one or more social relations are transposed from one domain to another, mixing in use with relations already there'. Second, *refunctionality*, which emerges 'when transposition leads not just to improvement in existing uses but, more radically, to new uses—that is to a new set of objects with which to interact and transform'. Thirdly, *catalysis* is 'when these new interactions feed back to alter the way existing relations reproduce'.

DIPLOMACY INSIDE THE EU: SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Despite advancing European integration, the structure of bilateral diplomatic relations between EU member states remains intact so far (Hocking and Spence 2002, Bátora 2005). An indication of this is the fact that embassies of EU member states in other member states have structures, functions, and staff on par with their embassies in third countries. Moreover, there has been a proliferation of member states' embassies and consulates in other member states. An example is the ongoing construction of member state embassies in Berlin (Bátora 2005), as well as the building and inauguration of new embassies *in* and *by* the new member states.[3] In short, the structure of bilateral diplomatic representation between the EU member states is not only maintained, but is in fact being renewed in an isomorphic manner in accordance with established traditions and standards within the global organizational field of diplomacy.[4] Yet, as Olsen (2003: 524) points out, a puzzle for students of organizations examining European integration is that although formal organizational structures (or 'façades') in member states' public administrations remain unchanged, new practices and routines have been introduced within the existing structures. Foreign affairs administrations are not an exception.

Analysts have pointed to the fact that the EU represents a new kind of environment for the conduct of bilateral diplomatic relations between member states. According to Stephan Keukeleire (2003: 32), the intra-EU inter-state interactions are characterized by *interrelational goals*, which relate to the need of improved mutual understanding, predictability of national policies, greater solidarity and overall strengthening of mutual relations between member states. This view is shared by David Spence, who points out that in negotiations between EU member states there is a 'higher order agenda' relating to the fact that negotiated agreements limit

[3] See the proliferation of member state embassies in Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Bratislava, Ljubljana, Valetta, and Nicosia. For instance, Austria has opened new embassies in Valetta and Nicosia in 2005. Another example could be Slovakia's decision to open new embassies in Tallinn and Vilnius in the near future (see *Správa o stave siete zastupite_sk_ch úradov SR v zahrani_í v r. 2005 a v_chodiská pre jej _al_í rozvoj* [Report on the state of the network of Slovak missions abroad in 2005 and points of departure for its further development], Bratislava: MFA; www.foreign.gov.sk/pk/mat/197-material.htm)

[4] For the concept of *organizational field* see DiMaggio and Powell ([1983] 1991). For a conceptualization of diplomacy as an institution using the notion of organizational field, see Bátora (2005).

the potential of conflict in the future and 'this is the overall, yet unspoken, aim. [...] Of course, rivalry for influence between the member states persists, but what characterizes the system is commitment to togetherness and the seeming unshakability of member states' resolve to strengthen the system of European governance' (Spence 2004: 256–7). Given these emerging systemic differences between an intra-EU environment and an extra-EU environment for state-to-state relations, there has been a growing sense among policy analysts and diplomatic officials that the system of bilateral diplomacy within the EU is undergoing various forms of change, which might lead to the emergence of differences between the way diplomacy is organized and conducted inside the EU as opposed to outside the EU. As Richard Whitman noted, there is a need to

> draw some distinctions between different *strands of European foreign policy.* We have *intra-European diplomacy* [...] which results in tactical and strategic alliances. But we also have *extra-European diplomacy* which consists of member states national foreign policies, areas that fall to community competence (much of which is foreign economic policy) and we have our common foreign, security and defense policies under the CFSP and the ESDP and our common internal security policies (italics in the original).[5]

Reflecting upon the change dynamics, Stephen Wall, the Europe Advisor of Tony Blair, argues that European integration processes have radically changed the work of British embassies in the EU. While previously the embassy personnel in member states' capitals would spend most of their time hammering out EU negotiating positions and various policy issues, this function is now mostly centralized in the governmental offices in London, where the civil servants manage direct contacts to counterparts in the governments of other member states.[6] In part this also has to do with the increasing information exchange over the COREU network, in which member state governments share foreign policy information. This increases mutual awareness of foreign policy positions and actions and might be decreasing the role of member states' embassies in mediating

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[5] Remarks at the conference 'Changing landscape in Transatlantic relations New EU member states and candidate countries between Brussels and Washington', Prague, Europeum, 23 September 2005 (www.europeum.org/doc/arch_eur/Conference_Report_final.pdf)

[6] Stephen Wall, interview at fpc.org.uk/articles/160.

intra-EU bilateral relations in the field of foreign policy cooperation. As a source from the Research Unit of the British foreign office pointed out in 1994,

> [b]ilateral contacts have increased due to CFSP; Coreu telegrams, that bypass the sort of national embassies in community capitals, because Foreign Ministries can now communicate directly with each other through this network. Also telephone contacts. If I were to be posted in for example Dublin or Paris, it would not be much of this traffic that would pass through me, because it goes directly from the Foreign Office here to the Foreign Ministry in Dublin. To that extent the work of the bilateral embassy has become less intense, due to the direct communication between Foreign Ministries (cf Ekengren 1998: 69).

Arguing in a similar fashion, senior German Ambassador Karl Paschke (2000) pointed out in his seminal report that there are particular functions (i.e. conducting formal negotiations with the host country government, briefing home government, trade promotion) that the German embassies in the EU member states no longer need to perform. However, other functions, notably public diplomacy, have been gaining in importance in the work of embassies in other member states. As a result, Paschke sees 'a new type of "European Diplomacy" with its own functions and characteristics' emerging (ibid.). Although, this report remains the only comprehensive analysis of the changing role of bilateral embassies in the EU available to date, a number of foreign ministries in the member states have also reflected upon the emerging specifics of the diplomatic work inside the EU. The Austrian foreign ministry points out that,

> Austrian embassies based in the other EU Member states have had to assume new and additional tasks beside their traditional classical ambassadorial work. Although an important part of the workload is handled by the Austrian representation in Brussels, the embassies play a substantial role as *hubs* and *lobbying centres* for Austrian interests. Their direct access to decision-makers in the EU partner countries has proved to be a sine qua non in terms of preparatory and follow-up work on EU plans and projects' (emphasis added).[7]

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[7] See www.bmaa.gv.at/view.php3?r_id=22&LNG=en&version—(accessed 3 June 2006).

The Swedish foreign ministry is a bit more general in its description of its work in the EU, but still conveys that there is a difference between the work of missions inside as opposed to outside the EU:

> Officials both from Stockholm and Brussels participate in EU meetings and discussions of the issues take place between Stockholm, Brussels and the missions abroad. Work pertaining to the EU varies depending on the country of operations, particularly when the country is a member of the EU as opposed to a non-EU member.[8]

A number of foreign ministries see the mainstay of the embassies' role inside the EU to be the promotion of national positions or inputs in the formation of the EU policies. The Slovak foreign ministry clarifies this in the following manner:

> [There is a need] to create ad hoc alliances with other EU Member states with similar views. [...] The process of increasing EU integration will hence require—seemingly paradoxically, but in fact quite logically—also the strengthening of bilateral relations between Slovakia and the EU Member states, which will enable us to maintain an authentic Slovak voice on the European and the world scene. For these reasons it is necessary to finalize in particular the development of the network of our missions in EU Member states.[9]

Championing the implementation of specific organizational procedures for intra-EU diplomacy, the German foreign office has had a network of the so-called *EU-Affairs officers* in charge of EU policy in all of its embassies inside the EU and in the accession countries. The system, which has been in place since 1995 and has been extended progressively as new countries joined the EU and the pre-accession negotiations, serves Germany 'to directly lobby our partners in favour of German positions and to fully assess those of the other Member states on European policy issues. This is a major prerequisite for successfully

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[8] See www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2059/a/19981 (March 9, 2006).

[9] *Správa o stave siete zastupite_sk_ch úradov SR v zahrani_í v r. 2005 a v_chodiská pre jej _al_í rozvoj* (Report on the State of the Network of Slovak Missions Abroad in 2005 and Possibilities of its Further Development), Bratislava, Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005, p. 8.

bringing our interests into the process of formulating European policy objectives and demands'.[10]

Besides such new tasks, procedures, and practices, membership in the EU had also brought about a differentiation of the discourse used by foreign ministries to denote the object of their work. There is an increasing tendency at foreign ministries of exempting the EU-agenda from what is usually covered by the term foreign policy and/or a tendency of making a distinction between EU-related policies and policies towards other parts of the world. The home page of the Italian foreign ministry, for instance, makes a distinction between 'European Policy' and 'Foreign Policy',[11] thereby indicating that it does not consider the former to be a part of the latter. The British FCO website makes a distinction between 'Britain in the EU' and 'International Priorities'.[12] Similarly, the home page of the German foreign office provides the banners of 'Europe' and 'Foreign Policy'.[13] Awareness of this difference, although expressed rather in geographic terms, can also be found on the home page of the Austrian foreign ministry, where under the banner 'Foreign Policy', we can click on 'Europe' and 'Extra-European area'.[14] It is interesting to note that the distinction between a regional-integrationist policy and foreign policy is specific of foreign ministries in the EU as one does not find any such differentiation on the websites of the foreign ministries of non-EU countries.[15] While virtually all member states foreign ministry home pages feature one or another form of a distinction between foreign policy and European policy, there is no unitary model of how such a distinction is made. This does not concern only the discursive level of foreign ministry home pages, but also policy substance, and may be related to the fact that the EU as such keeps evolving dynamically. As Hocking (2005: 14) argues, this leads to

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[10] There are currently EU Affairs Officers in the German embassies in all EU member states, and also in the accession states Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Turkey, and in the German Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. For more information see 'The Making of German European Policy' at www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/Europa/deutschland-in-europa/entscheidungsfindung.html (accessed 16 August 2006).

[11] See www.esteri.it/eng (accessed 16 August 2006).

[12] See www.fco.gov.uk (accessed 17 August 2006).

[13] See www.auswaertiges-amt.de (accessed 16 August 2006).

[14] See www.bmaa.gv.at (accessed 17 August 2006).

[15] Based on a review of the home pages of foreign ministries of Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Norway and the United States accessed on 17 August 2006.

the need to adapt to a situation in which the demarcation lines between what is not yet a 'European domestic policy' but is neither 'foreign' policy, are increasingly blurred. At the centre of this puzzle lie the core issues of policy coordination—a complex one in which policy actors play differing roles depending on the nature of the issues involved as well as the political and bureaucratic cultures in which they are located.

These ambiguities are demonstrated in a number of the case studies of the adaptation processes in member states' foreign ministries featured in the volume edited by Hocking and Spence ([2002] 2005), as well as in Bátora's (2003) study of the change tendencies in the Slovak foreign ministry and in Nilsen's (2001) analysis of the work of the Norwegian embassies in Copenhagen and Stockholm.

In sum, while there is a growing sense among academics and practitioners that state-to-state diplomacy within the EU is organized and conducted in different ways than outside the EU, assessments of the change dynamics either vary considerably or remain at a fairly vague and abstract level. There is no clarity as to the magnitude of change and the direction of change of diplomacy between EU member states. Ambiguities are strengthened by the fact that besides the aforementioned report by the German foreign office (Paschke 2000), there are to date practically no comprehensive analyses of the change dynamics in intra-EU bilateral diplomacy. As stated in the introduction, this article seeks to provide some initial steps to fill this gap by formulating a set of emerging research questions. The following section takes on this task.

TOWARDS AN INTRA-EU MODE OF DIPLOMACY?

Institutions are markers of a polity's character and the way they are organized makes a difference (Olsen forthcoming). The way diplomacy is organized as an institution shapes the character of the inter-state diplomatic order and provides some of the core features of modern states as political entities. It is important to explore the evolving ways in which diplomacy is organized inside the EU, which in turn can provide us with indications of what kind of political entity the EU is. Inspired by the above-mentioned preliminary assessments in the academic literature and by the organizational developments described in strategic reports of European foreign ministries, the lead-question that arises is the following:

Is there an intra-EU mode of diplomacy emerging? The focus of the analysis can be made more specific by three sub-sets of questions.

Firstly, given the fact that a comprehensive analysis of the change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy is still missing, the first set of questions that needs to be addressed is exploratory: Are state-to-state diplomatic relations organized and conducted in a different way within the EU than outside the EU? If so, what are the characteristic features of intra-EU diplomacy? More specifically, do member states' embassies within the EU have different functions, organizational structures, tasks and procedures than outside the EU? Are the changes in the way state-to-state diplomacy is organized and conducted so profound that we can speak of a different kind of diplomacy within the EU as opposed to outside the EU? In short, what is the *magnitude of change*?

Given the fact that there are large variations in the way states in Europe were constituted (see Tilly 1975, Rokkan 1975), an institutionalist perspective alerts us to the possibility of variations in how member states adapt structures of their governmental administration to the process of European integration. However, harmonization of administrative law in the member states and increased mutual interactions across national administrations may also be leading to a greater convergence in the way member states' public administrations are organized (Olsen 2003). The second set of questions that needs to be addressed in the analyses of intra-EU diplomacy hence concerns the *direction of change*, i.e. whether there is a uni-directional development of practices of intra-EU diplomacy throughout the EU or whether individual Member states or their grouping organize and conduct their intra-EU diplomacy differently: Are the changes in the way diplomacy is organized and conducted similar or identical in all member states or are there different change dynamics in individual member states? Can we speak of the emergence of a coherent set of EU-wide practices, routines, structures and procedures for organizing intra-EU diplomacy? In short, is there a single intra-EU mode of diplomacy emerging, or a multitude of modes?

Finally, since diplomacy can be conceived of as a key institution of the modern state order externally constitutive of states as units of political organization (Watson 1982, Der Derian 1987, Held et al. 1999, Bátora 2005), the third set of questions is at a more abstract level and concerns the implications of the intra-EU change dynamics in diplomacy for the emergence of a European polity: What do the changes in the way diplomacy

is organized and conducted within the EU tell us about the member states as sovereign units of political organization? What do these change dynamics tell us about the EU as an emerging polity? Does the EU remain a collection of states or do the emergent patterns of intra-EU diplomacy indicate that some form of European statehood might be in the making?

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined a view of the EU as an interstitial order between intra-state spheres of member states governed by the principles of democracy and the inter-state sphere informed by the principles of diplomacy. Due to this character of the emerging European polity, the role of bilateral diplomacy inside the EU (among the member states) has been challenged. The nature of the challenge and the emerging change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy have not been analysed in any extensive way so far. Assessments that are available were usually part of larger studies focusing on broader trends of change in the EU or in diplomacy. Hence, although contributions in the academic literature and the reports by foreign ministries indicate that there is a growing sense of differences between the way diplomacy is conducted inside the EU as opposed to outside the EU, virtually no comprehensive study has focused specifically on the change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy so far. Although, as noted above, the Paschke report (2000) is an exception here, it remains a practitioner's view focusing strictly on the changes in the intra-EU embassies of one member state. There is a need for academic analyses covering a broader spectre of member states' diplomatic services, in which more general patterns of change in intra-EU diplomacy could be analysed.

In an attempt to provide a first step in this direction, the current paper has pointed to some of the conceptual puzzles that the emerging intra-EU diplomacy represents and identified some of the core research questions that a comprehensive investigation of the change dynamics would need to address. More needs to be done in terms of suggesting proper methodological tools and the choice of cases for an investigation of this kind.[16]

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[16] In an extended version of the current paper, Bátora (2006) provides a research framework including a set of hypotheses on the change dynamics in intra-EU diplomacy and suggestions of cases to be investigated.

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The Home Front

Diplomatic Dealings with Politicians

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OVERCOMING HURDLES IN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION

THE SIMPLE THEORY OF LINEAR DIPLOMACY WOULD ASSUME THAT THE diplomat is selfless and carries out his master's bidding in conveying a message or makes representations to another country's diplomat or foreign minister. There was a time when nothing else but this was expected. Instructions were to be implemented faithfully without ever interposing any interpretation, nuance, or—woe betide the diplomat—any reservations. Above all, no initiative was to be taken without prior clearance.

The real picture was and still is of course much more complex. The diplomat is constrained by bias or filters, foreign and local, deviating, disturbing, and sometimes even distorting the diplomatic process, which if pressed in the extreme, would leave the diplomat with the sole option of resignation from the foreign service.

Moreover, and in contrast to the fully-fledged diplomatic relationship, when one political sovereign met another, when a diplomat dealt with a political sovereign he operated under a severe handicap in managing a profoundly asymmetrical relationship, a handicap which could be overcome with diplomatic tact.

Whilst the PMs/FMs could decide both on strategy as well as tactics, e.g. to soften their approach, deviate from the subject matter, introduce other matters to enlarge the scope of the discussion the diplomat had to stick to his remit within a much more restricted area of manoeuvre, namely within the instructions given within an established foreign policy.

While the PMs/FMs could decide that it would be unwise to press for results there and then, the diplomat who had been specifically instructed to bring back results had to find ways and means of achieving this end with only the slightest of exceptions tolerated. So the diplomat must learn how to dance with the wolves, by generating a sufficient degree of trust without having much or hardly anything to give in return.

Modern complexities such as track-two diplomacy[1] and public diplomacy[2] operate as an additional constraint on the ordinary diplomat not only in his dealings with foreign diplomats and politicians, but also with his own headquarter's diplomats and politicians.

FILTERS

Even in normal dealings between diplomats from different countries, a number of 'filters' tend to operate to distort the diplomatic flow. Whether these 'filters' are conscious or just stemming from the unconscious, formal or informal, willed or habitual is a highly debatable theme which will not be entered into here. From a pragmatic perspective, the most important point to be made here is whether they can be avoided before harm is done to the diplomatic process.

Let us start with the 'foreign filters' and take the case of a diplomat who has served for too long a period of time in a foreign country. He inevitably becomes tainted by some of the customs and even by the ways of thinking of that country's diplomats with whom he is dealing regularly. But it is when he starts seeing so much more sense in their position, which he sees through these newly-acquired 'foreign filters' rather than in his own country's position, so much so as to affect his own performance, that he starts posing a threat to the diplomatic flow and process as a whole.

Whether or not it can be justifiably held that the other country's position is more sensible than the position of our diplomat's country is another matter. This diplomat will be seen as having turned, become

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[1] 'Stepping Out of the Tracks: Cooperation Between Official Diplomats and Private Facilitators', paper presented by Andrea Strimling, at the International Studies Association Conference, San Diego, March 2006.

[2] 'The Disintermediation of Diplomatic Communication: Propaganda, Lobbying, and Public Diplomacy', Christopher Young, Rutgers University, Newark, Anthony Deos, University of Kent at Brussels, Geoffrey Allen Pigman, Bennington College; International Studies Association, San Diego, March 2006.

tainted or overinfluenced, or having got too close to or even succumbed to the other country's mindset to such an extent that he adopts that 'foreign filter' on his remit. He would thus not be able to implement his instructions faithfully, causing 'distribution losses' in the diplomatic grid if not diplomatic gridlock! Removing him from that posting would become essential.

If this were a case of 'going soft' or becoming overawed by the other country's achievements so much so as to defer more easily to their diplomats' persuasiveness, adopting the 'foreign filter' would come out easily in the wash of official inspections or internal auditing of our diplomat's performance.

If this were the case for our diplomat and perhaps also for some member/s of his family who had been so well looked after by the receiving state as to feel compelled to see more sense in their advocacy whilst keeping quiet about it, then inspections are of no avail and it is only the normal time limit of three years which can save the diplomatic flow, hopefully before any damage ensues.

If, instead of the other country's diplomat, it is the other country's politician or even the PM or FM himself who takes our diplomat under his wing, offering him more immediate 'access' than other diplomats enjoyed—a 'nugget' which our diplomat tries to sell back home as highly significant—then if it is decided to 'buy' this nugget and keep him there, there is a corresponding risk of our diplomat having to operate in an even more non-level playing field than where the normal asymmetries apply to diplomatic dealings with politicians.

While this narrative focused on a bilateral relationship, the same applies to a diplomatic posting with a multilateral organization. The persuasive nature of the plethora of international norms advocated by international secretariats and the experts at international organizations can so convince and 'turn' our diplomat that he himself would start advocating them with Headquarters and indeed with the politicians back home instead of (or more than) advancing his own country's interests at the International Organization. That a new posting follows should not be too surprising in this case.

The effects of these 'foreign filters' can be quite different and not necessarily as obtrusive and startling as suggested. Our diplomat could just go slow on some instructions, whether consciously or even unconsciously, when judging that their implementation would uselessly irritate

the sensitivities he (and only he!) has discovered in the receiving country or organization.

Or he could also additionally start expressing his own views on the subject matter, again, whether consciously or unconsciously, to retain his own credibility. Whether and when the receiving country or organization is in a position to distinguish which part of his representations is personal and which is official is another source of 'distribution losses' in the diplomatic grid, sometimes leading to grid lock.

FLOWS

The hierarchical structure of a foreign service determines the flow of instructions downwards whilst allowing for reporting on their implementation upwards. It allows less space and time for initiatives to flow upwards for comment and/or clearance. It allows even less space and time for initiatives to be taken in diplomatic exchanges.

However for a smaller group of diplomats who operate in the main area of focus of the Foreign Minister's agenda there is usually a greater flow of ideas between diplomat and politician.

In contrast to the distorting effects exerted on our diplomat posted abroad by the prevailing influences over there such as to 'turn' him to their side and see things through their 'foreign filters', 'distribution losses' can be generated from the very start of the diplomatic process, that is even before coming into contact with the receiving country, at Headquarters itself due to 'local filters'.

Local Filters

Let us consider the distorting effect of 'local filters' to the diplomatic process. An interesting perspective on this is from what Sir Harold Nicolson had termed as the seventh great virtue of the ideal diplomatist, loyalty, coming after truth, accuracy, calm, patience, good temper, and modesty. Loyalty however was not in the singular, 'The professional diplomatist is governed by several different, and at times conflicting, loyalties.'[3]

According to Nicholson, for the diplomat accredited to a foreign capital, these include:—

[3] Nicolson, Sir Harold. *Diplomacy*, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy Edition. Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press, 1988.

1. Loyalty to his own sovereign, government, minister and foreign office;
2. Loyalty to his own staff;
3. Loyalty, or a form of it, to the diplomatic body in the capital where he resides;
4. Loyalty to the sending state's citizens in the receiving state and to their commercial interests;
5. Loyalty to the sending state's commercial interests;
6. Loyalty, or a form of it, to the government to which he is accredited;
7. Loyalty, or a form of it, to the minister with whom he negotiates.

In order to overcome these occasionally conflicting loyalties Nicolson suggests the simple answer of 'loyalty above all to the government whom [the diplomat] serves'. This goes a long way to confirm a much older and similar expression from Renaissance Diplomacy by Ermolo Barbaro, the Venetian Ambassador to Rome in 1490, who called the first duty of an ambassador 'to do, say, advise and think whatever may best serve the preservation and aggrandizement of his own state'.[4] That this traditional belief is still dominant and upheld by the classical realist Hans Morgenthau is no surprise. In his essay, 'The Moral Blindness of Man'[5] he argues thus: 'What a man would not be allowed to do for himself, that is, on behalf of his own limited interests as the ends of his action, he is allowed and even obliged to do when his act would further the welfare the state and thus promote the common good.'

So, 'raison d'état' rules, OK. Or does it not? Michael Howard had argued perhaps too cleverly that individual ethics and state interests are not incompatible. They could be examined on a two dimensional field where one co-ordinate depicted individual ethics from 0 to +10 and from 0 to −10 whilst the other co-ordinate showed state interests. Thus, he explains, movement along either co-ordinate does not effect movement along the other co-ordinate. Moving toward a state's best interest does not mean moving away from individual ethics, any more than moving toward greater morality increases a state's ability to realize its interests.[6] The obvious faults here are first that this suggests that morally questionable

[4] Ermolo Barbaro quoted in Mattingly, Garrett. *Renaissance Diplomacy*. London, Jonathan Cape, 1962.

[5] Hans J. Morgenthau, 'The Moral Blindness of Scientific Man'. *International Politics*, 4th Edition, Robert C. Art and Robert Jervis (eds), New York, HarperCollins, 1996.

[6] Howard Michael, 'Ethics and Power in International Policy', *International Affairs*, July 1977, p. 364.

behavior should be acceptable even when it contradicts state interests, and second that it leaves out the many other dimensions 'filters' constraining diplomatic behavior identified here.

The point then is not whether 'raison d'état' rules or not but whether we can generate a useful teaching tool from dissecting diplomatic behavior for lessons to be learned. This is why the local and foreign 'filters' identified here from amongst the myriad of filters or loyalties can be useful. This can be especially so if applied to the functions of the diplomat as listed in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961.[7]

Other loyalties potentially adding even more potential conflicts arise due to the diplomat's inherent 'local filters' including conscience,[8] ethics,[9] religion,[10] family, tribe, commercial[11] and cultural sensitivities.

If the above list had to be characterized as negative[12] 'local filters' as disturbing or even distorting the diplomatic process, there are in contrast two great positive 'local' factors earned from avoiding 'self-satisfaction' which is strongly advised by Nicolson as it could lead first to a loss of 'adaptability' and second to a decline in 'imagination'.

Thus 'adaptability' and 'imagination' are identified as what the diplomat can profitably resort to in his unequal and even asymmetrical relationship with the Politician.

[7] www.un.int/usa/host_dip.htm.

[8] See Abba Eban, *Interest and Conscience in Modern Diplomacy*, Fourth Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Morality and Foreign Policy, 1985.

[9] *Ethics and Diplomacy: Contradiction in Terms?* by Sir Michael Palliser on Wednesday, 24 May 2000.

[10] *The Role of Religion in Peacemaking**, State of the Art Paper, Kristian Berg Harpviken and Hanne Eggen Røislien, For the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2005.

* This state of the art paper is written for the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the project.

'Mapping the Terrain: The Role of Religion in Diplomacy and Peacemaking'. The main component of the project was a conference, under the same title, held in Oslo 7–9 February 2005. The authors are grateful for comments on an earlier draft from Trond Bakkevig and Stein Tønnesson.

[11] See Ethics and Commercial Diplomacy, Chapter 20 available at www.commercialdiplomacy.org/manuals/manual_busgov9.htm.

[12] Current negotiating strategy teaching at the Harvard Business School similarly seeks the ability to overcome six common mistakes, according to professor James K. Sebenius. 'Six Habits of Merely Effective Negotiators,' *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 79, no. 4, April 2001.

He cites De Callières[13] who had recommended:—

'It is essential that a negotiator should be able to divest himself of his own opinion in order to place himself in the position of the Prince with whom he is negotiating. He should be able, that is, to adopt the other's personality, and to enter into his views and inclinations. And he should thus say to himself—"If I were in the place of that Prince, endowed with equal power, governed by identical prejudices and passions, what effect would my own Representations make upon myself?"'

Although the treatise goes on to condone the judicious use of flattery and even bribery, it warns against trickery as prejudicial to the confidence that an envoy must inspire.

It might be useful to assess here the major diplomatic meeting immediately after the end of the Cold War from this perspective of a diplomat dealing with a politician on war and peace, if not on the 'New World Order'. US Ambassador April Glaspie met Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on the 23rd of July, 1990. Difficult as it is to discern which of the two versions[14] of that meeting as available is true, they are both relevant

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[13] '*On the manner of negotiation with Princes; on the uses of diplomacy; the choice of ministers and envoys; and the personal qualities necessary for success in missions abroad*' 1716 Treatise, François de Callières, University Press of America 1993. An over-modern introduction has entitled it as *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes: From Sovereigns to CEOs, Envoys to Executives* by François de Callières, Charles Handy.

[14] Two unofficial versions are available on the following two web pages, there are quotations here of the relevant words. There are significant differences between the two versions: www.whatreallyhappened.com/ARTICLE5/april.html.

Saddam Hussein—As you know, for years now I have made every effort to reach a settlement on our dispute with Kuwait. There is to be a meeting in two days; I am prepared to give negotiations only this one more brief chance (pause). When we (the Iraqis) meet (with the Kuwaitis) and we see there is hope, then nothing will happen. But if we are unable to find a solution, then it will be natural that Iraq will not accept death.

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie—What solutions would be acceptable? Saddam Hussein— If we could keep the whole of the Shatt al Arab—our strategic goal in our war with Iran—we will make concessions (to the Kuwaitis). But, if we are forced to choose between keeping half of the Shatt and the whole of Iraq (i.e., in Saddam's view, including Kuwait) then we will give up all of the Shatt to defend our claims on Kuwait to keep the whole of Iraq in the shape we wish it to be (pause). What is the United States' opinion on this?

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie—We have no opinion on your Arab–Arab conflicts, such as your dispute with Kuwait. Secretary (of State James) Baker has directed me to emphasize the instruction, first given to Iraq in the 1960s, that the Kuwait issue is not associated with America (Saddam smiles).

especially in the common parts. On 2 August 1990, four days later, Saddam amassed troops to invade and occupy Kuwait. Only time will tell whether and to what extent Ambassador Glaspie lured the President to believe that no reaction whatsoever would be forthcoming from the USA if he invaded Kuwait—the whole of Kuwait.

Multilateral diplomacy then saw the highest level of diplomatic exchanges since the end of the Cold War during the consequential eight weeks leading to the 8 November 2002, passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441 offering Iraq 'a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations' that had been set out in several previous resolutions (Resolutions 660, 661, 678, 686, 687, 688, 707, 715, 986, and 1284), notably to provide 'an accurate full, final, and complete disclosure, as required by Resolution 687 (1991), of all aspects of its programs to develop weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles'.

UNSC 1441 threatened 'serious consequences' if these were not met and reasserted demands that UN weapons inspectors that were to report back to the UN Security Council after their inspection should have 'immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access' to sites of their choosing, in order to ascertain compliance. Significantly, the Resolution stated that the UN Security Council shall 'remain seized of the matter'.

Nevertheless, strong diplomatic opposition to a Second Resolution was shown by a number of members at the Ministerial Council session of the UN Security Council. This was specially convened on 7 March 2003[15] as if to emphasize the political importance they were raising the diplomatic process up to from an ordinary meeting of the UNSC. This

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www.chss.montclair.edu/english/furr/glaspie.html, *The New York Times International*, Sunday, 23 September 1990.

Glaspie—I think I understand this. I have lived here for years. I admire your extraordinary efforts to rebuild your country. I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. But we have no opinion on the Arab–Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait. I was in the American Embassy in Kuwait during the late 60s. The instruction we had during this period was that we should express no opinion on this issue and that the issue is not associated with America. James Baker has directed our official spokesmen to emphasize this instruction. We hope you can solve this problem using any suitable methods via Klibi or via President Mubarak. All that we hope is that these issues are solved quickly. With regard to all of this, can I ask you to see how the issue appears to us?

[15] 'Several Security Council members call for more inspections in Iraq', UN New Centre. www.un.org/apps/news/storyAr.asp?NewsID=6387&Cr=iraq&Cr1=inspect.

opposition was particularly evident by veto holding Foreign Ministers of France, Russia, and China.

They prevented the passage of the Second Resolution authorizing the use of force. The attempt of the United Kingdom and the United States to obtain a further Resolution legitimizing/authorizing the use of force failed. They withdrew the Second Resolution. Thus, the U.S.-led invasion began without the express approval of the United Nations Security Council, and most legal authorities regard it as a violation of the UN Charter.

Several countries protested. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in September 2004, 'From our point of view and the UN Charter point of view, it was illegal.' Proponents of the war claim that the invasion had implicit approval of the Security Council and was therefore not in violation of the UN Charter. Nevertheless, this position taken by the Bush administration and its supporters, has been and still is being disputed by numerous legal experts. According to most members of the Security Council, it is up to the council itself, and not individual members, to determine how the body's resolutions are to be enforced. Despite the discovery of some potential components of WMD manufacturing, no actual weapons of mass destruction were found.

At the limit of not reconciling his conflicting loyalties, the dissenting diplomat is left with no choice but to resign. Resignations could be either due to conscience, ethics, party political loyalties, or the better governance of the state? Or due to loyalties to 'higher' principles? And if the diplomat really wanted to put his boot in and not just get out of the irreconciliable situation, he could not only be acutely aware that a resignation was giving a political advantage to the other side, but willfully carry it out, admittedly at a high cost to career and family. The resignation letters[16] of three US diplomats in connection with the Iraq war make interesting reading and beckon further analysis of how these could not be contained and broke through the diplomatic net.

MICRO/MACRO

What has been considered up to now have been the micro aspects of diplomacy. The macro aspects of diplomatic dealings with politicians

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[16] www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=25342&printerfriendlyVers=1&.

will be examined here of which the major determinant is the power of ideas, unless one cynically goes for the Defense lobby as holding the trump card.

The subject of 'Diplomatic dealings with politicians' is of course not limited to diplomats dealing with politicians but, especially at the macro level of the paradigm setting of ideas, also of thinktank strategists and academics having diplomatic dealings with politicians. Which way the flow of influence went in particular moments in time in particular countries, between on the one hand intellectuals and experts, and politicians on the other, is a most interesting relationship begging to be analysed at greater depth.

Following the end of WWII in the US hardly any diplomat could be held to have had a determining effect on politicians.[17] In essence most of these used their models and equations to please their political masters—be it with theories of containment, deterrence, limited war or flexible response except perhaps for PNAC[18] in the mid 1990s, unless this is deemed to have been a fierce reiteration of the earlier position of the Department of Defense immediately after the end of the Cold War[19] by also introducing geopolitical specifics which were bizarrely followed to the letter by 'blinded' politicians in 2003.

Perhaps the most impressive case of internal diplomatic dealings with politicians although not directly at first was that of George Kennan. But even Kennan, who as a diplomat helped craft the strategy of containment with his famous long telegram from Moscow to Headquarters in 1945[20]

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[17] Bruce Kuklick, *Blind Oracles: Intellectuals and War from Kennan to Kissinger*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006.

[18] 'The only acceptable strategy is one that eliminates the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction. In the near term, this means a willingness to undertake military action as diplomacy is clearly failing.'— Letter from PNAC principals to President Bill Clinton, reprinted in the *Washington Times*, 27 January 1998.

[19] See also, 'The Generals' Diplomacy: U.S. Military Influence in the Treaty Process, 1992–2000', by Karl K. Schonberg in *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Winter/Spring 2002.

[20] In February 1946 the US Moscow embassy got a question from the United States Treasury asking why the Soviets were not supporting the newly created World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In response, Kennan wrote his long telegram outlining his views of the Soviets, which arrived in Washington on 22 February 1946.

and by its publication anonymously as X's article 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct' in *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947, saw his influence wane quickly after.

RAND staffers who were 'scientifically oriented' developed concepts such as game theory and organizational behavior to guide strategic thinking, which had carried little weight with President Eisenhower who had an aversion to abstract theorization. Even the Air Force at that time generally ignored the RAND staffers' suggestions, unless they justified requests for military budget increases. But intellectuals came into their own with President Kennedy who brought in the 'brain trust' (later the Kennedy School of Government) to manage the Cuban Missile crisis and later took America to war under President Lyndon Johnson.

There is hardly time here to examine to what extent 'graduated escalation' constituted the sound advice boasted of by academics in proferring it to the polticians during the Cuban Missile crisis and as re-interpreted afterwards. That the formula of 'graduated escalation' was applied again in Vietnam in starkly different circumstances is a telling lesson on the limits of analogy. Treating the Vietnam war as an 'applied social science experiment' is an appalling example of how correct academic thinking in one field does not easily travel to another and so can be grossly abused by politicians in practice.

That Kissinger sought to diminish the role of ideology so that President Nixon could better manage the great power relationships (by analogy with Kissinger's studies of 19th-century Europe) and extract himself from the Vietnam war, only came into its own when America had to recognize that it had no choice but to leave Indochina. This is also telling in delineating the limits of academic influence on politicians.

All this shows that scholars advising governments have been inevitably seduced by politics. Scholars in thinktanks like RAND and the Kennedy School of Government had found it difficult to criticize their benefactors and many of their theories served merely as justifications or as scapegoats. In contrast, today the strong and unified opposition by American political scientists to the Iraq war is remarkable both as a rejection by politicians

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Among its most remembered parts was that while Soviet power was 'impervious to the logic of reason', it was 'highly sensitive to the logic of force'.

of 'expert' advice as well as proving intellectuals to be wholly ineffectual in their diplomatic dealings with the wider political arena.

Didactic Exercises via Simulations of Diplomatic exchanges.

SIMPLE TELEPHONE GAMES

A. Diplomatic instructions and or Politician's messages/signaling not being understood clearly enough or even misunderstood due to:
1. losses along the bureaucratic conveyor belt
2. 'filters' local and foreign
3. posturing and masking
4. red herrings and other distractions.

ADVANCED TELEPHONE GAMES

B. Diplomatic Exchanges between diplomats and diplomats, as well as those between diplomats and politicians, not being understood clearly enough or even misunderstood partially or entirely, especially when reported upon due to:
1. attention gaps
2. nuances
3. pre-set concepts and/or mental agendas
4. lack of understanding of wider context
5. lack of understanding of public diplomacy
6. ignorance of track two channel on related themes if not altogether on the very same themes
7. triumphalist reporting.

Russian MFA
Facing the Regionalization Process

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IN RECENT TIMES, WE HAVE OBSERVED THAT THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMATIC SERVICE is facing new challenges coming from its provinces and regions. The phenomenon is not just restricted to Russia. An extraordinary increase of regional challenges is disturbing the general architecture of world politics. In this regard I think that both the comparative analysis of changes and mutual learning of different diplomatic experiences and regional challenges are important.

One can see each separate region face new challenges in its own way. On the one hand there is a common understanding of local institutions as a starting point for democratic transit, providing citizens with rights in state affairs. On the other hand, lots of regions depend on national, cultural, historical, geopolitical, legal, social, and economic specifics.

At the same time, the changes that they have to deal with give the impression of being very complex. The mobility of capital, manpower, goods, and cultural values escape government control because of a greater transparency of borders. The new challenges of organized crime, drug dealing, and terrorism are a constant threat.

Not only at the state level, but also at a level of integrated communities, it becomes even harder to confront the shocks provided by transnational or multinational corporations. Quite often, their power goes beyond that of governments, where their activities are taking place. New international economic, trading, and financial groups are operating in world and European markets. They aspire to overcome protectionist

barriers proceeding directly, and preferably uncontrolled, to local consumer markets.

In this climate, we observe economic crises and unemployment growing in more countries. A critical situation is causing more centrifugal tendencies and generating hopes that a local government can respond better to citizens' calls, which can be helpful in prevailing over a crisis. Some particular circumstances generate separatist moods that sometimes deteriorate into armed clashes and hostilities.

This new geopolitical dimension with its sub-national and frontiers' challenges heavily influences the same idea of state sovereignty. So regions are getting a much greater importance than ever before. The champions of local and regional teams are filling up the ranks of new actors in diplomacy and trying to achieve a certain position in the realm of international relations.

Democratic transition has distorted Russia's state agenda. In the domain of international affairs, Russia has also to deal with such new topics as regional policy and the relationship between the central authority and the subjects of Federation. The regional drift continues while the regional understanding of foreign relations and trade is expanding.

The subjects of the Russian Federation are taking part in projects promoting trans-frontier regional agreements. Legally their *modus operandi* has been developed within the guidelines of the international policy of Russia and conceived as a particular branch of international and foreign economic relations.

At present, as many as 82 subjects of the Russian Federation are closely in touch with their partners in 77 countries, and 74 regional missions have been opened abroad.[1]

For example, the republic of Tatarstan has on its account 68 international agreements with foreign partners while 43 of that number are so-called 'transverse' international deals, that is, in close contact with the central government of a foreign country. The republic of Tatarstan has 23 diplomatic missions abroad; they promote business relations, organize commercial exhibitions and promote cultural events. The missions are called 'plenipotentiary representation' (for example, in the Russian Federation, French Republic, Australia), 'permanent representation' (in

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[1] Mezdunarodnye svjazi subjektov Rossijskoj Federazii. Hanty-Mansijsk, 20–1, April 2006.

the USA, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, in the Sverdlovsk region, in the city of St. Petersburg, in Czech and Slovak Republics), and 'trade representation' in Ukraine and so on.[2]

The Russian State Council meetings emphasized the enormous potential of Russian regions. The regions have been engaged in the elaboration and implementation of Russian foreign policy strategy. President Putin insisted on his purpose to render the regional international policy more constant and systematic. Particular attention has been paid to the protection of the rights of Russian citizens abroad. In this field, the regions are expected to play a most active role. In their policy towards the Russian citizens abroad, some regions are supposed to concentrate their attention on socio-economic aspects, others on cultural identity or on migrants' adaptation.

The regional activity in the international scene is based on specific legal items brought into play for this purpose. First of all, there are constitutional norms to observe; secondly, federal laws, decrees of the President of the Russian Federation, and the Government official documents; thirdly, constitutions, charters, laws, and other official documents produced by regional governments; fourthly, there are international legal acts. In the field of international relations and international exchange, the Russian Constitution establishes a threefold level of authority:

1. The Russian Federation (RF) exercises its jurisdiction in the field of foreign policy, international relations of the RF, foreign economic relations of the RF, and international treaties.
2. The joint jurisdiction of the RF and the subjects includes a coordination of international and foreign economic relations of the subjects of the RF, the fulfillment of international treaties and agreements of the RF.
3. Outside the limits of authority and powers of the Russian Federation on issues under joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and the subjects of the Russian Federation, the subjects of the Russian Federation shall possess full-state authority.

The co-existence of various powers of the Federal and local governments means the harmonization of those. In a majority of federative states, local governments' external relations are a Federal responsibility. However the Russian diplomatic service considers the harmonization of powers as its main task for balancing Federal and local foreign relations.

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[2] Website: lng.tatar-inform.ru.

That is why in Russia's case more complex harmonizing mechanisms are needed as compared to other federative states.

For this purpose, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, a special Department has been created for communicating with the regions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (following the tradition of the Russian Empire and that of the Soviet Union) has its own supervisors placed in the most important urban centers. At present the MFA has on agenda a proposal to introduce supervisors that should be placed alongside all regional governors.

The set of Regulations regarding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (14 March 1995) provides special functions for coordinating the international ties of local governments. For instance the MFA Regulation says a lot on gathering documents, information and other knowledge provided by local governments and sent for consideration to the MFA.

At the suggestion of the MFA, a special Consultative Board for the subjects of federation has been set up. This CB deals with foreign economic exchange and is developing strategic and tactical planning at the regional level within the general guidelines of Russian foreign policy. The CB gives advice and expertise and presents documents, regulating this particular field of activity, generalizing positive local experience. It also publishes a newsletter portraying regional international activities.

Recently on president Putin's initiative, a new Council, headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which brings together regional government leaders, has been set up for the same purpose.

At the same time, it is enough to take a glance at the local governments' behavior in the field of external activities to understand that there is a significant number of unresolved legal problems. Actually the problems deal with regional claims for sovereignty. I think that in many respects the problem is rooted in our recent history.

As a matter of fact all Soviet constitutions, since 1918, have been declaring the sovereignty of republics within the USSR. It was a logical consequence for the Soviet State to get rid of its czarist heritage and provide support to national minorities. In that way all USSR republics were formally granted rights of international activity and, accordingly, were authorized to have their own Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

The Russian Federation is, along with the former Soviet Union, a multinational state and has got a Constitution that in many ways is a

carbon copy of the Soviet one. As a rule, lawyers classify it as a 'dissymmetric federation' for there is an unequal distribution of power and authorities between more than eighty autonomies (republics, territories, regions, autonomous areas, autonomous regions, and cities with special status) called subjects by the Russian Constitution.

In 1992, with the demise of the USSR, in order to prevent the subsequent disintegration of Russia, a large number of so-called autonomies concluded between them a Federal Pact. Yeltsin, the Russian president of the time, declared: 'Take as much sovereignty as you can swallow.' These tactics provided Mr Yeltsin the major support of regional (mostly national minority) elites that by the time had taken over all local power in the Russian Federation. The governments of autonomous republics and other subjects, then with greater freedom of action, moved through the regional parliaments their own local constitutions and charters.

A large, oil-extracting republic such as Tatarstan proclaimed as follows: 'The Republic of Tatarstan is a sovereign state and a subject of international law, associated with the Russian Federation in terms of agreement on mutual designation of powers and matter of competence.' And it follows: 'Being a subject of international law, Tatarstan takes part in international relations as regards economic, political, ideological, legal, diplomatic, military, and other relations between sovereign states.' A new Department for external relations, has been set up, supervised by the local President that coordinates foreign relations. This Department is also coordinating the activity of all permanent Tatarstan missions in foreign countries and international organizations, as well as in various autonomies of the Russian Federation.

Many other subjects included a declaration of sovereign international actions in their statutable documents. The constitution of Kareliya (para. 1) said that Kareliya within the powers provided by the Russian Federation Constitution and the Federal Pact is a sovereign state as regards its foreign policy. It is also an independent member of international and economic relations in case it does not disagree with the Federal Constitution.

The Charter of the Orenburg region (para. 28) recognized all conventional norms and principles of international law ratified by the RF government as a part of regional law. Many other regions consider themselves as independent partakers of international and economic relations within the limits of their competences.

In many Russian Federation subjects, new Departments of Foreign Affairs have sprung up. They established abroad their own missions, sometimes pretending to be embassies.

According to Mr Dubinin, former Russian ambassador in Ukraine, some Russian regional representatives in Kiev asked for the opening of regular embassies (with rights of issuing visas, gathering political information, etc.). The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which self-proclaimed ambassadors addressed for official recognition, requested a corresponding note from the Russian Ministry.

No competent department of the MFA was able to formulate any reply as to a legal base for such a request. In the end the Ukrainian lawyers resolved the problem, reaffirming that regional missions couldn't apply for a level above the usual trade mission.[3]

The same method of working was taken up in Latvia. A representative for a Russian region was taken aboard in the embassy of the Russian Federation as an expert for relations with local governments; the region he had come from paid him a salary.

One should remember that in 1993, a year after the Federal Pact, a new Constitution adopted in Russia turned out to be at variance with the Federal Pact and some regional regulations.

To remedy the collision, the Russian Parliament passed a certain number of acts. The major lawmaking act in this camp is the Russian Federal Law (1999) that has given guidelines for coordinating international and economic relations of regional governments. This law assigns Russian regions rights and competences in international relations. It gives them the right to negotiate and sign agreements. At the same time, it emphasizes their responsibility to harmonize their international cooperation projects together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The law contains some formalities that should be observed locally and endows federal bodies with coordinating tasks.

New regulations for regional missions sent abroad, and patterns of their behavior, while facing foreign partners, have been introduced quite recently. For example, international agreements are supposed to have legal value only in case the local government is competent to sign such agreements. However every international covenant named 'agreement' is due to pass through bureaucratic grids of the Federal Ministry of Justice.

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[3] In my own records.

As a rule, it is long enough practice; therefore regions prefer to strike their bargains, disguising the names of their deals, for example, calling 'protocol on cooperation' that which is obviously an agreement.

The subjects' constitutions and charters along with federal acts also supervise local governments' activity in the field of international and economic relations. As a rule, they outline that in many cases the final decision of local government involvement in international agreements is a competence of the central government.[4]

The Russian Constitutional Court decision (2001) says that the Federal Pact provisions cannot be activated, and are of no relevance to the case, where they grant state sovereignty to the autonomous regions for it handicaps the sovereignty of the Russian Federation. This decision constrained some regional governments to cancel out many statutory acts or—if it were the case—to bring them to conformity with the Russian federal legislation. In May 2006 Tatarstan presented a new agreement on the distribution of powers between the republic and the federal center.

Quite recently, however, Mr Gryzloff, Speaker of Parliament, once more lamented that some regions in their bargaining with the federal center had been transformed to a kind of governors' individual resource.[5] I suppose time will have passed by the day the relations between federal and regional powers become unambiguous.

We have examined a particular aspect of a very complex problem relating to the further development of Russian federalism. Russian politicians and researchers have different views on this issue. President Putin set a task to consolidate the so-called 'vertical line of power'. On the one hand, his plan aimed at putting subjects' leaders and regional politics under stricter federal central control, on the other hand it had as its object the avoidance of excessive centralization. The central power also proclaimed its intention to reduce an excessive number of subjects and to start the processes of its consolidation.

As some legal experts suppose, the present federal system badly corresponds with the territorial division of industries as long as the industries are subjected to federal ministries, and have quite an independent policy vis-à-vis the local powers. Some of these experts bring

[4] See V.L. Tolstyh. Mezdunarodnaja dejatelnost subiektov RF. Tomsk, 2002.
[5] The address delivered to the 2nd Congress of the party 'Edinaja Rossija', 27 October 2001.

up for discussion projects of very large regional unities such as 'Far East Region', 'Great Volga Region', and 'Siberia Region' with the purpose to further transform all of them into republics.

Certainly centralization trends are rather comfortable with the Soviet Union's unitary tradition of governance. The only clear distinction was that Soviet federalism was based on ideological cramps, the leading role of the communist party, the powerful repressive state machinery, and last but not least, very cheap energy. Russia today lacks all this components. Attempts to elaborate a common ideology in the guise of a 'national idea' project still haven't achieved any results. Democratic state building isn't supposed to have only one predominant party or repressive tools of governance.

At the same time the local elites are not likely to remain passive in front of center attempts aimed at a tougher control of the subjects' activity. It is common knowledge that the nationalistic mood within each SU republic became one of deciding factors of the Soviet system's demise. The new Russian leadership, to a considerable degree, put its stakes on such thinking and consequently became hostage to local, primarily national elites. Nowadays the central authorities can hardly ignore the present-day reality marked by an exacerbation of nationalistic and localistic manifestations fraught with serious conflicts.

In my opinion, the only way to resolve all these problems is to further perfect the federal structure. First of all, the matter involves an effective juridical base, regulating relations between the center and its regions. Developing a democratic legal system can help to find a solution to Russia's eternal problem when laws are substituted with the governance of bureaucracy, whose unlimited power not only in the center but also in the provinces represents great obstacles for whatever initiatives. Suffice it to say that paradoxically, Russia has almost tripled the number of its state offices in comparison with those of the incomparably greater, as compared to territory and population, Soviet Union.

An efficient regional foreign policy also greatly depends on a modern legal system. In this context, recent records of cooperation between the Council of Europe (CE) and the Russian Federation are more encouraging. Projects and programs managed by the MFA of Russia together with the CE enable both the federal structures and local governments to learn from European experience of state building, inter-regional and frontier cooperation, including the knowledge of European scholars. In my opinion,

it is very important to gradually introduce a well-known European principle of subsidiarity for a successful implementation of Russian federalism.[6] I think it is also worth studying the European legislative base for regionalism concerning budgetary federalism and the division of competences between different echelons of power.

The experience shows that in a few years, several CE programs have provided guidance for almost 80 subjects of the Russian Federation. These programs helped the subjects fine tune themselves for a steady dialogue on the agenda of federalism with their European colleagues. Within the guidelines of the CE Congress of local and regional authorities, coordinating efforts are also worth considering as soon as we discuss the Russian regional government missions abroad.

Another important two-year program called 'Institutional, legal and economic federalism in Russia' is being implemented within the Cooperation Program between the European Union and the Russian Federation. Its primary aim is to further the development of legal basements of federal relations.[7]

Such cooperation is of value whilst we observe an escalation of regional conflicts, mounting corruption, organized crime, and terrorism. It goes without saying that no automatic imitation of a European experience is supposed. For example, it is common knowledge that in the field of international politics, even in Europe, the problem of a growing bureaucratic apparatus and a doubling of regional and bilateral representations to the European Union is extremely critical. A common study of both the positive and the negative experiences of federalism and regional politics should be able to deliver fruitful results.

[6] See Tatiana V. Zonova. Ot Evropy gosudarstv k Evrope regionov? // *Political Studies Journal*, no. 5, 1999.

[7] Institute of Law and Public Policy, www.ilpp.ru.

The case of Flanders (1993–2005)
How subnational entities develop their own 'paradiplomacy'

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INTRODUCTION

DIPLOMACY IS NO LONGER THE PRIVILEGE OF NATION STATES. SINCE 1945, international politics have become much more complex. Gradually, new non-state actors have entered the international scene (for an overview, see: Arts, Noortmann and Reinalda 2001). Some of these non-state actors are of a non-territorial nature; for instance non-governmental organizations or multinational corporations. Others have a territorial nature (e.g. 'micro-regions' such as Québec and Catalonia or 'macro-regions' such as the European Union and Mercosur). One can also observe that cities such as London and New York seem to feel the urge to enter the international or diplomatic scene themselves, so as to better defend their own interests in a complex and ever more interdependent world. For the scholar, these trends offer a myriad of opportunities to delve into. One of the first scholars who tried to come up with a name or label to 'identify' this assembly of rather diverse forms of non-state diplomacy, is Panayotis Soldatos (Montréal) (Soldatos 1990; Soldatos 1993). He coined for the first time the term 'paradiplomacy', an abbreviation of 'parallel diplomacy'. One could define this as *the foreign policy of non-central governments* (Aldecoa and Keating 1999; Boyer 2001). The concept was later disseminated in academic literature via the writings of Ivo Duchacek (New York) (who initially preferred the term 'microdiplomacy') (Duchacek et. al. 1988; Duchacek 1990). Some scholars such as Brian Hocking are not fond of the term 'paradiplomacy' because it suggests an element of conflict between

the national and subnational policy-level, and implicitly presumes 'incompatible interests'. Diplomacy should not be approached as a segmented process of the different actors within a state, but rather as a system in which the different actors within a state are entangled, both inside and outside their national settings, to embrace a diversity of interests; a *multi-layered diplomacy* (Hocking 1993: 3–4; Phillipart 1998). Others underline that paradiplomacy is not that 'new' as one would think. However, all authors more or less agree that we live in a juncture which promotes and incites non-central actors to enter the international/ diplomatic scene (Cornago 2000; Paquin 2001; Paquin 2004).

The *purpose of this chapter* is not to discuss the semantics of the concept 'paradiplomacy'.[1] Rather it proposes to delve into a case study; the way in which Flanders, the territory[2] located in the north of Belgium, acquired international competencies within the Belgian federation and how it made use of those instruments to develop its own geopolitical and functional interests, and diplomatic network. This is a relevant[3] case study for this conference in the sense that it also offers an 'insight view' into how a small and new international actor such as Flanders coped with the problem of limited financial and/or human resources while at the same time having the ambition to develop its own 'foreign policy' from an 'empty drawing board', so to speak. This contribution is both descriptive and exploratory in nature.[4] The *structure of this chapter* is as follows; *first*, we identify the

[1] In fact, Duchacek made a distinction between different types of 'paradiplomacy'. His categorization was based upon geopolitical dimensions; (1°) transborder regional paradiplomacy, (2°) trans- or macro-regional paradiplomacy, and (3°) global paradiplomacy (Duchacek 1990: 16).

[2] Some basic data about Flanders: the Flemish territory is about 13.522 km^2 (Belgium totals 30.518 km^2) and has 6 million inhabitants (Belgium has 10 million). The population speaks Dutch, the same language as in the Netherlands. Flanders generates about 60% of the total Belgian Gross National Product (GNP), 81% of the total exports, and attracts 60% of the foreign direct investments in Belgium.

[3] The paradiplomacy of Flanders constitutes a case which has over the years attracted a lot of interest by scholars. However, the available data published in English or French on this issue is rather scarce, and often based upon secondary sources (some exceptions: Delmartino 2003; Paquin 2003). This paper thus also tries to 'remedy' this problem by offering a concise overview of Flemish foreign policy based upon original documents and interviews with many of the protagonists, gathered via a number of policy-oriented research projects since 1998.

[4] Special thanks go to Mr Bernd Reggers (Flemish Dept. of Foreign Affairs) for providing recent information and data.

basic features of the 'Belgian solution' regarding foreign policy in comparison to some other examples; *second*, we investigate Flemish foreign policy; what instruments were developed to 'guide' the political choices? How did the foreign ministry of the central/federal Belgian policy-level change its role as a result of these developments?; *third*, we briefly discuss the progressive adaptation and the more fundamental reforms in Flemish foreign policy; *fourth*, we identify the main challenges for the future; and *fifth*, we sum up some conclusions.

BASIC FEATURES OF THE 'BELGIAN SOLUTION' REGARDING FOREIGN POLICY IN COMPARISON TO SOME OTHER EXAMPLES

The Belgian federation has a complex structure, based on so-called Communities and Regions. This is a result of history. From the 1960s onwards, the Flemish economy in the northern part of the country developed quite rapidly, whereas at the same time the economy in Walloonia (southern part of the country) was in crisis (it was mainly based on a so-called 'heavy industry'). This element formed the first impetus for Walloonia to aspire to get political control over the economical policy-instruments, so as to be able to shape its own future with tailor-made policy-tools. Flanders initially developed another reasoning; it wanted in the first instance to protect its own language and culture (Dutch). Thus, the Flemish political elite initially aspired to get political control over the culture-based policy instruments in the country. These dual aspirations
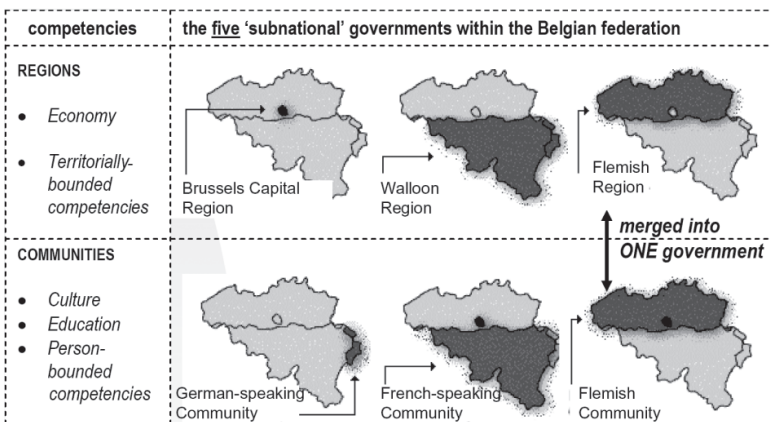

Diagram 1: The complex Belgian 'solution' in general

led to the development of the so-called Belgian Regions and Communities, which overlap territorially—as shown by the diagram above.

The Belgian Communities 'manage' the so-called 'person-bounded competencies' such as language policy, cultural policy, education, welfare, preventive health care, etc. The Belgian Regions 'manage' the so-called 'territorially-bounded competencies' such as economy, environment, employment, infrastructure, environmental planning, etc. There does exist however an important difference in the northern and the southern part of the country. The competencies of the Flemish Community and Flemish Region have in practice been 'fused together'—they are being managed by *one* Flemish Government and monitored by *one* Flemish Parliament. In the southern part of the country, there are still two different governments; the Walloon Regional Government and the French-speaking Community Government. As a result of this, the Belgian federal model has often been labelled an 'a-symmetric model'. The 'fusion' which has been realized in the northern part of the country (Flanders), has in practice led to the realization of important synergies on leaning policy-areas. *How does this translate into the foreign policy of the Belgian federation? What leverage do the Belgian Communities and Regions have in foreign policy matters? What instruments do they have to develop their own 'paradiplomacy'?*

Since 1993, two principles are central in what I would like to call the 'Belgian solution regarding foreign policy'. *First*, the so-called principle '*in foro externo, in foro externo*', and *second* the idea of the *fundamental equality* of all the Belgian governments ('no hierarchy of norms').

THE PRINCIPLE '*IN FORO INTERNO, IN FORO EXTERNO*'

The principle '*in foro interno, in foro externo*' refers to the *convergence between the internal, material and the external competencies of the federated entities* (Ingelaere 1994).[5] This principle entails that the Belgian 'federated

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[5] Since the Belgian constitutional revision of 1993, the division of labor between the federal and the regional governments in foreign policy was written down in the articles 167, 168, and 169 of the coordinated Constitution. Art. 167, § 1, section 1 states: '*The King (read: the federal Government) has the lead over the foreign relations <u>without prejudice to</u> the competence of the Communities and Regions to regulate the international cooperation, including making a treaty, or in the affairs for which they are competent by virtue of the Constitution*' (Senelle 1999: 211).

entities' or 'regions' have to manage their (still growing number of) competencies—not only in day-to-day domestic policy, but also on a permanent basis in the foreign policy-dossiers which touch upon their 'internal' material competencies (see also: Lagasse, Ch.-E. 1997; Lagasse, N. 2002; Senelle 1999).[6]

First, the Belgian 'federated entities' have been granted the right to **conclude or make treaties with third parties** (e.g. sovereign states, regions with a degree of autonomy, international organizations, etc.). As regards this *'ius tractati'*, this has the immediate result that a foreign state or third party can *no longer* conclude a treaty with the Belgian federal government on matters which fall within the realm of exclusive competencies of the Belgian Regions and Communities (Kovziridze 2001: 25).[7] Only they have the authority to decide upon possible external cooperation.

Second, the Belgian 'federated entities' have been granted **the right to send their own representatives** to bilateral posts, to other regions/ areas, and to international organizations (e.g. the European Union or intergovernmental multilateral organizations). As regards this external representation of Belgium (*'ius legationis'*), the Belgian Communities

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[6] *Regarding the so-called 'exclusive federal competencies'* (e.g. defense, justice, social security), the Belgian federal government will still decide upon and implement the content of the Belgian position in foreign policy. *Regarding the so-called 'exclusive regional competencies'*, only the Belgian Regions or Communities have material competencies; they will thus autonomously decide upon their foreign policy-position (e.g. the person-bounded competencies of the Belgian Communities; culture, education, audiovisual media, preventive health care / the territorially-bounded competencies of the Belgian Regions; e.g. agriculture, environment). In such dossiers, these federated entities will however have to agree amongst themselves, after intensive consultation, so as to create a 'common position of the Belgian federation' regarding an issue (e.g. the Belgian position on education and culture within UNESCO). In such issues, the Belgian federal government will merely have a role of coordination. *Regarding the so-called 'mixed' competencies between the Regions (or Communities) and the federal government*, a similar consultation-procedure will be organized. The difference is, however, that the federal government in this case will also be in a position to voice and defend its own viewpoints during the negotiations within the Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP, a new body which was founded on 5 November 1992), in order to reach a common position of the Belgian federation.

[7] Regarding the making of treaties which touch upon the competencies of both the federal level & the Communities/Regions (so-called *'mixed treaties'*) the six Belgian governments (federal and federated) signed a *Cooperation Agreement* on 8 March 1994. This agreement also created a Working Group for Mixed Treaties within the framework of the Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP) (see infra; diagram 2).

and Regions can appoint their own 'diplomatic' representatives abroad autonomously, with one restriction. From 1993 onwards, they were granted the opportunity to appoint their own 'attachés', which would be placed on the diplomatic list of the Belgian embassies, consulates or permanent representations *by the Belgian federal Minister of Foreign Affairs* (Senelle 1999: 212).

The representation of Belgium within intergovernmental or (semi-) supranational multilateral organizations underwent two changes as a result of the principle '*in foro interno, in foro externo*'. First, from 1993 onwards, the six Belgian governments had to reach an agreement regarding the composition of the Belgian 'multilateral' negotiation delegations. Second, the Belgian federated entities would from 1993 onwards also formally participate in the process of formulating the substance of the foreign-policy position of the Belgian federation, namely on those material competences for which they were internally authorized (see also: Salomonson and Criekemans 2001). From 1993 onwards, foreign policy thus had become an issue to be dealt with on a daily basis by the *whole* of the Belgian federation.

FUNDAMENTAL EQUALITY OF THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENTS ('NO HIERARCHY OF NORMS')

The *second principle* which guides the 'Belgian solution' is the idea of the *fundamental equality* among all the Belgian governments, be they federal or federated ('no hierarchy of norms'). This means in practice that the internal legislation generated by the 'federated entities' has equal power to that of the 'federal level'. In foreign policy matters, this thus means that all Belgian governments are responsible to give substance to and decide upon the foreign policy of the federation. If they are not able to find a 'common ground', there is in practice no Belgian position. A substantive number of consultative bodies have been created to develop a common position in foreign policy issues between the federal and five federated governments. Diagram 2 offers a concise overview of the most important consultative bodies created to develop a 'foreign policy of the Belgian federation'.

What can we deduce from all this? One can safely state that the 'Belgian solution regarding foreign policy' grants a **considerable amount of autonomy** to the Belgian Regions and Communities to conduct their

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│              CONSULTATION COMMITTEE                        │
│  (Federal Prime Minister+Minister-Presidents of the       │
│                  federated entities)                      │
│                                                           │
│  Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP)    │
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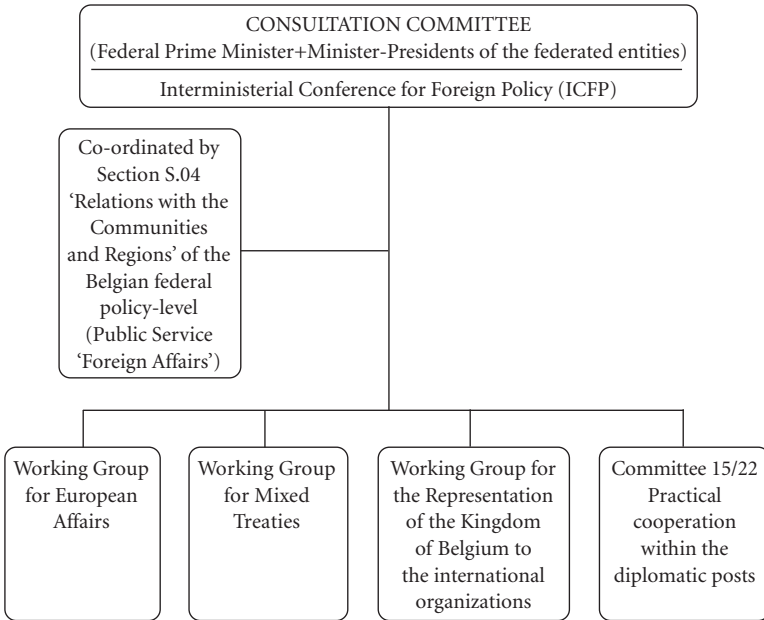
Diagram 2: An overview of some of the most important consultative bodies for foreign policy-making within the Belgian federation

own foreign policy. The idea that the King (read: the Belgian federal Government) has the lead over the foreign relations of the Belgian federation stands potentially *in direct confrontation* to the idea embedded within the Belgian federal model that the Regions and Communities enjoy *autonomy* in foreign policy matters, be it in making treaties with third parties or in sending their own representatives abroad. The **solution** developed for this potential conflict is as follows; the Belgian Regions and Communities do enjoy maximal autonomy *so long as* **the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation does not come in jeopardy.**[8]

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[8] The federated governments are for instance obliged to inform the Belgian federal government of their intention to conclude treaties (on the basis of their 'exclusive' competencies) with third parties. The federal government has to be informed of every step in the procedure which a federated entity undertakes to conclude such a treaty. The federal government has the authority to object. In such a case, the procedure to conclude a treaty will be suspended, and the Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP) will decide by consensus. When a consensus cannot be reached, the federal government can obstruct the further conclusion of the treaty in only four cases: (1) the foreign partner has not been recognized by Belgium, (2) Belgium does not

The combination of the principle '*in foro interno, in foro externo*' together with that of the *fundamental equality of all Belgian governments* is without precedence in the foreign policy of federal states. This is an exceptionally original solution which offers the Belgian Communities and Regions the possibility to develop **both their own geopolitical priorities and their own functional interests and accents in foreign policy**, as long as the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation is not threatened. Consultation and coordination thus become a key part of the daily management of the diplomatic network and optimizing value of the external relations of the Belgian federation.

THE DEVOLUTION OF FOREIGN POLICY IN OTHER COUNTRIES: NOT THAT FAR-REACHING COMPARED TO THE BELGIAN CASE

Without going into details, one can briefly compare the 'Belgian solution' to that of other countries and conclude that this case indeed goes much further compared to the freedom which other 'component units of a federation' or devolved governments have been able to achieve. If one looks for instance at the treaty-making power, one will find that most federal states will offer no or only scarce opportunities to their 'component units' (also: Dehousse 1989; Dehousse 1991; Di Marzo 1980; Kaiser 2000; Keating 1997a; Keating 1997b; Keating 1999; Keating 2000; Lecours 2002a; Lecours 2002b; Majeed et.al. 2005; Michelmann and Soldatos 1990; Salviolo 2005; Van Eeckhoutte and Vidal 2004; Velaers 2006: 15–17):

- The states of the United States of America can only conclude 'agreements' or 'compacts' after the explicit approval of the U.S. Congress. The same is true for the *Länder* within the German federation;
- The Swiss constitution of 1999 does offer its cantons the opportunity to conclude treaties in those areas for which they are internally competent. However, these treaties are not allowed to be in contradiction to the law of the Confederation or that of other cantons. Before starting the process of concluding a treaty, the Confederation has to be fully

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maintain any diplomatic relations with the third partner, (3) one can deduce from a decision or act of the federal government that the relations between Belgium and the third partner have been broken off, are suspended, or are seriously disrupted, or, (4) the treaty which currently is being written, could contradict or violate obligations which the Belgian federation has earlier agreed to in its international or supranational obligations.

informed. Moreover, the cantons can only conclude treaties with lower (subnational, regional) governments of third countries. In all other cases, they have to work via the Confederation. The Conseil fédéral or other cantons can always oppose the intention of a canton to conclude a treaty;

• The Austrian *Länder* can also conclude treaties with subnational governments or even with the countries that border Austria. However, an explicit mandate has to be given by the Austrian head of state to the head of the Austrian federated entity;

• Some federal countries often offer the opportunity to their component states to give a degree of input to the concluding of a treaty between the home country and a third party. Canada[9] and the United States of America for instance consult beforehand with their component units, so as to include their ideas/wishes. Australia offers the opportunity to its regions to send their own delegate as a representative in the negotiation team of the country;

• The German government even concludes an agreement with its own *Länder* regarding their exclusive competencies *before* negotiating with a third country.

All these examples show that the idea of the *unity and coherence* in the foreign policy of the federation is still quite strong in other federal countries as compared to in Belgium. In the Belgian federal system, this element is still important, but more loosely filled in. As a result of this, the opportunities to develop a 'parallel foreign policy' are potentially bigger in Belgium. Especially the Flemish case is perhaps an interesting one, exactly because the Flemish Region and Community have been 'fused together' as mentioned earlier.[10]

Let us therefore now look to the Flemish case; how did Flanders since 1993 make use of its new instruments regarding foreign policy? What choices were made, and what kind of policy-tools were developed to guide the political choices? How did Flanders develop its own paradiplomatic network? And last but not least; how do the Flemish regional diplomatic

[9] For more information on the example of Québec within the Canadian federation, see: Soldatos 1989.

[10] In Walloonia, a practice has also developed for the joint management of *external relations* between the Walloon regional government and the French-speaking community government (see: Massart-Piérard 2005: 194–9). For more on the foreign policy of Walloonia, read also: Massart-Piérard 1987; Massart-Piérard 1999.

activities relate to those of the federal level? Does a new pattern manifest itself gradually since 1993?

FLEMISH FOREIGN POLICY (1993–2005): THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PARADIPLOMATIC NETWORK AND STRATEGY 'FROM AN EMPTY DRAWING BOARD'

In 1993, the Flemish Government (at that time called: 'Executive') acquired its new instruments regarding foreign policy. It took until 1995 before the Executive developed a clear-cut vision about its foreign policy. The Flemish coalition agreement of 17 June 1995 between the christian-democrats and socialists mentioned the following aims of the new Flemish foreign policy: (1) strengthening the Flemish autonomy optimally by using the opportunities which the international cooperation and contacts offered, (2) to provide a clearly identifiable contribution to the international community, more in particular by using and restoring the 'historical role' of Flanders as a bridge between different cultures, countries and regions, (3) the promotion of the Flemish cultural identity and image-building abroad via an integrated 'cultural diplomacy'—the international recognition of the Dutch language constitutes an important element in this effort, (4) providing Flanders a rightful place in Europe and the world, and (5) supporting 'young democracies'.

In these early days of Flemish foreign policy, two remarkable tendencies can be distinguished. *First*, 'foreign policy' and 'image building' were seen as synonymous to each other (see also: Criekemans and Salomonson 2000). Flemish foreign policy focused quite strongly on image building and public relations. This trend can be explained by the fact that Flanders at that time was virtually unknown internationally. Pragmatism prevailed in the sense that it was seen as necessary to familiarize the international community with the idea that Flanders had become an international actor. *Second*, the rhetoric of the then Flemish Minister-President Luc Van den Brande developed in two ways an explicit link between 'culture', 'economy' and the Flemish identity. On the one hand, the region was presented as a 'natural carrier of innovation'; the regional dynamic was heralded by Flemish officials as a policy-level which was better equiped to be 'an economic motor' in the 'post-industrial economy' compared to the national state-level, and hence also an attractive partner in international affairs. On the other hand, culture was explicitly used by the Flemish

regional government as an instrument in the advancement of the Flemish economy and international-political position. Both of these tendencies would gradually decrease in prominence during the second half of the 1990s (see also: Criekemans and Salomonson 2000; Criekemans 2002).

If one takes the principle '*in foro interno, in foro externo*' into account, one could defend the idea that Flemish foreign policy today entails five to six functional areas; (1) international cultural policy,[11] (2) international economic policy, (3) international environmental policy, (4) development cooperation, and (5) promotional activities. The finality of Flemish foreign policy does however remain a *political* one. Each of the above-mentioned components should not be seen as distinct from one another, on the contrary. From the early beginnings onwards, Flemish policy-elites voiced their intention to develop an 'integrated Flemish foreign policy', certainly in light of the fact that Flanders is such a small international actor. Put in another way, one can distinguish in Flemish foreign policy; (1) a *bilateral policy* vis-à-vis other countries and like-minded regions, (2) a fast developing *policy vis-à-vis the European Union* and (3) a *multilateral policy*. Each of these realms tries to support the other. We now come to what interests us most in this paper; *what choices were made, and what kind of policy-tools were developed in order to guide the political choices?* In order to answer this question, we will use the last-mentioned categories so as to obtain a clearer insight.

FLEMISH BILATERAL POLICY: NINE CRITERIA PUT TO THE TEST AND THE REMARKABLE REALIGNMENT OF BILATERAL POLICY WITHIN THE BELGIAN FEDERATION

In his '*Policy Letter 1995—Flemish foreign policy*', Minister-President Luc Van den Brande wrote that due to its limited resources, Flanders could

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[11] Between 1971 and 1993, the Belgian Communities did already have the power to develop their own international cultural policy. They contributed to the negotiation of cultural treaties and developed cultural initiatives abroad (e.g. the development of a Flemish cultural centre 'De Brakke Grond' in Amsterdam, the Netherlands and a 'cultural house' in Osaka, Japan). The dream to send out their own 'cultural attachés' was however postponed due to a number of legal and technical obstacles (see also: Schramme 1999: 145–53). In 1980, the initiative was taken to install a Flemish '*Committee-General for the International Cultural Relations*', which became operational from 1982 onwards (Hendrickx 2004: 22). This administration constituted the 'embryo' from which the later Flemish MFA gradually took shape (see also infra; 3).

never be prominently present in all countries. It would thus become crucial for Flanders to determine certain priorities among the potential countries and regions with which the Flemish Government could establish relations (Van den Brande 1995: 14). In order to develop such an exercise, nine criteria were formulated which could serve as an instrument to develop a so-called 'concentration-policy' (in order to focus the limited Flemish resources abroad). The decision to incorporate a certain country or area into the Flemish concentration policy could thus best be taken by 'testing out' these territories based upon the following nine criteria:[12]

1. common language, culture and history;
2. geographic proximity;
3. (potential) intensity of economic and trade relations;
4. parallel vision on and involvement in the construction of the European integration project;
5. similarity of state structure (federalism);
6. attachment to democracy and human rights;
7. (the need for support and cooperation, and) the possibility for Flanders to develop solidarity actions in a meaningful way;
8. strategic location and international impact;
9. willingness to recognize Flanders as a (full-fledged) partner.

Although the nine criteria today are no longer explicitly mentioned in current Flemish policy letters, it appears that they are still *implicitly* used as a beacon and policy-tool to guide the political choices. As a result of this exercise, a number of bilateral priorities became apparent; *the neighboring countries* (with the Netherlands as most important due to the language similarity and e.g. the importance of the deepening of the Scheldt-river for the Flemish economy), *the young democracies in Central- and Eastern Europe*, *Québec*, *Southern Africa* (again apparently because of the language similarity), and *Chile* in Southern America:

• In June 1989, an 'Entente' was signed with **Québec** to establish a cooperation on such issues as economy, education, health and the environment. At that time, Flanders did not yet have international treaty-making power. It shows however that the Flemish Executive

[12] The Flemish idea behind formulating these 'nine criteria' was as follows: *'the higher a certain country or region "scores" on as many of these criteria as possible, the higher the priority for Flanders to engage into formal relations with that specific country or region'.* However, the Policy Letter rightly warned that these nine criteria cannot and may not be applied in a purely mathematical fashion.

was very much interested in cooperation with like-minded regions in the world. In 2002, this relationship was extended to almost all Flemish competencies (also culture, science, etc.).

- The **countries in Central and Eastern Europe** would soon follow. It is interesting to note that already in April 1992 (also *before* Flanders officially became an international actor with treaty-making power), the Flemish Government had decided to make relations with Central and Eastern Europe a priority. A new policy-instrument was created for this; the *'Programme Central and Eastern Europe'*. In 1992, 10.68 million euros were earmarked in order to support the transition process in Central and Eastern Europe, and the development of strong and healthy market economies (Vanden Berghe and Van Alstein 2004: 2). With this yearly budget (which gradually decreased over the course of the 1990s), projects were financed in areas such as economy, environment, infrastructure, education, vocational training, socio-economic matters, and judicial assistance. In this way, the Flemish 'know-how' could be used to bring these countries up to Western European specs. At the same time, these projects would bring Flemish and Central-European specialists together on a wide variety of dossiers. Also important to note is that in this way, certain (aspects of) the Flemish (socio-)economic, ecological and societal model could be 'exported' to the 'East'. In the medium term, Flemish officials also hoped to bring about joint 'spin offs'. The final goal of this Programme was however political in nature; to bring the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in contact with Flanders, an equally young but reliable foreign partner (Criekemans 2005). Soon after the moment when the Flemish Government received treaty-making power, a number of agreements were signed with Poland (June 1994), Hungary (October 1994) and the three Baltic states (1996). In the years to come, all the other Central and Eastern European countries followed [those which now have become EU-members, but also Romania (1997) and Bulgaria (2001)];
- The first 'exclusive treaties' which the Flemish Government concluded, were with the **Netherlands,** regarding the deepening of the Scheldt river (which partly flows across Dutch territory) and also regarding cooperation in such areas as culture, education, sciences, welfare, etc.;
- In October 1995, the Flemish Government also concluded a treaty with **Chile.** Initially, the relationship with this country was mainly focused

on development policy. However, the character of the cooperation changed over the years. Today, Flanders approaches Chile as a bilateral partner in its own right. The choice for Chile as a 'bridge head' into Latin America is however quite peculiar. Some observers question whether the 'nine criteria' had anything to do with Chile becoming an important Flemish partner. There are those that point to more personal and political explanatory variables; e.g. the relationship between some Flemish and Chilean christian-democrats (Hendrickx 2004: 31). This somewhat puts the 'nine criteria' into perspective; they were certainly not the *only* guiding mechanisms by which Flemish foreign policy got its orientation. Another—more official—factor which influenced the choice for Chile was the Chilean diaspora in Flanders (as a result of the coup in 1973); Flanders thus had links with the country, and wanted to make a contribution to the renewed process of democratization (*Vlaamse Administratie Buitenlands Beleid* 2005).

- On the African continent, **South Africa** was chosen as a partner. Via transnational contracts with the South African Housing Company, Flanders for instance financed shelters for families. In October 1996, a cooperation agreement was signed in the areas of culture, education, science, technology and sport, which would in later years be broadened to cover more policy-areas. These agreements formed the basis for a much larger Flemish policy vis-à-vis the Southern African area (to include Lesotho, Botswana, and Mozambique). Since the beginning of the new century, Flanders has focused more and more on the battle against HIV/AIDS. The Flemish Government for instance gives money to the UN-AIDS-programme (which is led by the Flemish/Belgian Dr Peter Piot), to be earmarked for usage in projects in the Southern African area.

When one delves into the question of the choices that were made by the Flemish Government, an interesting element comes to the surface. A closer look at the Flemish diplomatic priorities list can compare it to the geopolitical priorities of the Belgian federal ministry for foreign affairs, and reveals that *the partners which Flanders chose were mostly in those areas in which the Belgian federal government at that time had only limited contacts, or did not prioritize its existing bonds*:

- The Belgian central government did have diplomatic ties with the Netherlands, but those relations were at the beginning of the 1990s, mostly cultural in nature, and thus already within the sphere of interest

of the Flemish Community. One of the dossiers which is often quoted as an example of the diplomatic efforts of the Flemish Region being more successful compared to those of the central/federal government, is that of the first agreement regarding the deepening (to 11,6 meters) of the Scheldt-river (1994).[13] This is only true to a certain extent.[14] The recent agreement of 2005 on the second deepening of the Scheldt-river (to 13,4 meters) by 2009, was, for instance, a dossier which was 'multi-layered' in nature—it involved the negotiation effort of both the Flemish regional and Belgian federal government;

- At the beginning of the 1990s, the Belgian central government had only limited diplomatic contact with Central- and Eastern Europe, like most Western European countries. Especially the Baltic countries were a 'blank' on the Belgian diplomatic map. Since 1994, a Belgian diplomat was assigned to these countries, but he operated from Brussels and was not based over there. This situation has of course changed in the meantime, but with its *Programme Central and Eastern Europe*, Flanders was able to set up an impressive array of contacts and credentials.[15] The challenge from the end of the 1990s onwards till today was, however, to build upon these relations and mold them into a political partnership with Flanders. A challenge which—due to budget costs and different political priorities under the former Flemish government—only recently reached the political agenda (see infra);

- As a result of its (post-)colonial history, the Belgian central government was heavily involved—diplomatically and politically—in Central-Africa; Zaïre (today better known as the Democratic Republic of Congo or DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville. The choice for South

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[13] The journalist Tastenhoye wrote in 1995 in the political science journal *Res Publica*: *'...that which the Belgian diplomacy had tried to accomplish in twenty years was now realized by Flanders merely eighteen months after the moment when it obtained international treaty-making power'* (Tastenhoye 1995: 328).

[14] For a detailed account of the negotiations between Flanders and the Netherlands regarding the issue of the deepening of the Scheldt river and related issues, read: Vanfraechem 2003.

[15] Some successful Flemish projects in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s have been: installations for water purification in the Czech Republic, a project for environmental management in Hungary, the development of harbours in e.g. the Baltic states, the establishment of the first independent health service in Poland—'*SWP Flandria*', the PLATO-project in which Flemish captains of industry became godfathers of 160 Czech small- and middle-sized companies, etc.

Africa as a partner of Flanders had not only its language similarity going for it, it also had the benefit that the Flemish Government would not stand in the way of the Belgian central policy level. The opportunity arose when the apartheid regime was officially abolished in 1994, exactly at the moment when Flanders constitutionally became an international actor. South Africa came at that time out of a period of international isolation and would thus readily accept international help, even from non-state actors such as Flanders.

Based upon these short observations, one can claim that a remarkable realignment of bilateral policy within the Belgian federation has gradually taken shape. The external contacts of Belgium have become more diverse and a kind of informal division of tasks seems to have taken place among the different governments within the Belgian federation.

If one takes the *international treaty making-power* as an indicator for Flemish paradiplomacy, one can conclude that Flanders has used this new policy-instrument quite intensively, both in an active and in a passive way. Flanders has actively concluded 33 'exclusive' treaties (25 bilateral ones, and 8 multilateral). On the other hand, the Flemish Parliament has approved 307 (mostly multilateral) 'mixed' treaties and agreements (which touch upon both federal competencies and responsibilities of the regions/communities). Furthermore, 44 transnational contracts[16] have been signed, and 65 joint-policy declarations[17] have been issued. Also, the Flemish government manages 35 cultural agreements. Clearly, Flanders has today entered a new phase in the sense that a further exponential growth of its 'exclusive' treaties could result into 'inflation'. For the moment, the current plans involve only Croatia as a new treaty-partner. Treaty-making power contributes to the international recognition which Flanders has been able to build up until now, and is a clear indicator of the *geopolitical priorities* which Flemish foreign policy has formulated; a

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[16] Transnational contracts are agreements which have been concluded between two parties, one of which is no subject of international law. These agreements only pertain to private law, and are thus guided by private international law. Flanders for instance concluded such agreements with Québec regarding education, science, technology, preventive health care, etc., but also signed agreements with the South African 'New Housing Company' (a cooperation which ended a few years ago).

[17] Flanders, for instance, recently created an international network called '*Districts of Creativity*' which promotes creativity as a factor for economic renewal, together with Baden-Württemberg, Catalonia, Lombardy, Maryland, Québec, Scotland, Shanghai, etc.

strong commitment to the (future) EU countries, and a spearhead policy towards the larger Southern African region and Latin America (Chile). However, founding one's foreign policy too much upon the formal instrument of a treaty could potentially 'formalize' (para)diplomacy up to a point when one can no longer be flexible to respond to new challenges which present themselves within society or on the international scene. It appears as though Flemish policy-officials have understood this; they also often use less formal instruments for international cooperation such as transnational contracts and joint-policy declarations. A potential disadvantage of such an approach is of course the non-binding nature of such policy-instruments. Nevertheless, they can be used successfully to give substance to cooperation.

Another indicator for 'measuring' Flemish paradiplomacy is to look at the way in which Flanders has made use of its right to send its own representatives to bilateral posts, to other regions/areas, and to international organizations. After all, in the globalizing world of today, 'networking' is also crucial to achieve one's foreign policy goals. Diagram 3 offers a concise overview of the wide network of Flemish representatives abroad:

	Responsible service	*Number of representatives*
POLITICAL / PARADIPLOMATIC		***9 Representatives of the Flemish Government***
	Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs operational since 1 April 2006	**– Brussels**: <u>Flemish Permanent Representation accredited to the EU</u> (one Representative of the Flemish Government (RFG) heads a team of Flemish attachés for different EU-policy-areas such as education, environment, energy,...);
	formerly known as:	**– Geneva** (based in Brussels) one Representative (RFG) responsible for following dossiers in WTO, UNAIDS, ILO, WHO.
	the *'Administration for Foreign Policy'* since 1994	**– the creation of five 'Flemish Houses' in The Hague, Vienna, Berlin,**[18] **Paris, London** (one

[18] Berlin is not a *'real'* Flemish House in the sense that Flanders rents a floor within the Belgian embassy. The title 'Flemish House' is given when the Flemish 'mission' is located in another building than 'Belgium'.

	Responsible service	Number of representatives
	or the 'Administration External Relations' between 1991–4	Representative of the Flemish Government (RFG) heads the 'mission' to which in some cases economic representatives and people from 'Tourism Flanders' are also assigned). These 'Flemish Houses' operate complementary to the existing Belgian embassies, and each have their own role to play. The Paris RFG is also accredited to the OECD and UNESCO in Paris and to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Future plans include strengthening the team in The Hague and—later on—in Paris and Berlin. The Vienna RFG is not only accredited to Austria, but also to the Czech Republic and Hungary;
	+/- 74 personnel internally	– **Washington**: one Representative of the Flemish Government responsible for relations with Northern America, but also with the World Bank Group. Future plans include moving the RFG to New York and creating a 'Flemish House', but this time in a private–public cooperation (together with some Flemish companies which are active in North America). In 2006, the Flemish RFG will also be accredited to the United Nations in New York; – **Pretoria**: one Representative of the Flemish Government
ECONOMICAL	*Flanders Investment and Trade* +/- 190 personnel internally	*60 Flemish economic representatives* *17 trade secretaries*
CULTURAL	*Department Culture*	*No real network of cultural attachés, but a few cultural*

	Responsible service	Number of representatives
		houses; *'De Brakke Grond'* (Amsterdam), *'Belgian Flanders Exchange Centre'* (Osaka), *'De Buren'* in Brussels (together with the Netherlands, so as to jointly present the Dutch-speaking community towards the EU-countries)
TOURISTIC	*Tourism Flanders* +/- 127 personnel internally	**11 representatives;** in The Hague, Copenhagen, Prague, Paris, London, Milan, Cologne, Vienna, Barcelona, Tokyo and New York.
AGRICULTURAL	*Centre for the Promotion of Agriculture and Fisheries* +/- 70 personnel internally	**2 representatives**; in Paris, Cologne
	Department Agriculture	**5 to 10 attachés for agricultural affairs**; *The Hague* (for the Netherlands), *Paris* (for France and Spain), *Berlin* (for Germany and Poland) and *Vienna* (for Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary) and several which operate from Brussels as a 'home base' (see also: Hendrickx 2004: 66).
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION	*Flemish Agency for International Cooperation* Created only recently out of the remnants of the former *'Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance'*	South Africa and Mozambique (the personnel of the Flemish Agency for International Cooperation should not be seen as 'representatives', but as experts of the Agency abroad)

Diagram 3: An overview of the Flemish international network—
in Flanders and abroad

What can we deduce from the diagram above? During the past decade and a half, Flanders has gradually built a relatively wide international network; 450 people working in Flanders itself, and 280 people which represent Flanders all over the world (not counting the 'support staff'). This is quite impressive for a small region. However, it is still 'peanuts' when compared to the network of the Belgian federal MFA; they have over 3,200 employees and collaborators, of which two thirds are located abroad.[19] Of the Flemish network, only a limited number of people actually work in the area of 'Flemish foreign policy'. Flanders has only nine *'Representatives of the Flemish Government'*, which actually enjoy diplomatic status. In comparison, the diplomatic personnel of the Belgian federal government still amounts up to around 450 (not counting the people that serve within the so-called 'internal career'). The nine *'Representatives of the Flemish Government'* try to establish the necessary contacts abroad on all the competency areas of the Flemish Region and Community (both on an official level as within civil society). They also have a mission to gather insights and knowledge on socio-cultural, political and economic domains, and have to report on these matters to the 'home front'. Last but not least, they also have a mission to promote Flanders abroad, and are understanding orders to play into the opportunities which present themselves. Critics could question the 'added value' of such an additional network of regional diplomatic representatives abroad; aren't the diplomats of the Belgian federal level also responsible to represent and defend not only the federal government, but also the Regions and Communities abroad? The decision of the Flemish Government to send out its own 'diplomatic'/political representatives abroad should be seen in another perspective; as the 'political signal' that Flanders places a high priority to developing bonds with the outside world. Since Flanders has such an open economy, an important transport-economic position in Europe, and is located so close to the heart of the European decision-making centre, the Flemish region seems to feel an urge to 'go abroad' itself. The *'Representatives of the Flemish Government'* constitute the 'spearhead' of the foreign policy-accents which Flanders wants to develop. They should, however, be seen as operating *complementary* to the existing federal diplomatic network. By sending out its own Representatives, the Flemish Government shows its clear political intention of deepening the societal

[19] See the website of the Belgian federal 'Policy Service Foreign Policy'; www.diplomatie.be/nl/FOD/organisationDetails.asp?TEXTID=16839.

and official cooperation with third areas and countries, within its policy-
competencies. The final goal is to propel the cooperation to a higher
intensity, well beyond the level of 'classic diplomatic relations'. The
nine *'Representatives of the Flemish Government'* and the five Flemish
houses which today exist are however quite limited when compared
to the international network which the Belgian federal government
has developed; for the moment, 'Belgium' manages 86 embassies, 12
permanent representations accredited to various international organizations,
25 consulates-general, 5 consulates and 284 honorary consulates (see:
Hendrickx 2004: 67).

   The basic foundations of the Flemish apparatus for external repre-
sentation were laid between 1991 and 1999, during the two governments
which were headed by the christian-democrat Luc Van den Brande.
During the former Flemish Government (1999–2004), the coalition of
greens, socialists, and liberals made different political choices; they gave
priority to the further development of the network and apparatus of
Flemish external trade. The expenditures of the external political repre-
sentation were cut back from 1.33 to 1 million euros. As a result of this,
Flanders had difficulties in transforming its contacts and credentials in
Central- and Eastern Europe into an actual political strategy vis-à-vis this
area, crucial since these countries were acceding to the EU on 1 May 2004
(Criekemans 2005). It seems as though the new Flemish Government
(2004–9) composed of socialists, liberals, christian-democrats and nation-
alists, has understood the importance of Flemish external political
representation. Plans are under way to broaden the political representation
in the neighbouring countries (with a priority being given to The Hague),
in Central- and Eastern Europe and in New York. One can thus expect a
further extension of this apparatus in the coming years. One of the main
priorities for 2006 is the development of a Flemish 'lobbying office' to the
EU, similar to the many offices of European regional delegations that
already exist in Brussels, the (un)official capital of the EU. This 'lobbying
office' will not only defend the Flemish interests on the European forum,
it will also bring different partners together and establish relations with
other EU-regions, member states, regional offices in Brussels and the
European institutions. This initiative also tries to give the Flemish societal
players a better access to European information. Another mission is the
touristic and logistical support for other regional offices based in Brussels,
and to optimally inform the already existing Flemish Representation to

the EU (e.g. detecting possible EU-sources of finance for diverse projects). To conclude, the office will also be responsible to inform the larger public and create a representative 'meeting place' of Flanders in Brussels (Bourgeois 2005).

When one analyses these initiatives more closely, one comes to the conclusion that they all are actually quite complementary to the external activities of the Belgian federal level. In the next part, we explore Flemish EU-policy in a concise way.

FLEMISH EU-POLICY: THE VAGUENESS OF THE DISTINCTION DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL

The EU-policy of Flanders is probably one of the most important components of Flemish foreign policy. The choices made are a direct result of both the institutional position of Flanders within Europe, and its competencies.

From an institutional point of view, a recurring theme in Flemish foreign policy is the regional dimension within the European Union. In December 1992, the then Flemish minister-president Luc Van den Brande officially launched the *Charter of* '*Europe of the Regions*' in Edinburgh. This Charter involved an informal network of like-minded people who believed that Europe should be built on cultural diversity—the Europe of the Cultures (Claerhout 1999: 1). According to Van den Brande 'such a Europe would welcome the cultural identities of regions and member-states not as an obstacle to integration, but as a stimulus to its development' (Van den Brande 1998). In this context, the international Foundation '*Europe of the Cultures 2002*' was created, via which Flanders was placed center stage in the debate on the European regions (Criekemans and Salomonson 2000). The Foundation does not exist anymore today, but over the years, other networks and institutions have been created in which Flanders plays a prominent role. In this context, one should mention that the Flemish region has played an important part in the REGLEG-network,[20] the Group of Regions with Legislative Powers made up of EU

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[20] REGLEG has its roots in the regional cooperation to prepare the discussions within the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) in 2000. The regions with legislative powers wanted to have a say in this context, which predicted a fascinating period for the institutional system of the Union. In 2001, these regions wished to respond to the demand for a broader and futher-reaching debate on the future of the EU as formulated

regions that have responsibility for implementing—and in many cases transposing—European legislation. Over seventy regions with legislative powers within the European Union have directly elected parliaments and governments. For example, the Group helped to achieve significant steps forward for regional involvement in the EU through the draft EU Constitutional Treaty. REGLEG also has become a network for strategic coordination and a forum for the exchange of 'best practices'.

From the point of view of competencies, one can determine that a lot of the competencies which the Belgian regions and communities have received over the years, are actually issues in which the European Union is quite active; education, agriculture, aspects of economic policy, etc. Some scholars claim that the Belgian federated entities are to a certain extent *frustrated* by this; they have discovered that their autonomy is limited by other policy-levels such as the European Union (Vos 1999). Hence, participation in the European policy-framework is being perceived as crucial—not only in the implementation-phase, but also (and more importantly) in the decision-making phase (or even before; e.g. when the European Commission floats a Green Paper in which new policy ideas for the future are being 'tested out'). On 8 March 1994 a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the federal government and Regions/ Communities regarding the representation of Belgium within the Council of Ministers of the European Union, an agreement which was recently updated. The situation varies in each policy-domain, but there are cases (e.g. culture, education, sport) in which Belgium as a whole will be represented by a Minister from the Communities, who will speak on behalf of the whole of the Belgian federation. In more 'mixed' policy-domains, for example, the team leader will be someone from the federal government, accompanied by a representative of the Region/Community, or vice versa. This all means in practice that the traditional distinction between domestic policy and international ('EU')-policy is less clear; both are intermingled. In practice, all the Belgian governments have to try to work together via the DG-E-consultation process. No 'parallel foreign policy' there. However, some argue that if the federated entities are not able to find a common position, they should be given the chance to each vote separately in the EU-Council of Ministers (the so called 'split

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in a declaration annexed to the Treaty of Nice. Their initiatives resulted in the recognition of the concept of a *'region with legislative powers'* in the so-called 'Declaration of Laeken' (see the network's website: www.regleg.org).

vote'). However, such a radical idea will probably not find supporters in Europe anytime soon...

FLEMISH MULTILATERAL POLICY: FROM PROJECTS TO A MORE STRUCTURAL APPROACH

Soon after the Flemish Government received its international competencies, Flanders developed an interest in collaborating with and within multilateral organizations on concrete issues of policy.[21] Four reasons can be mentioned for this.[22] *First*, because multilateral organizations can offer an added value to almost every internal Flemish competency. *Second*, because such multilateral fora constitute a reservoir of policy ideas and—competencies—they are often the places where innovative policy ideas for the future originate. The Flemish Government thus thought it crucial to get access to this process. *Third*, multilateral programmes and competencies can also strengthen the existing Flemish bilateral cooperation. For example, when Flanders subscribes to multilateral programs on employment and vocational training in the ILO, it can appeal to a permanent 'knowledge-infrastructure' which could in turn strengthen the Flemish bilateral cooperation with one of its geopolitical priorities; Central- and Eastern Europe. In this way, the different components of Flemish foreign policy strengthen one another. *Fourth*, acting multilaterally can also be seen as an opportunity to further develop the international recognition of Flanders. Despite the obstacle in international law that Flanders is a 'non-state actor', the Flemish federated entity can also offer its expertise and 'know-how' to such fora (e.g. the Flemish expertise in education [Council of Europe, UNESCO], in preventive health care [WHO], in the knowledge economy [EBRD], etc.). It is the hope of the Flemish Government that this would—in the long run—contribute to Flanders obtaining a certain degree of recognition and authority within the 'multilateral community'.

On the basis of this analysis, Flanders developed its first initial multilateral steps vis-à-vis the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNESCO and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

[21] Before 1993, Flanders already contributed to the Belgian multilateral position on its 'classical' Community-competencies such as language, culture and education within organizations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

[22] Also based on an interview with the former Flemish Minister-President Luc Van den Brande, on 13 July 2000.

(EBRD). It also contributed financially to certain projects of these organizations. Some interviewees underline that at that time—during the 1990s—the Belgian federal government had cut back its participation in some of these projects (e.g. within UNESCO). Flanders thus seized the opportunity which presented itself to enter the multilateral stage (see also: Vanden Berghe and Criekemans 2002). Later on, the Flemish Government broadened its multilateral 'scope'. Its competency regarding preventive health care led to an interest in the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN-AIDS. Because of its educational and cultural work, the Council of Europe was also selected. Within the OECD, Flanders promoted the development of more 'regional' statistical data and studies. Also the WTO has become an important organization for Flemish foreign policy, certainly regarding the negotiations in the liberalization of services (the Flemish economy is mainly services-based). Flanders thus contributes to the Belgian/European position in these matters (e.g. via the concept of 'cultural diversity'). As a result of the recently acquired competencies in development cooperation, it can be expected that the World Bank-group will become more important. In other words, one can detect a wide dispersal of Flemish multilateral activities; from a limited number of organizations and programs into a much more wider spectrum, in which all Flemish administrations are involved. Coordinating this effort therefore becomes a much more daunting task. Flanders finds itself today in a process in which the original project-based approach is less prominent, in favour of the development of a much more 'structural approach' (see also: Vanden Berghe, Salomonson and Criekemans 2001). Some problems do remain, however: (1) the Flemish Government should allocate more personnel and means to multilateral policy—both in Brussels as in Paris, Strasbourg and Geneva, (2) it is curious to see that Flanders often devoted much attention to multilateral issues in which it enjoys 'exclusive competencies' (e.g. culture and education within UNESCO), but is less active in those dossiers which are from a Belgian perspective 'mixed' in nature. It would be advisable that all Belgian governments try to work pro-actively on such issues, within the COOR-MULTI-consultation process, but also—more importantly—at the highest political level within the Intergovernmental Conference on Foreign Policy (ICFP). All too often this system detects problems only at a *later* stage, instead of trying to set out some goals for the foreign policy of the Belgian federation beforehand. A more pro-active approach would probably

smooth the Belgian decision-making process in foreign policy-matters. From time to time, the observer can detect 'differences in opinion' among the different Belgian ministers for foreign policy vis-à-vis a 'mixed' issue. By trying to formulate goals early on, these political problems could perhaps be eased, (3) multilateral negotiation teams coming from the Belgian federation sometimes appear somewhat 'heterogeneous' in the eyes of foreign diplomats. It should be stressed that the Belgian Permanent Representations abroad have to be given the leeway to coordinate the Belgian position vis-à-vis multilateral organizations. Each government of the Belgian federation must indeed be able to exercise its freedom, but this should not undermine the coherence of the position of the Belgian federation during negotiations (Criekemans 2002).

THE CONTINUOUS REORGANIZATION OF THE FLEMISH FOREIGN POLICY-APPARATUS

The Flemish foreign policy-apparatus has been under constant reorganization. In 1980, the idea was set in motion to establish a Flemish *'Committee-General for International Cultural Relations'*, which became operational in 1982. The concept 'culture' was being interpreted more broadly as time went by, gradually also including education, sport, etc. This led in 1986 to a new name; *'Committee-General for International Cooperation'*, and an adapted organizational structure. In 1991, a Flemish ministry took shape, which combined the administrative capacity of both the Flemish Community and Region. Within this ministry, a new *'Administration for External Relations'* was created. This was a so-called 'horizontal department', in the sense that it coordinated all the external activities of the internal administrative policy-domains. The acquisition, in 1993, of the international treaty-making power and external representation led in 1994 to the re-naming into *'Administration for Foreign Policy'*, which underlined the idea that all external activities of the Flemish Government should be streamlined by political priorities. This situation remained for the rest of the decade. Gradually however, the organizational structure came under strain, mostly because the Flemish administration was being asked to follow up on a growing number of new competencies.

In the Hermes-agreement of 5 April 2000, the federal government agreed in principle with the federated entities to devolve 'agriculture' and 'foreign trade' to the Belgian Regions. This intention was formalized

in the Lambertmont-agreement of 13 July 2001. An extra area which the Belgian governments agreed to 'devolve' was 'development cooperation'. However, up until today this last area has not been devolved in practice; a study group has not reached any conclusions on how to realize this (De Volder 2005). The Flemish Government wants the Belgian personnel and financial means that accompany them to be transferred to the Communities. For evident reasons, this element still remains a subject of discussion. In 2003, the competency of the 'export licences for weapons' also was devolved from the federal government to the Regions. Not Flanders but Walloonia had asked for this. This impressive list of new material competencies resulted in a situation in which the structure of the Flemish Administration for Foreign Policy was no longer in alignment with its new tasks and responsibilities. This had already provoked an 'internal exercise' in 2001; the Policy Support Division of the Flemish Administration for Foreign Policy was given the assignment to start a **benchmarking research project** of several Ministries for Foreign Affairs. Special attention was given to the following benchmarks; the organizational structure of the Ministry, the relation between foreign policy, international trade and development cooperation, the structure and operation of advisory committees, the management of the network of representatives abroad, the relation between 'administration' and 'politics', the way in which priorities are determined, etc. After an initial 'scanning', the MFAs of the following countries were selected; Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom (Vlaamse Administratie Buitenlands Beleid 2001).[23]

The exercise started by the Policy Support Division was not completed due to a change in priorities and lack of time. The team did nevertheless collect information, but they were never used in an actual benchmark study. The main reason for this change of priorities was that at that time, the Flemish Government had launched a new project *'Better*

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[23] These countries were chosen because of the following reasons; *Canada*—because of its innovative integral policy management, its representation abroad and its networking; *Denmark*—because of its integral policy management (e.g. policy preparation and evaluation) and scientific foundations; *Germany*—because of its exemplary development cooperation; *Finland*—because of its exemplary strategic planning, policy evaluation, and scientific foundations; *the Netherlands*—because of its advisory committees and policy evaluation (annual reports and indicators); *Norway*—because of its policy support and strategic planning; the *United Kingdom*—because of its vast experience regarding building public support and in strategic planning.

Governmental Policy', an effort to structure the competencies which the Flemish Region and Community had accumulated since 1991. However, the elements which had been gathered in the preliminary research for the benchmarking study were perhaps implicitly used in the process to implement '*Better Governmental Policy*'? The initial idea was to 'verticalize' the former 'horizontal' Flemish Administration for Foreign Policy into a full-fledged MFA. This meant bringing general foreign policy, development cooperation and tourism together, under one responsible Minister. The idea was that this could improve the coherence and decisiveness of Flemish foreign policy, which would in turn have a positive spin over-effect into the external perception of Flanders as an international actor. The organizational structure which was chosen is dynamic; it should be able to adapt in more flexible ways to the continuously changing international environment. The reorganization is not only limited to redesigning structures, but also involves new means for developing the MFA further in terms of human resources. The MFA-officials are given the opportunity to follow training and/or be seconded to an international organization, so as to become a 'learning organization'. New is also the creation of a Strategic Advisory Board, composed of people from civil society, the academic world, etc.

On 1 April 2006, the new Flemish MFA was declared operational. Originally, the title assigned to the Flemish MFA was '*Ministry for Foreign Policy, Foreign Trade, Development Cooperation and Tourism*'. This title was deemed too long, therefore the ministry was called '*Flanders International*' (in Dutch: 'Internationaal Vlaanderen'), which entails both a Department and an agency for development cooperation. This title is somewhat strange, especially also in the sense that the former title 'foreign affairs' has been deleted in favour of a much more vague one. In the meantime however, a practice has developed whereby the Flemish MFA uses for its Department a different title in all external communications in English, so as to avoid misunderstandings: '*Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs*' (in Dutch it is still called 'Departement Internationaal Vlaanderen').

The new organizational structure is as follows:

In the new organizational structure, the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs will be responsible for the coordination and integration of the foreign policy of the Flemish Government. It does a follow-up on both the 'content' and the 'logistical support' of the foreign policy developed

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┌─────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ Minister for│     │ Minister for │
│  Foreign    │     │Foreign Policy,│
│   Trade     │     │ Development  │
│             │     │Cooperation and│
│             │     │  Tourism     │
└─────────────┘     └──────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────┐
                                        │Strategic Advisory Council│
                          ┌───────────────┐ └──────────────────────┘
                          │ Policy Council│
┌──────────────────┐      └───────────────┘      ┌──────────────────┐
│Advisory Committee │                             │Board of Directors│
│      FADC         │                             │      FIT         │
└──────────────────┘                             └──────────────────┘
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Agency Tourism Flanders	Flemish Agency for Development Cooperation FADC	Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (Foreign Policy + Development Cooperation + Tourism)	Agency Flanders Investment and Trade (FIT) (under the guidance of the Flemish Minister for Foreign Trade

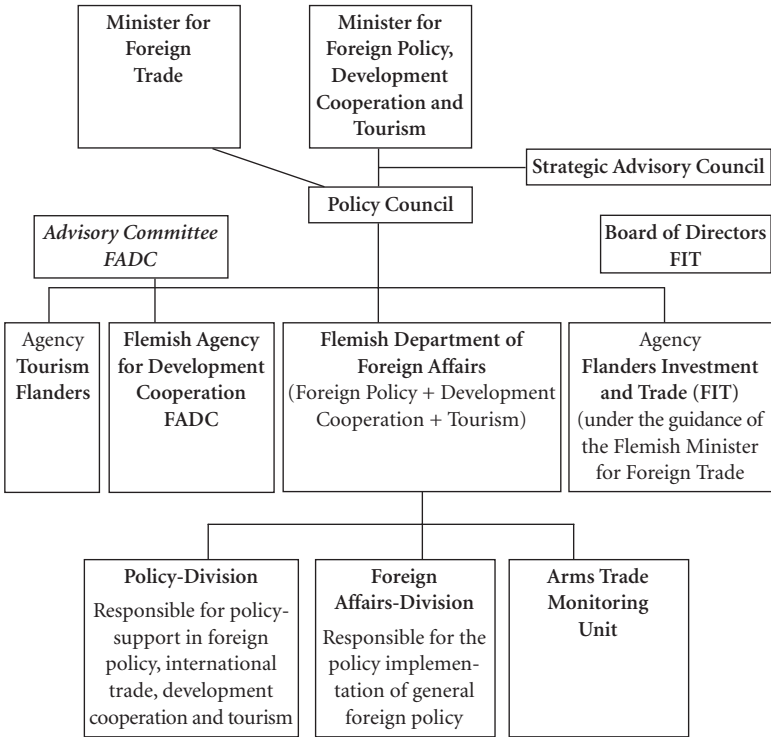| Policy-Division	Foreign Affairs-Division	Arms Trade Monitoring Unit
Responsible for policy-support in foreign policy, international trade, development cooperation and tourism	Responsible for the policy implementation of general foreign policy	

Diagram 4: The new organizational structure of
Flemish foreign policy since 1 April 2006

by the Minister-President, the Minister responsible for Foreign Policy, Development Cooperation and Tourism, and the international policy activities of all other Flemish ministers. *On the one hand*, the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the communication between the Flemish ministry, the federal Public Service Foreign Policy, and the foreign policy institutions of all other Belgian governments. *On the other hand*, it also follows up on all foreign partners of the Flemish Government. The organization of the official international representation of Flanders abroad constitutes also one of the permanent assignments of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs.

New in the organizational structure is the clear division between 'policy support' and 'policy implementation'. The *policy-supporting entity* ('Policy Division') advises the Minister regarding strategic planning, policy preparation, the policy steering of the implementation process

and the policy evaluation. The *policy-implementing entity* ('Foreign Affairs Division') looks after all implementation tasks for the domain 'foreign policy'; the bilateral and multilateral relations, the implementation of all exclusive treaties and the Programme Central and Eastern Europe, the Flemish representation abroad and the coordination of all Flemish decision-making regarding EU-dossiers. *Both entities* are an integral part of the Department. Some related domains such as foreign trade, development cooperation and tourism will however be implemented within externally or internally emancipated agencies. A third division is the *'Arms Trade Monitoring Unit'*, which advises the minister on all export licences regarding the import, export and transit of weapons and military technology.

A *'Policy Council'* will serve as the forum where all the relevant ministers can discuss policy together with the managers of all relevant departments and agencies. With this new organizational structure, all policy-fields which relate to the international activities of Flanders are being brought together under one policy domain. In theory, this should radically augment the coherence of the international actions which the Flemish Government undertakes. The jury is still out on whether that goal is now within grasp. It is nevertheless the hope of the current Flemish Minister for Foreign Policy Geert Bourgeois that this reform will also create a cross-fertilization between the policy-fields which Flanders now has under its responsibility, so as to better position the region in Europe and the world (Bourgeois 2005: 44–5). This last goal brings us to a last point; what are the challenges for the future with which the relatively new Flemish 'paradiplomacy' is being confronted?

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE IN FLEMISH PARADIPLOMACY: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

As our analysis has shown, the foreign policy of the Flemish Region and Community has developed quite rapidly over the last decade and a half. Based upon its newly received competencies in 1993 (the treaty-making powers, the right to send its own representatives abroad), Flanders has developed its own foreign-policy structure and priorities. Gradually, it is becoming an international (non-state) actor in its own right. As a result of the (still) growing number of material competencies for regions and communities within the Belgian constitutional framework, the

organizational framework has to update itself almost continuously. Herein lies a distinct danger, namely in the *possibility* that these re-organizations are driven more by internal 'Belgian' idiosyncrasies than by external evolutions. As a result of the rapidly changing institutional 'architecture' within the Belgian federation, much attention has been devoted during the past years to competencies and decision-making structures. However, the challenges with which Flemish foreign policy is being confronted in the near future all mainly lie within public diplomacy, both internally and externally:

- *On an internal level*, it is surprising to notice that Flanders as a non-state actor has not (yet) developed a structural link with its own public. The elaboration of such a structure is in the making. Especially in the most recent plans for the reorganization and optimization of Flemish foreign policy, one can for the first time recognize structural solutions such as the intention to bring the broader public on board. The setting up of an Advisory Board (made up by members coming from societal movements and organizations, the academic circles, etc.) could contribute to this. One can notice that the current Flemish Government, and more in particular the Minister for Foreign Affairs Geert Bourgeois, devotes extra attention (compared to his predecessors) to informing the broader public of his initiatives regarding foreign policy, and to explain why certain choices have to be made (at least certainly when compared to the last Flemish Government, between 1999 and 2004). However, much work remains to be done on this issue. It is nevertheless crucial so as to achieve one's foreign-policy goals.

- *On an external level*, public diplomacy can even be considered to be of existential importance to a non-state actor such as Flanders. It is crucial that the governments and general publics of third countries and regions are informed of the large autonomy that the component units of the Belgian federation (regions, communities) have been granted. One must also point out that some countries appear to have a certain reservation vis-à-vis cooperation with the Belgian federated entities; they fear to offend the Belgian federal government. Such a fear is of course unfounded, at least on the so-called 'exclusive competencies' of the Belgian regions and communities. It appears that third parties do not always realize this. It is this issue of external public diplomacy that needs to be addressed more urgently in order to 'manage' the diplomatic networks of the Belgian federation (the federal level and

the regional level). If not, Belgium could—as a federation—risk losing its chances to tap into opportunities for cooperation with third parties and countries (Vanden Berghe and Criekemans 2000; Criekemans 2002).

This is thus a plea for the development of an explicit Flemish public diplomacy. Such an approach should first and foremost try to systematically establish relations with the *'non-official abroad'*, via opinion leaders and via a strategy to approach populations directly. The establishment of 'two-way traffic' is essential. A large part of the possible 'public diplomacy'-activities aims at the medium term. One could think of initiatives in the area of culture, education, and other domains which can effectively influence this creation of an 'image'. The Flemish region should actively promote its own strong 'trump cards' (e.g. its logistical know-how and central location, its internationally highly praised educational system, its knowledge and experiences in preventive health care, etc.). This is not to say that Flanders has not done anything in this area, on the contrary. However, a more focused strategy could prove beneficial in the longer term. Gradually, the region should automatically be associated with some of these strong assets. At the same time, a more explicit Flemish public diplomacy would involve informing the population on its foreign policy goals, and/or even giving them the chance to debate these and to participate in their realization (based upon an earlier opinion article: Criekemans and Melissen 2006).

CONCLUSIONS: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE FLEMISH/BELGIAN CASE?

What can we learn from the Flemish/Belgian case? I present my conclusions and some further remarks under two headings; 'the Belgian federation' and 'Flanders':

(1) Regarding the Belgian Federation

- Belgium is a unique example among the countries which have given international responsibilities to their component states. The combination of the principle *'in foro interno, in foro externo'* together with that of the *fundamental equality of all Belgian governments* is without precedence in the foreign policy of federal states. The *autonomy* given to the Belgian Regions and Communities is far-reaching, and the

instruments with which the *coherence* of the foreign policy of the federation are guaranteed, have been filled in only in a limited way compared to most other countries;

- During the past decade and a half, the Belgian federal diplomatic 'apparatus' has adapted itself to the new situation which was created as a result of the constitutional revision of 1993. Whereas the central government used to enjoy a monopoly in the management of the international affairs of the country, it is now *only one* of the players. However, it has successfully transformed itself into a coordination centre which guides all external contacts under an atmosphere of 'federal loyalty'. Within the Belgian federation, one can even detect a remarkable realignment. The external contacts of Belgium have become more diverse and a kind of 'informal division of tasks' seems to have taken place in the external relations among the different governments within the federation.

(2) Regarding Flanders

- Flanders has made active use of its international treaty-making power. The way in which it selected its partners does suggest that the six governments within the Belgian federation work on a fairly complementary basis, both in geopolitical as in functional terms;
- The Belgian Regions and Communities continue to receive more and more competencies, and—by consequence—will have more to say in the foreign policy of the federation. This is also the reason why the Flemish Government continuously had/has to adapt its structural organization. As a result of the rapidly changing institutional 'architecture' within the Belgian federation, much attention has been placed during the past years to competencies and decision-making structures. One of the main challenges with which Flemish foreign policy is being confronted today is public diplomacy; *internally* vis-à-vis its own population, and *externally* vis-à-vis its potential international partners.
- However, the case of Flemish paradiplomacy shows that it *is* possible for a region within a federation to develop its own foreign policy-accents, even with limited resources. The Flemish foreign policy-apparatus has sought ways to adapt in more flexible ways to both new competencies and novel challenges within society or on the international

scene. It also has made use of the opportunities for networking and new partnerships which presented themselves at certain junctures in time. To conclude, one must indeed acknowledge the general remark made by some scholars (see Introduction); Flemish foreign policy operates often not 'parallel' to the foreign policy of the Belgian central government, but is part of a *multi-layered process* within and without the Belgian federation. The consultation procedures which have been developed over the years can perhaps serve as some inspiration to other countries which are looking to reconcile 'globalization' and 'localization'. One does however have to bear in mind that a 'blind transposition' of the 'Belgian solution' is not to be recommended; each solution which tries to give more international authority to the component states within a federation should be attuned to the needs of each political system and specificity of its 'component units'.

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The Functional Areas

Switzerland's agreements with the European Union
How to manage complex international negotiations

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INTRODUCTION

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT SWITZERLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY, SINCE THE EARLIEST period, has been dominated by two concerns, status and trade. By status, we mean the vital interest for a small neutral country to be recognized as such and to safeguard its independence in the context of equilibrium and conflict between major European powers. In referring to trade, we point to the necessity for a naturally poor and landlocked country to achieve access to both markets and supplies. In dealing with the emerging European Community, later the European Union, Switzerland has seen these two key concerns merge. A look at the map or at trade statistics immediately makes clear why 'Europe', i.e. Switzerland's immediate neighborhood, has been in the center of its foreign policy. Today, to mention only this single set of figures, the EU provides Switzerland with 83% of its imports of goods and takes 63% of its exports.

One has to be aware that for Switzerland, the end of the Second World War brought an end to seeing its neighbors almost constantly at war with each other, or engaging in prolonged political struggles. For centuries, within this power game, keeping the strategic North–South passageway over the Gotthard Pass free from external control has been a key concern not only for the Swiss themselves, but also for competing European powers. Thus, Swiss neutrality was declared as being in the best interest of Europe as a whole. While peace in Europe was and is good news under any

political logic or circumstances, it must be understood that, historically, Switzerland is not a 'nation' in the classical sense, but a political construction or 'work of art' strongly influenced by the logic of neutrality. External restraint reflected Switzerland's complex internal structure as an alliance of cantons, with a rich diversity in terms of language, wealth, religion, or political tradition, but possibly also in external relations. This is what we refer to when we talk about Swiss federalism and this is also the main reason why European integration has been considered by the Swiss not only as a chance for peace and prosperity within their natural European environment, but also as a challenge to the country's sovereignty, and therefore its political survival.

Taking the latest round of negotiations with Brussels as an example, I shall try to show how Switzerland has succeeded in developing useful relations with the European Union without actually aiming at full membership. This latter difficult issue remains reserved for consideration at a later stage.

BILATERALISM

Space does not permit me to give a full account of Switzerland's relations with the European Union since the end of World War II. Let me simply recall that in the late eighties, Switzerland, together with other EFTA countries—Austria, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland etc.—negotiated a comprehensive treaty with the European Union called the European Economic Area (EEA). It provided for a full participation of these countries—which had already concluded a free-trade agreement for industrial goods in the early seventies,—in the EU's emerging internal market, the 'four freedoms', due to be fully operational by 1992.

Technically speaking, the EEA Treaty was a multilateral agreement. Negotiations were conducted, on the EFTA side, by the country in the chair after a full consultation with the other participants. Those involved in its negotiation still consider, today, that the result was a rather good agreement providing EFTA countries, of course, not with a real say in the management and further development of the EU's internal market, but at least with ample consultation, non-discrimination, and dispute settlement.

In 1992, however, the formula of a multilateral association between the inner Twelve and the outer Seven fell apart. Indeed, after the demise

of the Berlin Wall, when the question of Eastern Europe's relations with the EU emerged, some of the EFTA countries—Austria, Sweden and Finland—decided to go for full membership without further delay. Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein chose to stick to the EEA. In Switzerland, the Treaty was defeated in a popular vote on 6 December. One of the issues in the debate preceding the vote was the comprehensive character of the agreement making it appear as a first step towards full membership. This was, indeed, the Government's strategic aim; but at the same time, it also allowed Eurosceptics to forcefully denounce a suspected automaticity with respect to a further deepening of our EU links.

After the referendum, the negotiation of a series of bilateral arrangements on specific topics was put forward as an alternative formula. In this way, every specific issue could be dealt with on its own merit. The EU eventually agreed with this approach, but insisted that a few of these arrangements should be considered as a package, thus preventing Switzerland from picking and choosing only certain specific obligations.

To put it very briefly, the first series of agreements comprised, inter alia, the issues of free movement of labor, technical obstacles to trade, public tenders, air and land transport, agricultural trade, and research. It entered into force in 2002. The second set included Switzerland's association with the Schengen and Dublin schemes, a withholding of tax on capital gains earned by foreigners, the fight against tax fraud and a number of minor matters. They have not all entered into force yet. In 2005, two issues, i.e. Schengen and the extension of the free movement of labor with the ten new EU States, had to be voted upon. They were both approved by the people.

My subject, however, is not to go into the details of these arrangements but to dwell on some aspects of the negotiation and the work of diplomats, both within the EU and in Switzerland.

COORDINATION: THE EU SIDE

You probably all know how the EU negotiates. In most cases, it is the European Commission which proposes entering into negotiations. It elaborates a report setting out the key issues and a draft mandate which it submits to the Council of Ministers. This mandate forms the basis of all further work. Member countries will follow the negotiations as silent observers in the back row of the meeting room and regularly discuss

progress or arising problems among themselves and with the Commission's negotiators. This method, as a rule, provides for a close link with already existing EU legislation. Thus, in order to avoid difficulties in the management of these arrangements, the EU tends to insist on following the rules of the internal market already in force. The final agreement is then approved by the Ministers.

Things get a bit more complicated when we deal with so-called mixed agreements which cover both matters falling within the EU's own competences as provided by the Treaty as well as other matters on which Member States have retained their own treaty-making power. They may, even in these cases, want to ask the Commission to negotiate on their behalf; but each of them will have to ratify these mixed agreements individually, according to its own internal rules.

This has been the case with the arrangement concerning the free movement of labor since it also covered matters relating to social security or the recognition of diplomas, among others. It was interesting to see how little, in some EU countries, these residual matters were able to kindle interest in national parliaments. Negotiations with Switzerland were considered to be mostly a matter for the Commission to cope with. In addition, abolishing obstacles theoretically still in existence with Switzerland did not appear as economically very relevant. As a rule, MPs became aware of some of the issues only when the final agreement was presented to them. This was the case, for instance, for some issues of concern to so-called 'frontaliers', EU workers crossing the border of Switzerland daily to work in Switzerland (Geneva, Basel, the Ticino). Their misgivings or uncertainties about their future status where often further kindled by information about how carefully the Swiss Government consulted with local and cantonal authorities since, indeed, in Switzerland, too, some issues did not fall within the competence of the federal government but were cantonal matters. Indeed, knowing that the most delicate issues may well come up again in the final referendum, the Swiss government could not afford to override these concerns simply by insisting on its formal competence in concluding international treaties.

There is another aspect which we should look at quickly: diplomatic action to accompany such negotiations. I have already mentioned that the Commission's negotiators were under constant scrutiny by EU Member States, more precisely by their permanent missions in Brussels. It soon became necessary for Switzerland to conduct a sort of parallel dialogue

with national administrations in the EU State capitals from whence instructions to the Brussels representatives originated.

This is a good example of the bilateral face of multilateral negotiations. Indeed, while bilateral embassies in Europe may occasionally feel somewhat frustrated to be bypassed by the new 'bilateralism' between Berne and Brussels, their actual contribution to the negotiations' success, quite often, has been crucial. It was the bilateral embassies' task to get at the root causes of some difficulties and do their traditional job of explaining and convincing. This, in certain cases, was easier in Paris, London, or Rome than in Brussels, since capitals had a better grasp of certain aspects of Swiss politics or of certain economic realities while the Brussels machinery is very much, and occasionally too much, geared to the EU's internal logic and workings.

COORDINATION: THE SWISS SIDE

How about the Swiss side?

Traditionally, Switzerland has been rather active in the field of trade negotiations. Although it joined GATT only during the sixties—the main problem being Switzerland's pronounced protection of its agriculture—the Swiss trade negotiators were well known for their skill and, occasionally, also their stubbornness. Although most negotiators in the field of European integration were diplomats or belonged to the traditional class of high officials acting from the Office of External Economic Affairs, it soon became clear that dealing with Brussels not only required taking into account aspects of foreign policy, but also that the subjects to be dealt with went far beyond the classical fields of trade or economic cooperation. Labor movements were an early concern. EU countries like Italy or Spain, where many foreign workers in Switzerland come from, insisted on including important aspects of the status of these workers into the negotiations.

Another example is transport. This is one area where Switzerland's geographical position turned the country into a natural partner of the EU. It has been said that any attempt by the EU to develop something approaching a common European transport policy required the full cooperation of Switzerland since important flows of intra-EU trade pass in transit through Switzerland's alpine railways and roads.

The multi-disciplinary character of these negotiations were taken into account chiefly by creating an inter-departmental office for European

integration matters, or Integration Office. At the beginning, in the early sixties, the Office was deemed to function as a secretariat for a series of working groups created to study the various aspects of a possible Swiss EU membership; that was in the early sixties when the United Kingdom first deposited its candidacy for adhesion. One of these groups was called upon to go beyond the mere technical aspects and take a look at the historical perspectives of Switzerland's position in Europe. It soon became a sort of philosophical and political brain-storming group.

While officials of the Integration Office were primarily recruited in the Foreign Ministry and in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Integration Office soon became the crossroads or coordinating body for the work of all government departments dealing with European affairs. This has been an interesting experience since some so-called technical departments explicitly or implicitly resented these efforts. They had a tradition of dealing with international aspects of their work themselves and saw little reason for letting others interfere just because 'integration' was deemed to be something new and special. Other departments, however, were somewhat lost when it came to understanding some of the subtleties of Community legislation and had little knowledge of how the Brussels institutions worked.

This aspect is primarily a challenge for the chief negotiator, be he the head of the Integration Office or a State Secretary in the Foreign or Economic Ministry. In terms of the ordinary pecking order, he may not be considered to be the superior of certain high officials in other ministries. When it comes to negotiations with Brussels, particularly when, formally or informally, we are faced with a series or with a package of future agreements, he will have to appeal to his colleagues' preparedness to perhaps, abandon certain positions for the sake of achieving a balanced overall result and getting through with the negotiation as a whole.

Finally, let me make a comment or two about the political nature of international negotiations, which are headed for a possible referendum of the Swiss kind. Although, normally, diplomats will have their minister's or the cabinet's instructions as a clear and sufficient framework for their negotiations, in the Swiss case, direct democracy exerts a sort of anticipatory effect on many things that are being said or done in diplomatic channels. Leaving open the question of whether a referendum will be called for or not, is one of the main techniques used by political adversaries of a particular law or international agreement in order to exert pressure. But

even when it has become obvious that the government will not be able to avoid being challenged in a popular vote, it is not always clear right from the beginning where the most delicate issues will lie. Questions that play some role in the parliamentary debate may fade away when the public debate starts and vice versa.

Due to the somewhat technical character of these negotiations, some of the diplomats involved will also be heavily engaged in the public debate preceding the referendum. Although, in the end, a few rather emotional issues dominate the battle, it is a habit in Switzerland to organize all kinds of public meetings, be it in obscure country inns or in the national media. Some diplomats may be a bit lost in this highly politicized world, others develop unsuspected talents.

CONCLUSIONS

Three conclusions:

One: Dealing with the European Union implies a new and often complex mix of bilateralism and multilateralism, occasionally requiring new skills.

Two: Effective coordination within a national administration becomes an absolute necessity. *Not* speaking with one voice in Brussels is a sure recipe for failure.

Three: European integration does not allow for a separation between diplomatic work on the international scene and internal political work, particularly in a country practicing direct democracy. Modern diplomats have to be available for and be able to master both fields of action.

Multilateralism
Fading or changing?

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'The World Is A-Changin'
>—*Bob Dylan*

'—What do you think of the French Revolution?
—It is too early to tell.'

>—*Mao Tse-Tung to André Malraux*

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTILATERALISM

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS—POLITICIANS, ANALYSTS, AND DIPLOMATS HAVE been worrying that multilateralism is in danger—at best—or actually so emaciated that it is as well as dead—at worst. The arguments that are brought forward to prove the truth of these warnings are mostly related to the challenges facing the global security and peace, and the main message is targeted to countries that have been increasingly dealing with these challenges clearly favoring a 'one-on-one' approach or, sometimes, resorting to clusters of (more or less) like-minded states.

As a general principle, it is healthy to debate whether this quickly-changing world of ours can still be governed by methods and rules that were set more than half a century ago. It would be a cliché to state that the world in the twenty-first century is radically different from what it used to be fifty years ago; the same worn-out truth is that the aftershock waves of the end of the Cold War are still roaming and impact on realities

that used to be considered settled once and for all. Last, but not at all least, 9/11 is a turning point in the approach of global affairs: there are few days in the history of mankind that are credited with such far-reaching and complex consequences, in terms of both their scope and depth.

There are many issues at stake in this debate: multilateralism is about more than security—or, to be more accurate, security has become more than the absence of military threats, of acts of war or of terrorists. Likewise, the international institutions that were set up after WW II—and that have proliferated, as we shall see later on—have been constantly trying to cope with a reality that goes on being more dynamic, less predictable and even less manageable with old tools—be they time-proven ones.

One line of thinking would be to question whether it is worth wondering about our ability to keep up with what is going on around us. This does NOT mean that whatever is happening does so without us knowing about it—for it is us, after all, that are the direct producers of this change. But this very fact may be the reason of the confusion: the development of technology, information, communication, and everything else that we all know only too well, and which is flattening the world, as Friedman says, is enabling us to do things to our environment—in the wider sense—that would have effects about which we are not fully aware. We may be too close to the evolving picture—and too busy with making it develop.

This chapter is an attempt to cast a quick glance at what multilateralism was—or rather at how we have grown accustomed to see it—and then to be an invitation to pondering whether the multilateral approach is indeed in crisis. We might find that what we need to do is not necessarily an emergency intervention to resuscitate a deeply wounded phenomenon, but rather to think about the need to follow the 'breakthrough' pattern of almost everything that we, as a global community, have been doing for the last couple of decades. We may conclude that it is us who should be more daring and innovative, more forward-thinking and positive-acting rather than indulging in finger-pointing while cunningly ignoring what each of us—meaning nations of the world, or member-states of international organizations—should have done, and did not. In other words, the intervention may prove necessary, but not for bringing the system back to order, as much as for re-thinking and rehabilitating it, including by providing it with new tools, ways of decision-making and means of action.

WHAT MULTILATERALISM?

The literature on the topic has been growing apace and so did the alternatives, both conceptual and operational: Wallerstein writes about the 'soft multilateralism' of the United States;[1] important political statements refer to 'effective multilateralism';[2] and Robert Kagan predicts the advent of 'multilateralism American style'[3]—to name but a few. As for 'multilateral actions', there are more than a couple of instances where the educated Tom, Dick, and Harry would be in a really difficult position if they had to answer to a 'yes-or-nay' opinion poll on whether the attack on Iraq in 2003 was a result of a unilateral decision or the outcome of a multilateral endeavor; in this latter case, it is still unclear to what extent their opinions would be shaped by the (international) media.

It is not a mere coincidence that worries about the fate of multilateralism took shape and voice after the world had passed from a familiar multipolar system to something else. Some call it a unipolar order and acknowledge the supremacy of the United States in all the fields that count—from military might to the cultural performance; others noted years ago that, in certain aspects, there were emerging powers—be it in economics, finance, or trade—that would certainly contradict the widely-accepted perception of the two world superpowers.

In many respects, the roots of the 'conceptual confusion'[4] go beyond the political readiness to blame the powers that be, and merely express the degree of uncertainty that prevails on the theoretical approach of current global affairs. That the media is a political-decision shaper is part of the basic electoral training of any politician; yet, there are many

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[1] I. Wallerstein, 'Soft Multilateralism', in *The Nation*. www.thenation.com/doc/20040202/ wallerstein.

[2] The US–UK Joint Statement on Multilateralism, 20 November 2003. The Irish Presidency of the EU (first half of 2004) had used the same phrase in outlining its priorities.

[3] Robert Kagan, 'Multilateralism, American Style', in *The Washington Post*, 13 September 2002.

[4] This is the title of a chapter in John V. Oudenaren's paper, 'What is Multilateral?' in *Policy Review,* no. 117, February/March 2003. The confusion that Oudenaren is talking about is between multilateralism and multipolarity; it is our view that many aspects that are presented there may be related to the new reality of the global scene, which challenges theoretical approaches.

cases when major decisions were taken regardless of the public opinion, and *that* is also a well-known fact. The impact of the global information village is, alongside other globalized phenomena, another factor that renders the assessment of the true meaning of multilateralism difficult.

It could be readily agreed that '[i]*n the political sphere, multilateralism is embodied in the universally accepted obligations contained in the U.N. Charter, the provisions of international treaties, and customary international law*'.[5] However, '*multilateralism is easiest to define in economic affairs, where it remains the bedrock on which the international financing and trading systems are built*';[6] this seems to be such a well-known fact that the first line of the definition of multilateralism in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* reads '*an approach to international trade, the monetary system…*'[7] It is then safe to note that (a) the political meaning of multilateralism is rather loosely defined; and (b) it is in the economic domain that multilateralism has proved its resilience and strength. So, we may want to look closer to the economic multilateralism first, in order to see to what extent it is hurting. As a side-thought, we could discover that it is not the 'usual suspect' that is always to blame for unilateral attempts; it is also true that we may find that very few international actors can indulge in this dangerous kind of attitude any more. However, this chapter deals with the political aspects of multilateralism.

As mentioned before, the literature would reveal an interesting list of qualifications for the multilateralism that is seemingly taking shape nowadays: all of them are inciting and may be true, if put together into the same definition. It is a sign as to the multitude of aspects that one has to take into account when trying to find a way out of the dilemma.

To try to sort things out and reach a clear understanding of multilateralism in the Third Millennium is a challenge worth facing. Like in many other instances, it certainly is more feasible to put forward negative definitions and, sometimes, trace the causes of certain developments back to a source that everybody knows is there, somewhere, but very few—if at all—can really delineate. Looking at the trend-setting actions of US international policy, the debate seems to be rather '*less about unilateralism*

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Iain McLean, Alistair McMillan, eds, *Oxford—The Concise Dictionary of Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2nd edn, 2003, p. 356.

versus multilateralism than about the trade-offs of alternative strategies and frameworks of multilateral cooperation'.[8]

MULTILATERALISM SINCE WW II

It can be argued that multilateralism was born, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the League of Nations—and, more painful, of the last thirty-year World War, as some call it. There is also a common acceptance that multilateralism was a reality during the Cold War. However, during the Cold War, the UN was largely marginalized in international security issues, as the P-5 seldom succeeded in working together. Things have improved during the last decade of the last century, and ever since, with the notable three exceptions of the Middle East conflict, Kosovo, and Iraq. Three trends have developed:

a. international bodies have become more involved in internal matters of various states (there is also a conceptual breakthrough that has a Romanian touch: the resolution on democracy and the human rights, which is a Romanian initiative, introduced the term of 'democracy' in UN documents in 2000);

b. references to Chapter VII of the Charter have become more frequent (although the present Iranian file is an argument to the contrary…); and

c. the alternative of international administration of failed/collapsed states.[9]

Many analysts point to the second term of the Clinton administration in order to highlight the beginning of the erosion of multilateralism; yet, it is more accurate to consider that multilateralism, which was hailed as a new approach after 1945, seems to have a longer troubled record. Indeed, if multilateralism is to be equated, or at least, closely related to the UN, then it would be but normal to conclude that it has been sharing the fate of the latter. Consequently, the syllogism would run like:

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[8] Shepard Forman and Stewart Patrick, *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement*, Carnegie Endowment for Peace (edited transcript of remarks, 5 February 2002 www.cceia.org/viewMedia.php/prmTemplateID/8/prmID/127.

[9] Shepard Forman, Kishore Mahbubani and David Malone, *Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, edited transcript of remarks, 24 April 2003, Carnegie Council panel discussion. www.cceia.org/viewMedia.php/prmTemplateID/8/prmID/933#2.

- multilateralism is linked to the UN;
- the UN has been under permanent pressure to reform;
- multilateralism is undergoing deep reform.

It may well be that the feelings towards the ways in which the world used to be ruled during the second half of the twentieth century are somehow distorted by the nostalgia of the '*good old times when one knew who is against what*'.[10] The bipolar world has deep roots in the geopolitics of the confrontation era and not even the NAM could do much about it. The Agenda for Development (1994) admitted that 'development is in crisis' and that the 'poorest nations fall further behind'. This came after the Third Development Decade had proved to be as less successful as the previous two decades.

On a scale wider than development issues, the multilateral environment has undergone tremendous changes since the end of WW II: the UN membership; more and more International Governmental Organizations, or IGOs, whose expenses are public money, go beyond $ 200 billion a year and are hardly accountable; the stunning number of 5,000 international treaties and conventions; and the increasingly strong positions and influence of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)—to name but a few. At the same time, a major trend has developed, which may be called the democratization of the international environment: it consists of the increasing number of the players that have the world as a stage. This number is made of states; business entities, whose net profits surpass sometime national budgets; organizations that are bringing together public and private partners; the media, both national and international, as sometimes it is difficult to tell one from the other— the list can go on. One of the magic links that binds these actors and makes their interaction not only possible, but also effective, is the information technology—the Internet and the world wide web that has reached the point when nobody can afford to ignore it, at their own loss.

There are other actors too, less traditional in terms of identity, yet not less efficient and, in some cases, even more visible than well-established IGOs. The life-record of the G-8 is a telling illustration of multilateral approaches of another kind: as the group arose informally during the

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[10] Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations—order and chaos in the twentieth first century*, Atlantic Monthly Press, New York, 2003, p. 164: 'Pleas for multilateralism by European countries […] may reflect a nostalgia for Cold War days when Europe was at the centre of a global struggle in a world in which there was still some military balance.'

1970s from the meetings of finance ministers arranged by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of the then West Germany, its main agenda was economic. As the years went by, this field, even if increasingly complex, has gained fellow agenda-items, like non-proliferation, promotion of democracy, fighting pandemics like AIDS and combating counterfeiting and piracy. Moreover, participation in these meetings began to widen, and representatives of developing countries and emerging economies are now regular guests. The latest event in this respect—i.e. the St. Petersburg meeting—also provides the most recent evidence about the possible increasing significance of such formats on major international developments: the second paragraph of the G-8 statement on trade urged the WTO members '*to commit to the concerted leadership and action needed to reach a successful conclusion of the Doha round*' and called on the Director General to facilitate '*agreement on negotiating modalities on agriculture and industrial tariffs within a month*'.[11]

REACTIONS TO PRESSURES ON MULTILATERALISM

Following these developments, multilateralism has been under pressure, as a concept and, even more important, as a practice. As a result, two trends of thought have basically emerged:

a. multilateralism is undermined, basically by the sole superpower in a unipolar world: action is needed to recover its strength; or

b. multilateralism needs to adapt: hence, *the effective multilateralism*, which *will guide our approach (*the US/UK Joint Statement on Multilateralism, 2003, November 20)

The first trend seems to be rooted in the logic of the Confrontation Age, even if there is truth in the assertion that '[w]*hatever the United States does has global consequences. That cannot be said for most other countries. Given that basic imbalance, there are naturally diverging views about the merits of multilateralism*.' (*Globalist*, 8 April 2004). At the same time, to recognize that one—or just a couple—of states can exert a critical influence on the course of the international developments is merely to admit a reality; but it is also a step on the slippery slope of mixing equal sovereignty with equal power. It is obvious that all actors on the world stage are not stars; it is also morally binding to allow all of them to live

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[11] en.g8russia.ru/docs/16.html.

their parts to the best of their abilities. This is what the Charter of the UN pledges to do and this is what all who have signed it and gained a seat in the General Assembly expect to happen. Many critics of the US 'unilateralism' seem to be persuaded that '*all the United States needs to do to put the country back on track is to return to the policies of the past thirty years*'.[12] Then, again, it seems that even in the United States, the debate between multilateralists and unilateralists is about 'style and tactics', since '[m]*ost would rather have allies. They just don't want the United States prevented from acting alone if the allies refuse to come along*'.[13] The question is: are the options that are put forward, anything more than a conservationist approach to a changing environment?

At the end of the day, this looks much like the age-long tension between the old—i.e. the 'known' reality, with its ups and downs, with its several 'good things' and many 'bad things' that we have grown accustomed to and so, they don't scare us, even if they do cause problems; and the 'fear of the unknown', the threat of the new, the familiar apprehension of the things that have not been done before (especially in rather conservative institutions like the MFAs and/or the international organizations). As we are going to see further on, the 'new' here is actually the day-to-day events of the increasingly interdependent international environment; and this is one of the features of globalization—a reality that is taking shape as we try to manage it. In a sense, it is like adjusting the rules of the game while the play is still on; not that decision-makers and policy-planners have not done that before! But never before has this environment been so complex and inter-related, while the intellectual exercise and the political and diplomatic tool-kit still has a long way to go in terms of being updated.

The second tendency seems to pay more attention to the reality-check: there are instances when old solutions, even if successfully tried, simply do not work. The example that has become classical now, not because of age, but because of repetition and complexity, is the anti-terrorism fight. The arguments are well known, so there is no need to repeat them here; what is worth mentioning though is the importance that the anti-terrorism camp gives to 'out-of-the-box' methods and ways of action. The cooperation and open dialogue among intelligence agencies, as well

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[12] I. Wallerstein, op. cit.
[13] R. Kagan, op.cit.

as the amount of creativity that is needed to tackle a phenomenon that means more than relatively small-scale attacks on predominantly civilian targets, call for new structures, new organizational skills—and new thinking. Likewise, the intricate causes of the increasing intolerance, xenophobia, racism, hatred, and rejection of dialogue are demanding holistic approaches and comprehensive understanding.

Terrorism is not the only phenomenon that calls for updated political and diplomatic tool-kits. The 'soft-security' challenges, the unconventional threats, the already globalized information community shaped by the communication opportunities provided by the Internet are as many developments that defy traditional posturing and even good results that have been obtained so far in specialized intergovernmental organizations. Migration and pandemics are processes that cannot be monitored, and even less contained any more by resorting to existing mechanisms—the more so when those mechanisms are faulty, slow, and costly.

Hence, the need to reform—or to re-create. The reform exercise of the UN is a good example at hand, for both success (the Peace Building Commission, the Human Rights Council) and failure (the management reform). Then, again, the call for reform is by no means new: the debate on the reform of the Security Council has been there for the last thirty years and more; at a lesser scale, the UN Economic Commission for Europe underwent a reform a decade ago or so, yet it is by the beginning of 2006 that its present shape was agreed upon, along with new programs and ways of action that have still to pass the test of action. Reform of the International Labour Organisation has been the Number One priority of its Director General since his first days in office:[14] by its very nature of having a tri-partite membership—i.e. the governments, the employers, and the trade unions—the ILO has provided *avant la lettre* for the circumstance that would allow the private sector to become more involved in global decision-making structures. The examples of attempted reform are abundant; the success stories are not. Why?

The debate between the proponents of either of the two trends is unfolding in a rather unfriendly environment. For one thing, the first decade(s) of the post-Cold War, just when the general feeling was that the age of confrontation was gone, triggered a chain of most tragic conflicts, some in areas that seemed to be quiet and settled. They also brought back

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[14] Meeting with the author.

to the fore, with a vengeance, the issues of deepening gaps between the development levels of various regions of the world. The tone of the debates itself has turned sour and is full of recriminations, mutual accusations, and distrust. There was a feeling of *déjà-vu* during the statements of speakers at the Summit that was supposed to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the UN: the Millennium Declaration is less than expected when one looks at it as a road-map to reform the organization. The old dividing lines between the North and the South are reinforced.

Sometimes, it seems that policy-makers and analysts alike compete in ignoring the changes that have occurred since the end of the Cold War, in the sense that their meaning is underrated. Dr Kissinger's recommendation for the Americans may be true for others as well: '*For Americans, understanding the contemporary situation must begin with the recognition that its disturbances are not temporary interruptions of the beneficiary status-quo*'.[15] It is true that the time that has passed since the end of the Cold War is too short for a comprehensive image of its results to be drawn; yet, there is a paradoxical tendency for people clinging to patterns of thought and, more intriguingly, of action, that were right—once.

There is another paradox to be noticed when looking into the developments of international relations: while some dividing lines look stronger, even if they seem to be shifting with other criteria—e.g. Huntington's theory—there is a growing consensus on the ever-thinner dividing line between internal policy and international affairs. The number of actors that are involved in managing the international relations is on the increase, while their identities more and more mirror the multitude of the stake-holders—and decision-shaping—that are legitimized to be active in home affairs.

Attempts to adapt to the new realities are made. The 2003 US–UK Joint Statement on Multilateralism includes four major challenges to multilateralism and highlights several actions that are needed under the guidance of effective multilateralism. The hierarchy of the challenges that is outlined by the order of their listing is significant: all of them bear on security, in the wider sense that was mentioned before; another important aspect that is outlined in the Statement is the contents of the actions that are taken into account in order to meet those challenges.

[15] Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?*, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, New York, 2001, p. 20.

Challenges	Actions
global terrorism	continue the fight against international terrorism
the spread of WMDs	strengthen global efforts against proliferators of WMDs
poverty and disease	• promote global health • support development in Africa • advance an open trade regime • increase technological cooperation on cleaner energy
hostile dictators who oppress their own people and threaten peace	promote freedom in the nations of the greater Middle East

From this point of view, the four lines of action that are needed to tackle poverty and disease put that challenge on the front line, as the most complex and compelling.

Several weeks prior to this statement, Kofi Annan had admitted publicly that: 'We cannot take it for granted that our multilateral institutions are strong enough to cope with all these challenges'. One issue commands attention: if it is true that 'unilateralism, like beauty, often lies in the eye of the beholder. One man's unilateralism is another's determined leadership',[16] then it follows that the action needed to respond to the Secretary General's warning has to be the result of decisiveness on behalf of the parties that are targeted by these challenges. The dilemma here seems to be that, under the globalization process, *all* members of the international community—which is a rather fuzzy term to define, though—are supposed to agree on taking a shared initiative in order to adapt the components of multilateralism. The 'effective multilateralism' was defined as 'getting the various international organizations to work more effectively together and recognizing that global security can only be achieved through collective action by the international community as a whole'.[17]

But there are not only new threats—there are also new realities in terms of who is supposed to deal with them:

[16] Pascal Lamy, EU Trade Commissioner, June 2001.

[17] Minister Cowen of Ireland address at the Conference on Conflict Prevention, on 2 April 2004, www.eu2004.ie/templates/news.asp?sNavlocator=66&list_id= 497.

In political and security terms, complex new threats are emerging, along with new centres of power. We are moving to a system of continents. And we all know that in a borderless world, events in faraway places affect our own security. It therefore is in our interest to be engaged in conflict prevention and crisis management. In this new security environment, we must be alert and creative. Above all, we need to be united. On our own, we are political midgets. Policy takers. Condemned to drown in the maelstrom of events. But together we can help to shape the global agenda. Not resist globalization but perhaps negotiate its terms. Not impose our views but get a hearing for them: in Washington today and Beijing tomorrow.[18]

From such programmatic statements and commitments, it is quite clear that there is a general consent on the need to reform. There is a flood of working groups, task-forces and forums of debate gathering together eminent personalities, outstanding names in the international community, who represent, indeed, the best that the intellectual resources of the peoples and nations of the world can put forward. Their recommendations cover all sides of the multilateral system, from basic documents of the organizations that make up this system, to their working methods, rules of procedure and, not least important, their budgets. Yet, the results are modest. The reasons are many—and most of them are both well-known and true. To go beyond this deadlock, it may be worth accepting, for instance, that *priorities are not mutually exclusive.* This calls for a holistic approach, as there is a growing consensus on the deep connections that underlay them.

Perhaps the most difficult choice is between *what is right and what is easy.* In many places, participants at the debates about what is to be done to increase the efficiency of the multilateral institutions are tempted to surrender to the strong bureaucracy of those institutions, even if they strongly advocate the 'member-driven' principle in their work. Concrete steps that would allow for more flexible and less costly structures are, however, hard to implement. Some of the contradictions that hinder their implementation are generated by the feeling that, since the largest part of the contributions to this or that organization comes from certain countries, it is their right to have a larger say in how things are run there; others consider

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[18] J. Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, at the conference 'The Sound of Europe'—Salzburg, 27 January 2006; www.eu2006.at/en/News/Speeches_Interviews /2701solana.html

geographical representation as the paramount criterion in both the staffing and management of the organization and, by doing so, are tempted to belittle the importance of professional competence; there are also those who are persuaded that all organizations should be focused on the developing part of the world only, so that the essence of multilateralism be an aid for development, as a moral duty of that part of the world which is better off.

WHICH OF THE TWO TRENDS IS CLOSER TO THE MARK?

There are several questions that, when answered, may help the endeavor to solve the issue of whether multilateralism needs to be resuscitated or changed—that is, adapted to the new realities.

Is multilateralism an issue about leadership?

Multilateralism was born in a time of crises. Leaders took the initiative to solve problems, and they came from those who had both the power and the means to do so. Now, we live in a globalized world; it is more democratic in many respects—more than sometimes we care to admit: information, travel, even participation. But even democracies need leadership; a collective one, based on those 'non-mutually exclusive priorities' and dialogue. Indeed, action is to debates what eating is for the pudding. According to UN folklore, Geneva is the 'workshop', while New York is the 'talk-shop'; putting aside the malicious ring of this sentence, the UN as a whole should turn from a 'decision-making shop' to a 'result-producing shop'. In this endeavor, the credibility problem that so severely undermines the UN can be solved by a strong and democratic leadership that would resist the temptation of smaller-scale arrangements to tackle global challenges. At the same time, responsibility starts at home—and that means, among other things, that no ready-made solution can work by merely transposing ideas into another environment, nor that resources alone can do the job that is supposed to be first and foremost, locally owned.

Can multilateralism be an issue about national sovereignty?

The European Union is the most complex example of the relationship between multilateralism and national sovereignty. Yet, on a global scale,

the national sovereignty is still young in historical terms, and jealously guarded. At the same time, going alone is easier to sell at the domestic political market, as it is more convenient to look for external reasons of hardships and even failures. There are, of course, instances when the outside interference is to blame; it is even easier to find culprits elsewhere in this globalized environment. The choice between what is right and what is easy, which was mentioned before, also applies here. One of the most common reactions when facing danger is to shut yourself in; by doing so, the world is shut out. In other terms, the increasing nationalism—be it in economy, culture, employment, or wherever—is an attempt to elude responsibility. Yet, sovereignty confers not only rights, but also responsibilities, including the one of building the ability to work with others.

Could it be that we need a new *multilateralism?*

It is hard to imagine that the world of changes can be managed by remaining stuck in a frozen frame. As 'nothing comes from nothing', we should build on what is positive and discard failures. The United Nations are a step onwards in the evolution of mankind's approach to its fate. Its fundamentals remain true; its methods of work, organization and management need something that is more than a mere adaptation to new realities. It needs creativity and courage to do things that were never done before; it also needs the hard, tough love of honesty and unselfishness.

Diplomatic services and emerging multidisciplinary issues, such as Internet Governance

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THIS CHAPTER TAKES THE EVOLUTION OF TRADITIONAL, 'BEHIND CLOSED doors' diplomacy to public diplomacy as a starting point and aims to explore how new forms of multi-stakeholder cooperation and new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) affect multilateral diplomacy. The Internet in this context is both a tool and an object of multilateral cooperation.

This chapter makes the case that there is no clear-cut distinction between the 'old' and the 'new'. Traditional diplomacy coexists with public and cyber-diplomacy. Metternich and Talleyrand would still feel at home in many meetings of various multilateral fora. However, the process of democratization that has taken place since the Congress of Vienna has led to an increased transparency and openness in the conduct of diplomatic negotiations. Secret negotiations do not fit any more into a modern democracy where voters want to exercise ultimate control over those who negotiate treaties. The increased interaction between governments and voters has made secret diplomacy increasingly difficult. Governments had to explain what they were doing if they wanted their projects to be approved. Negotiations behind closed doors would have been counterproductive if at the end parliaments or voters were not happy with the outcome. Switzerland is a case in point: in 1909, a deal negotiated by the government with Germany over the use of the St. Gotthard railway tunnel triggered popular resistance and led to a referendum in which Swiss voters gave themselves the last word in foreign relations. Ever since

then, major treaties have been subject to a vote. Swiss voters rejected joining the European Economic Area, but approved joining the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations as well as various bilateral treaties with the European Union (EU). The democratization of foreign policy has also taken place in other countries. In particular, voting on treaties within the EU and on the EU's relationship with other countries has become widespread. In some cases, voters refused what their governments had proposed: Norway voted twice on joining the European Union and twice said no to the government proposals, while voters in France and the Netherlands forced the European Union to rethink its project of a European Constitution.

Thus, secret diplomacy has gradually turned into public diplomacy. This development has been enhanced by the increasingly important role of television as the main vehicle of communication. The establishment of global news channels facilitates virtual negotiations. A press conference in Washington can be watched simultaneously all over the world by whoever has an interest at stake. World leaders therefore have taken to the use of TV as a tool to conduct diplomacy.

The Internet has led to yet another quantum leap. It has both become a tool for cooperation and also the subject of negotiation. The Internet, as a network of networks, has a long tradition of bottom-up cooperation and multi-stakeholder involvement. It was developed with government financing, but outside government interference. First, it was used by the academic and scientific communities before it was opened to commercial use in the 1990s.

Non-government actors were the first to spot the potential that the new medium offered. It facilitated the networking of advocacy groups and led to coalitions of NGOs who manifested themselves as actors on the global scene, who have to be taken seriously. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, was this first significant milestone in this regard. By then, the Internet had moved from being a tool for a few academics to a global communication facility. During the 1990s, much of the energy of civil society focused on resistance to globalization. The capacity to mobilize global resistance became particularly visible around conferences of the World Trade Organization (WTO). At the Third Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Seattle in 1999, the anti-globalization movement was well prepared and managed to attract a broad coalition of various, sometimes

bizarre, advocacy groups which managed to impose their agenda and force negotiators to abandon their project of launching a new round of global trade negotiations. Without the Internet, the anti-globalization movement would not have been able to establish itself as a force to be reckoned with. It would not have been able to stage the violent protests against the G8 Summits in Genoa and Evian, and the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos. The WEF itself is a powerful example of informal networking and interaction between business and government, while the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre illustrates the capability of civil society to contribute peacefully to the shaping of a global policy dialogue.

Thus, the emergence of new actors on the global scene was intimately linked to the new role of the Internet as a main backbone of global communication. It was therefore not surprising that the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) raised high expectations among non-government actors. The relevant Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly (A/Res/56/183, adopted on 21 December 2001) specifically invited NGOs, civil society, and the private sector 'to actively participate in the inter-governmental preparatory process of the Summit and the Summit itself'. Many non-state representatives interpreted this resolution to mean that they would participate as equals. However, reality soon set in. The rules of procedure adopted by the WSIS Preparatory Committee in June 2003 reflected the international consensus on how to allow civil society and private sectors to participate. They made it clear that governments remained in charge. However, it was interesting to note that in the course of the various preparatory conferences leading up to the Summit in 2003 these rules were interpreted more and more liberally. At the first phase of the Summit in 2003, when a compromise seemed almost impossible, governments decided to revert to their old practices. They locked out all non-government actors and negotiated behind closed doors. By so doing, they finally managed to reach compromise solutions. After the Geneva phase of the Summit, the multi-stakeholder cooperation within the WSIS framework evolved further and the different stakeholders began to trust each other. In the end, at the second phase of the Summit in Tunis in 2005, the non-government stakeholders were not locked out anymore during the final phase of the negotiations.

The first phase of WSIS in Geneva in 2003 also saw the beginning of a debate on a new issue on the international agenda—Internet governance. In the context of discussions on global governance, Governments have

been confronted with other stakeholders requesting to be allowed to participate in decision-making arrangements. The debate on Internet governance followed an opposite pattern. Here, Governments wanted to obtain a say in the running of the Internet, which has developed outside a classical intergovernmental framework. The Internet's infrastructure has been managed in an informal but effective collaboration between various institutions, with private businesses, civil society, and the academic and technical communities taking the lead. For historical reasons, the United States has the ultimate authority over some of its core resources. This situation has led to some political friction, as many countries hold the view that this authority should be shared with the international community, preferably in a traditional intergovernmental setting.

The final WSIS documents—*The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*—asks the United Nations Secretary-General to create a new multi-stakeholder place for a policy dialogue—the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The debate started by WSIS is not conclusive, but it marked the beginning of a process that can be described as a dialogue between the world of governments and the Internet community—the group of scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs who developed and deployed the Internet. In the context of the debate on Internet governance, the Internet professionals, technicians, engineers, and institutions, the 'Internet community' reaffirmed their claim as a fourth category of stakeholders. This new Forum is in the early stages. Multi-stakeholder cooperation will be its hallmark and also its main challenge.

The recognition of the merits of multi-stakeholder cooperation should not blur the distinction between the different roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group. There is an emerging common understanding that not all stakeholders have to participate on an equal footing in all bodies, or that their role varies according to the function of the process concerned. However, this is part of an ongoing debate. Some government representatives hold the view that national sovereignty and international law must remain the keystone of any international governance system, while civil society in particular argues that on the global level we have to go beyond that thinking in terms of national sovereignty and the nation state. They argue that international cooperation should be interpreted in a new and broader environment and include players with different legal status. This emerging new multi-stakeholder approach, involving governments, the private sector, civil society, and the Internet community,

would suggest the need for a new conceptual framework which is on the one hand embedded in the existing system of international law, but goes on the other hand beyond this, bringing other type of norms (for example, non-binding 'soft governance' or self-regulation) to global governance concepts.

This chapter concludes that the emergence of non-government actors on the multilateral scene will require diplomats to interact with people with a variety of backgrounds and adapt to new technologies. Like most professional groups, diplomats quite naturally prefer to be among themselves. Often they have more in common with colleagues in the service of other governments than their own countrymen from a different walk of life. Diplomats understand each other and know their own behavioral codes and protocols. An interaction with other stakeholders requires an adaptation to a different professional culture. However, diplomats are well equipped for this challenge, as their background, especially the experience acquired in bilateral postings, makes them sensitive to cultural differences. The WSIS experience showed that non-government actors appreciated diplomatic skills. Ultimately, all participants in the dialogue between government and non-government actors agreed that they learned from each other.

The Internet presents a challenge of a different kind. Civil society and the Internet community are both extremely well equipped for online discussions—this is their daily bread. Government representatives, however, have to adapt to the new tools that the Internet has to offer. To conduct negotiations online presents different challenges from traditional face-to-face negotiations. The opportunities are there for the diplomat or government official who is able to form coalitions with non-governmental actors and who is quick at developing his or her thoughts in an online discussion. The challenge is to defend an official position without getting too personal or too spontaneous in a discussion with other stakeholders, as there is always the risk of a breach of confidentiality.

Furthermore, the Internet with its distributed structure and its bottom-up approach to any form of governance is diametrically opposed to the traditional pyramid structures of government. The Internet empowers individuals and not structures. There is ample evidence from economic studies that those companies which adapted their management structures to the flat hierarchies of the Internet were the ones who benefited most from this new medium. While the business of government is different

from the business of doing business, there may nevertheless be some merit in looking at successful models.

Diplomatic services therefore will have to think on three tracks on how to adapt themselves to these new challenges: how to train diplomats to interact with new actors; how to make the best possible use of the Internet; and also how to adapt their own structures to benefit most from the Internet. There is no simple solution to these challenges. Training diplomats may be easier than adapting structures.

The Modernization of the Lithuanian Consular Service in Response to Global Challenges

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THE MAIN GOAL OF MODERNIZATION IS TO OPTIMIZE THE LITHUANIAN consular service by ensuring effective and high-quality consular assistance to the citizens, creating more favorable conditions for the development of tourist, business and cultural ties with other countries, and by performing consular functions in accordance with European Union and Schengen legal acts.

It is important to note that people evaluate the work of the whole Ministry based on their encounters with consular officers. In general, a person does not care much about the priorities of the Lithuanian foreign policy; what he is primarily interested in is routine issues, which needs resolving by an embassy or a consulate. Inadequate consular assistance taints the whole institution. The Ministry recognizes what great responsibility lies in the hands of the consular officers as it undertakes the modernization of the Lithuanian consular service.

The Lithuanian consular service is coordinated by the Consular Department within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

There are:

- 50 employees at the Consular Department (the largest in the Ministry, 21 employees out of 50 work with Special Kaliningrad Transit Scheme);
- 5 divisions at the Consular Department;
- 34 embassies and 10 consular posts abroad where consular services are provided;
- 71 diplomats abroad;

- 13 civil servants abroad;
- 33 technical staff abroad.

Consular workload has been increasing every year. Since the year 2000, it increased several times in all areas.

After Lithuania became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004, hundreds of thousands of Lithuanian citizens left for various European countries. This triggered a sharp increase in the need for consular services abroad. Incoming tourism is also on the rise.

A good example of how much the consular workload has increased is the number of visas bing issued. This figure had increased twice over the last five years, despite the fact that the list of countries whose citizens do not require a visa to come to Lithuania is constantly growing. The graph shows that over five years, the number of visas issued by Lithuania has doubled.
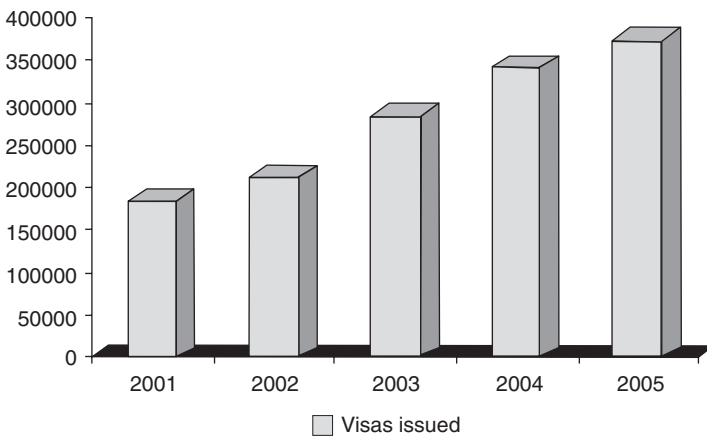
In the year 2002, as part of the preparations to join the EU, the government of Lithuania adopted a program for the expansion of consular services. It was mainly oriented as a response to the expected increase in the visa issuance rate in the neighboring countries following Lithuania's EU accession. The growth of consular services in these countries has another impetus, as Lithuania is striving to be among the regional leaders, and maintains a close cooperation with the countries on the eastern border of the EU.

Lithuania is planning to join the group of Schengen signatures next year. While preparing for the accession, the Ministry is paying special

attention to the quality of the consular services and their conformity
with EU standards.

In the past few years, the Lithuanian Consular Service had to come
to terms with new realities, such as natural disasters and international
terrorism. These challenges require an adequate consular response.

The Ministry's goal is to optimize the consular service by:

- providing a more effective and better quality of consular assistance,
- streamlining administrative apparatus, and
- working together with EU partners to make the consular service more
  available and more accessible.

The Ministry sees a two-dimensional approach to the consular
reform: quantitative and qualitative.

In terms of quantitative reforms, the Ministry plans to redistribute
consular staff effectively within the Ministry and abroad, as well as come
up with an adequate number of consular offices abroad.

The aim is to evaluate the embassies and the consular offices, based on
the scope and complexity of the services performed by each. The embassies
and the consular offices, which carry out high-volume and particularly
complicated consular services need an adequate number of diplomats or
technical staff to accomplish those tasks. Some representations may need
only one consular officer. In other cases, a diplomat working in another
capacity at a representation may be assigned consular responsibilities as
well. The prioritization of the embassies and the consular offices allows
for economizing as well as the efficient use of limited resources. Periodic
evaluations of embassies and consular offices are necessary as the scope
and complexity of consular work may change in certain countries due
to political, economic, social, and other developments there.

An establishment of a consulate in India is of immediate concern,
because of a significant increase in the number of Lithuanian citizens
traveling to India. Also, the issuance of visas to Indian citizens and citizens
of its neighboring countries travelling to Lithuania has always been
problematic. The idea of establishing a Lithuanian consulate in India
receives strong support from the Lithuanian business community as well.

Other countries that have a need for Lithuanian consular services are
Australia, Brazil, South Africa, and Thailand. The Ministry is considering
the possibility of establishing a consulate in the Far East of the Russian
Federation, as Lithuania has a sizeable Lithuanian community there
comprised of deportees and or descendants sent to labor camps and

prisons during the Stalin era. The presence of a substantial Lithuanian community in a certain country or its region is one of the key factors that the Ministry takes into account when considering the establishment of an embassy or a consulate.

In the past year, Lithuania established consular representation in
* Georgia
* Hungary
* Valencia (Spain)
* Romania
* Moldova

The workload of the Consular Assistance Division at the Consular Department encompasses ten different function groups. The head of the Division has to sign from 100 to 250 documents every day as well as deal with the different types of problems which arise on the daily basis. In order to better coordinate and balance the workload of the Consular Assistance Division, it would be expedient to subdivide the above said unit into two entities:
* Consular Assistance Division, which would focus on accidents, deaths, detained citizens, extraditions, legal assistance requests, victims of human trafficking, child care, and any consular crisis abroad, and
* Citizens Services Division, which would deal with citizenship, passports, travel documents, certificates, document legalization, and civil registry issues.

The events of the past few years, such as the tsunami in Southeast Asia, terrorist bombings in Turkey, Egypt, Spain, USA, UK, along with airplane and automobile accidents have shown that any state must have a professional rapid-reaction consular assistance team or teams. The success of any operation depends mainly on professionalism and speed. The Ministry is in the process of establishing such teams, which will be specially trained and ready to be dispatched to the crisis areas around the world.

The best measures to respond to crises have also been developed at the EU level, within the Consular working group (COCON) at the European Council. Crisis prevention and action to be taken to ensure effective performance and cooperation with other members, are the main topics during the meetings of COCON.

As Lithuania prepares to join Schengen (the Agreement) there is a need for a special secretariat within the Consular Department to work on it.

The secretariat would allow the rest of the Department to focus on its everyday and direct responsibilities. The Schengen Secretariat would deal specifically with:

- Consistent preparation for the meetings with appropriate EU working groups and committees;
- Coordination of work among various institutions and the formation of a common Lithuanian position;
- Search for common interests with other states in pursuit of certain political goals;
- Establishment of Lithuania as one of the centers for meetings of consultants and experts from the new Schengen states;
- Collection and archiving of all the documentation resulting from the work in the above-mentioned EU structures.

It is planned that the Schengen Secretariat will have three employees: two diplomats and one technical staff member. Consultations have begun with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding possible training opportunities for the Secretariat staff.

The Republic of Lithuania has implemented a Project entitled 'Development and Introduction of the Technical and Information Infrastructure of the Lithuanian National Schengen Information System'. A part of the project is the implementation of the Visa Information System (VIS). The basis of VIS is a proper functioning of 'Consular Procedures Management System (CPMS)', which encompasses a computerized visa issuance system.

The Consular Procedures Management System (CPMS) consists of several computer modules used for visa processing and issuance, and the management of documentation flows among the embassies, consulates, and the Ministry.

The Ministry has provided the embassies and consulates with the necessary computer equipment. The CPMS is used in all of 34 embassies and 10 consulates.

As a part of its consular modernization process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is furthering cooperation between other Lithuanian institutions. The Ministry is planning to formally request the Ministry of Interior to delegate special migration attachés to assist the consular staff at certain embassies or consulates abroad. For example, Lithuanian embassies in the United Kingdom and Ireland are faced with a great amount of work related to citizenship and passport issues. The assistance of special

migration attachés would be very useful. The Ministry is considering other types of special attachés such as a special police attaché or special attaché for diaspora affairs to take away certain responsibilities from the consular officers.

An agreement was reached with Spain on the consular representation of Lithuania in Brazil within Spanish diplomatic missions and the representation of Spain in Georgia within the Lithuanian mission. The agreement is among the very first of this type in EU.

An agreement with Hungary is being finalized on consular representation of Lithuania in New Delhi (India). Similar agreements are under consideration with other EU countries.

A legal reform of the consular service is also underway. The adoption of the new Consular Statute is in the final stages at the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas) and drafts of over 20 other legal acts are being prepared. The Consular Department has published the Consular Guide as a reference source used by consular officers performing their duties. Consular training will be reformed and formalized, and consular training for officers being posted abroad will be extended to four weeks. The establishment of the 'Consular Academy' is under consideration to perform instructions for consular officers working abroad, to organize regional and other types of training.

The need to provide our citizens abroad with an efficient and quality consular assistance guaranteed by various national legal acts and international agreements requires a modernization of the Lithuanian Consular Service. The Ministry sees it as an inevitable and ongoing process geared towards responding to new challenges and implementing common EU initiatives.

MFAs and the Rising Challenge of Consular Affairs
Cinderella in the Limelight

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THE PRIORITIZATION OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS

PRACTITIONERS OF DIPLOMACY GENERALLY DO NOT HOLD CONSULAR AFFAIRS in high regard. To be sure, in most countries the Cinderella Service, as D.C.M. Platt famously called consular work, is hardly a launch pad for a fast-track diplomatic career. Neither do consular affairs appeal sufficiently to students of diplomacy to merit much study and reflection. But there are clear signs that the tide is changing, at least for practitioners. An increasing number of foreign ministries is now taking a closer look at what was once widely considered as an essentially second-class activity for ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs). Consular affairs are becoming a core task for the MFA. The globalization process and instability are two ingredients of international relations that make people travel overseas in increasingly large numbers, and that may help get them into trouble in foreign lands. Changing patterns of international tourism, cross-border crime, international terrorism, and natural disasters account for a surge in consular challenges. The terrorist attacks of September 2001, and the subsequent Bali bombings and the Asian tsunami, have for instance served as eye-openers for countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada, and Sweden. Other countries have reasons of their own to prioritize consular affairs.

For MFAs it can be difficult to meet the demands of citizens in distress,

and parliament and the press come into the picture almost automatically. They tend to give a great deal of attention to human-interest issues that, have after all the special quality of attracting voters and readers. In defence of the onslaught of public opinion, the needs of individual citizens are firmly on the diplomatic agenda. Today foreign ministries acknowledge that part of their mission is to deliver services to their own citizens—and MFAs are constantly reminded that the perceived quality of such services has a direct bearing on the MFAs own reputation at home. It should therefore not be surprising that in an increasing number of MFAs, consular affairs nowadays receive attention at the highest levels. As one diplomat described his superiors' attitudes towards consular affairs, 'the people at the top are like re-born Christians'. The prioritization of consular affairs by senior management has generally however not filtered through to the lower levels. A rather lukewarm attitude to consular affairs seems to dominate in the rank and file of most MFAs. Many individual practitioners still consider consular services as a separate activity, and one that is in fact outside the realm of 'real' diplomacy: consular officers deal with citizens' concerns and are not in the business of managing change in international relations. Sometimes diplomacy and consular affairs are even juxtaposed as fundamentally distinct activities taking place in the same professional environment.

The new emphasis that consular affairs receives in a number of recent MFA strategy documents is not a matter of intrinsic vision nor a result of long-term planning. It is first of all an institutional response to the increasing demands of government assistance to citizens abroad, and also an implicit recognition that consular affairs are part of a wider phenomenon affecting MFAs. Like the current surge in public diplomacy activities, the rising challenge in consular affairs is evidence of a strengthening nexus between diplomacy and society, a trend towards a growing 'societization' of diplomacy. As a Danish report on managing foreign affairs put it:

> The classic distinction between high-priority sovereign representation and the relatively low-priority service tasks of MFAs and their representations is no longer accepted, as MFAs are turning into public-service organizations responsible for handling a mixture of tasks, whose relative priority is not given in advance. In one context the classic diplomatic tasks may take

precedence, while in another the overarching task is to cope with problems related to international migration or mass tourism.[1]

Consular services are, in other words, part of broader developments in contemporary diplomatic practice. Many individual citizens with no particular interest in foreign policy or diplomacy have discovered the relevance of the MFA as a result of their own increasingly international lifestyles. They see consular affairs as 'diplomacy for people' and consular affairs can therefore be seen as an activity that helps strengthen the bond between the MFA and its domestic constituency.

For the MFA, the consular job has, however, a clear element of risk. MFAs that fail to live up to the expectations of citizens in distress, as many of them have learned the hard way, may be crucified by the press and expect a barrage of questions in parliament. The fact of the matter is that the MFA's domestic reputation is dependent to a large degree on its perceived success in meeting citizens' expectations in the field of consular affairs. This poses a dilemma. There is a drive towards a professionalization of consular affairs and the meeting of growing public expectations. That external pressure on the MFA is, however, accompanied by a quiet call for 'expectation management' within the ministry, and a confidential debate as to where the limits of consular services lie.

This chapter is meant as an introductory discussion of consular affairs as a new priority for foreign ministries. It was written parallel to a pilot project on consular affairs commissioned by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[2] In line with the project for the Netherlands MFA, consular affairs is here limited to assistance to nationals abroad, and the chapter does not deal with immigration matters, i.e. assistance to foreigners, or other issues such as for instance the political role of consulates. Rather than treating the subject exhaustively, we merely highlight the growing importance of consular affairs by discussing selected issues and some of the principal challenges facing the MFA. Our focus is on external trends and triggers for the professionalization of consular affairs within the MFA, the creation of a legal framework and consular networks, and MFAs'

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[1] Jorgen Gronnegaard Christensen and Nikolaj Petersen, *Managing Foreign Affairs: A Comparative Perspective*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Studies, 2005, p. 41.

[2] Maaike Heijmans and Jan Melissen, 'Consulaire Zaken en Diplomatie. Buitenlandse Zaken met Binnenlandse Prioriteiten.' The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2006, 128 pp (not published).

dealings with the media and the public. Finally, for the purposes of future research and a broader perspective, the final section of the chapter raises some questions on consular affairs in the context of the changing nature of diplomatic practice. Our overview starts with a brief historical perspective on the subject.

FROM TRADE INTERESTS TO CITIZENS' INTERESTS

The function of the consul came about before that of the resident ambassador and can to a certain extent, be regarded as its forerunner. The consul existed before the emergence of the state system. A functionary similar to today's honorary already existed in Ancient Greece. The so-called *proxenos* was a citizen appointed by another city-state to represent the interests of his employer among fellow citizens. The first consuls in the modern sense did, however, only emerge in medieval times. In the wake of expanding international trade in Europe, the need for representatives of merchants in the main harbour cities in Southern Europe and the Levant increased. These representatives were not diplomats, as they were not officially appointed, but mostly people that were elected by and within their own community. One of their primary tasks was to administer justice in case conflict arose, and they also occupied themselves with the facilitation of international trade and the representation of the interests of merchants.

After the creation of the European state system with the Westphalian Peace Treaty in 1648, the consul became a state official, but for long his status was not based on international law. It was not until the Vienna Convention of Consular Relations in 1963 that the consular function was stipulated in an international treaty. Until then, consuls performed their duties under special bilateral agreements. Their main task was to promote (maritime) trade, but they were also commonly requested to provide services of general representation. The distinction between diplomatic and consular work was often not so clear, and at consular posts outside Europe, consular work was often profoundly political. Many British and Dutch consuls, for example, performed much broader tasks than their consular status alone would justify.[3]

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[3] D.C.M. Platt, *The Cinderella Service: British Consuls since 1825*. London: Longman, 1971, p. 120, and C.B. Wels, *Aloofness & Neutrality: Studies in Dutch Foreign Relations and Policy-Making Institutions*. Utrecht: HES Publishers, 1982, p. 182.

Over the years it became generally accepted that the primary function of consuls was to represent the interests and rights of nationals abroad.[4] As relations of European with non-European states were mainly of an economic nature, these services were mostly provided to fellow countrymen engaged in international trade. Following the economic expansion of the imperial powers, consular representation of European countries sharply increased from the mid-nineteenth century.[5] The interconnectedness of consular services and national politics already became apparent in this age. Aware of the political importance of flourishing international trade and the well-being of overseas citizens, members of parliament in various European countries showed great interest in consular affairs. MPs in the Netherlands, for instance, showed a reluctance to reduce MFA expenses for consular affairs, whereas they were highly critical of a further expansion of the diplomatic network. Consequently, from 1840–70 the number of Dutch consulates grew significantly, and the diplomatic service did not.[6] The organization of the consular service was, however, far from professional. According to Wells, the Netherlands MFA had little understanding of new developments in the international economy and managed to avoid the professionalization of its consular service until the end of the nineteenth century. The big European powers, England, France, Prussia and the German Empire, showed a greater drive in the consular field and appointed professional consuls to their most important posts.[7]

Consular affairs changed dramatically in the twentieth century. The First World War, the Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and the Second World War with its aftermath in the field of emigration and immigration, brought to the surface specific consular problems. These twentieth-century experiences turned the main focus of consular affairs away from trade and maritime affairs to the well-being of citizens abroad. Developments in the early twentieth century rather than present-day tourism, international drugs trafficking, natural disasters, and terrorism, have thus marked the beginning of profound change in consular representation and assistance. A major change in the environment in which consular services are delivered that *did* come about in the second

[4] L. Spanjaard, *Nederlandsche Diplomatieke en andere bescherming in den vreemde 1795–1914*. Amsterdam: Vereenigde Drukkerijen, 1923, pp. 118–21.

[5] M.S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy*. London and New York: Longman, 1993, pp. 107–8.

[6] Wels, *Aloofness & Neutrality*, pp. 189–90.

[7] Ibid., p. 194.

half of the twentieth century, was the growing pressure from the media and individual citizens.

The inter-war period transformed consular affairs in a way that ultimately led to the integration of the diplomatic and consular services after the Second World War. Political and economic functions of diplomatic representation abroad became interrelated as the economic aspect of international relations grew in prominence. The representation of trade and maritime interests became a diplomatic task, and was increasingly performed by representatives of other ministries and government institutions rather than the MFA. As commercial diplomacy became more professionalized, the interests of individual citizens became one of the core tasks of consular affairs, with other governmental players such as the ministries of justice and home affairs as associated players. Consular affairs did in fact express the link between foreign ministries and domestic society. Today, many individual citizens perceive consular affairs as the most important responsibility of the MFA, and foreign ministries themselves now commonly see consular affairs as assistance to overseas citizens in distress.

BOOMING BUSINESS?

Some governments include assistance to foreign nationals in their description of consular work, but most of them distinguish between immigration matters and mainstream consular work. The simplicity of the dominant definition of modern consular affairs does, however, conceal a complex subject. Inside MFAs any discussion of consular work triggers seemingly obvious but delicate questions such as: 'What is assistance?', 'How can distress be described?', and 'Who is a citizen and who is not?'

Consular practice differs widely in most countries, but three kinds of consular services are generally distinguished: i) documentary services, i.e. issuance of passports and legal documents, including elections abroad. These services are sometimes referred to as the 'city-hall function' of representation abroad; ii) individual assistance to citizens in distress, including help to hospitalized, detained, deceased, or missing persons abroad, as well as guidance to their next of kin in the country of origin; iii) all consular aspects of a major crisis abroad. Some countries also regard specific legal functions such as international legal help as consular affairs.

While documentary services are at a fairly equal level in all countries, individual and crisis assistance to citizens abroad are not only defined differently but also organized in dissimilar ways around the world. The

division of responsibilities between the consular department and other departments differs widely. While in some countries the consular department takes the lead in crisis management, in others it is just another—albeit very important—player in crisis management that is coordinated at a higher level. Generally speaking, consular affairs constitute a field of diplomatic activity where trial and error and pragmatic improvement rule. Rather than a complex legal framework, it is daily consular practice that is a guideline for the development of consular affairs.

The demand for documentary services and various types of assistance to citizens abroad has grown substantially over the past decade. Increased travel is a particularly important trigger for consular services. More and more people are going abroad for work, study, and above all, holidays. Tourists increasingly travel individually rather than in organized tours, and they look for challenges that add to the potential for trouble overseas. What complicates matters for consular officers is that news about citizens in distress is traveling fast, and that the press and the public have become more outspoken and demanding. Consular matters tend to get a lot more news coverage than most other foreign affairs issues, and the reputation of the MFA at home probably depends more on its perceived success in assisting citizens than on any other issue. This new reality has not escaped senior management in MFAs and it should therefore come as no surprise that consular affairs have moved up on the agenda of many foreign ministries. Several of such ministries have requested reviews of consular practice, and MFAs have looked at various ways of boosting their performance and involving more high-level diplomatic staff in consular affairs.[8] In several countries consular experience has now become a requirement for diplomats, and improved career options for those with experience in the consular field are likely to encourage the appeal of this area of work in the foreign ministry. Countries such as the UK, Japan, Canada, and Peru have developed career plans for diplomats in which experience in the consular field is either mandatory or highly recommended. The Dutch foreign ministry boasts the fact that some of

[8] An internal review by the Office of the Inspector General of the Canadian MFA was published in November 2004: *Review of Consular Affairs—Final Report.* The National Audit Office in November 2005 published the report *The Foreign and Commonwealth Office—Consular Services to British Nationals.* The authors of this paper completed a study for the Consular Department in the Netherlands Foreign Ministry in June 2006: Maaike Heijmans and Jan Melissen, *Consulaire Zaken en Diplomatie* (2006).

the people in the top ranks of the department have substantial experience in the consular field during the earlier stages of their careers. Generally speaking, there is an increasing awareness of the need for a more service-oriented approach and a better feel for dealing with the public. Several MFAs, including the UK, Canada, Australia, and The Netherlands, have drawn up service standards in order to inform their citizens of the level and limitations of the consular services they may expect from government.[9] Such standards are also instrumental in providing a services framework for consular officers and, at least to some extent, in protecting MFAs from *ad hoc* political intervention.

The importance attached to consular affairs should nevertheless be qualified. Cultural change within MFAs takes place at a slow pace and mostly for defensive reasons, and consular affairs are not always liked among MFA staff because of the risks involved. Consular matters are after all always about problems of one kind or another, and high-profile cases tend to result in a great deal of attention by politicians and the media. In spite of the much higher priority attached to consular affairs, it is therefore ironical that many individual practitioners still appear to see consular affairs as an activity that is only by necessity located inside the foreign ministry. Even today, consular officers generally get little recognition from their peers within the ministry, in spite of the renewed importance attached to this branch of work. In their relations with the outside world, they often see themselves as victims of success, as satisfied customers tend to go unnoticed, whereas those who have complaints tend to generate disproportionate amounts of negative publicity.[10]

Globalization in all its aspects and with all its consequences can be seen as the overall cause for the growing emphasis on consular affairs. In the area of documentary services, for instance, the need for increased

[9] The UK and Canada provide a general framework for consular assistance as well as norms for specific services.

In March 2006 the British FCO launched the document 'Support for British Nationals Abroad: A Guide', which can be downloaded from www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/consularfullguide,0.pdf. The Canadian Consular Affairs Bureau is to publish 'Consular Services Foreign Affairs Canada—A Framework of Operations' in the near future. Australia and The Netherlands have drawn up standards for targeted consular services. The Australian Passport and Information Service has, in cooperation with its partners, drawn up a *Client Service Charter* for passport services. The Netherlands agreed on norms for assistance to citizens detained abroad following a review by the General Audit Office.

[10] Interviews in Canada, France, The Netherlands, and the UK.

border security continues to have a great impact on the requirements of (biometrical) passports, and thereby on their issuance. The demand for individual assistance has grown because of a steady increase in the number of inexperienced travelers, dual nationalities, international marriages, drugs smuggling, and other problems. What is striking in consular practice in The Netherlands is that the MFA is doing a great deal for Dutch nationals who have been convicted in other countries. In the past six years, the high-quality services delivered to the large number of registered citizens detained abroad has developed to the point of a true welfare system of assistance to prisoners and their families at home. Significantly, the change of policies in The Netherlands was triggered by political pressure in a much publicized case that was followed by an evaluation of consular services by the General Audit Office. Dutch excellence in the field of assistance to prisoners abroad is unrivalled worldwide, but there are also questions as to whether pressure from parliament and the press has perhaps pushed the ministry of foreign affairs too far.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND CONSULAR NETWORKS

The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963 is the first and, to the present day, most important document in the consular field. It is even said to be more path-breaking than the 1961 Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which builds on earlier agreements.[11] The convention provides the judicial basis and general framework for consular relations between states and the delivery of consular services. It does not give an insight in current consular practice, as it has not been adapted to developments in the consular field during the last fifty years. Maritime issues dealing with vessels and their crew, for example, are explicitly brought up in the convention text, but these are nowadays an area of minor interest in consular affairs. Like the Vienna Convention, legal frameworks at the domestic level, insofar that they exist, fall short of any linkage to current practice. As a result, consular affairs are to a large extent governed by customary law, which makes this area of diplomacy all the more vulnerable to the media and political pressure.

Whilst most countries currently do not have a consular law on the right to consular assistance, some MFAs have considered exploring the

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[11] L.T. Lee, *Consular Law and Practice*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 25.

possibilities in this field. The reasoning is that such a law may be attractive from a client perspective, but also exists to protect consular departments from political oversight. Germany is exceptional in having legislation that stipulates the right to consular assistance.[12] But the law is very general as it has to suit all the countries' systems and practical realities. In practice, German consular officers do usually make reference to the social assistance law rather than the consular law when setting limits to consular assistance. The latter is too general, whilst the former significantly limits the right to obtain social assistance abroad. French consular officers refer to the *Code Civil* when setting limits to assistance. Articles 205 and 206 of this law confer the responsibility of family members for one another, stipulating that government has no financial responsibility in assisting citizens in distress abroad. Approaches on setting limits and increasing public awareness of consular problems do therefore vary, but most consular departments seem to agree that they are constantly stretching the limits of what they should be doing. Whereas consular assistance should be need-driven rather than demand-driven, many MFAs confess to delivering 'Cadillac consular services'.

Foreign ministries feel the need to search for alternative ways of dealing with the challenges and dilemmas in the consular field. One new approach focuses on increasing cooperation and interaction with third parties. Such third parties may be partner organizations and stakeholders contributing to the delivery of consular services, but should also include critics such as the media and the public. Consular cooperation between countries is also increasing: bilaterally as well as multilaterally, and through headquarters (sometimes represented in institutions, such as the European Union) as well as on-the-spot. The focus here is, however, on domestic networks, as this form of collaboration has a greater effect on the working methods of foreign ministries.

Partner organizations consist of a variety of government agencies, public and private organizations. Within the foreign ministry, these include the information department, the intelligence unit and honorary consuls associated with the MFA. Other ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Health and Welfare, each play a role in different fields

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[12] *Gesetz über die Konsularbeamten, ihre Aufgaben und Befugnisse (KonsularG)*, of 11.09.1974 (BGBl. I S. 2317) and altered through Article 12 on 04.05.1998 (BGBl. I S. 833).

of consular affairs. Outside the government, cooperation with non-governmental organizations and even private companies, such as travel agencies and insurers, is essential in delivering the high standard of consular services demanded by the public. Such cooperation takes many different forms. One is a general discussion with all partners and stakeholders on broad consular issues, such as the sharing of responsibilities between the ministry and third parties (private emergency centers and insurers, non-governmental and volunteer organizations, etc) and the limits of consular assistance. Another is the cooperation with organizations engaged in a specific area, such as assistance to citizens detained abroad, international child abduction, forced marriages or crisis management. Although considerable investment is required to make such partnerships work, these various forms of cooperation are indispensable. They increase private and public support for policies and tend to improve and broaden specific consular services.

Consular departments are nevertheless confronted with a balancing act. They are compelled to go into partnerships with third parties as an extension and improvement of their consular services, and they simultaneously need to preserve the kind of independence that is expected from government. The consular field is in this sense different from most departments within the foreign ministry. It may provide an example of increased future cooperation between the public and private sectors. While government has traditionally shied away from any linkage to the private sector, consular departments have to engage in a more business-like approach in order to deliver the quality of service that customers expect. Several countries go as far as to allow private companies such as travel insurers to publish in their safe-travel brochure, or to deliver their consular 'travel safe-message' in more inventive ways, for example on typical tourist products like sun cream or money change envelopes. Others are more reluctant or less inventive in engaging in such partnerships. They limit themselves to providing subsidies to non-governmental organizations in order to achieve a higher level of consular assistance. What is however clear, is that governments alone cannot live up to the high expectations of its citizens, and face an increasing need to cooperate with third parties, whether in providing services or delivering its messages.

Apart from looking for partnerships with private companies and NGOs, ministries of foreign affairs are also reconsidering the consular value of their diplomatic networks. They are confronted with tighter budgets and

looming political pressure for cheaper diplomatic representation, and they see themselves forced to brainstorm about revising the structure of their diplomatic networks. While embassies and consulates obviously have an important role to play, honorary consuls, if managed and assisted professionally, may prove to be cost-effective. The role of honorary consuls in assisting in passport-related affairs lapses with the introduction of biometric passports, but a reconfiguration rather than abolition of their function appears justified. Honorary consuls have an important role to play in other than documentary aspects of consular assistance, which may surface as a result of the changing character of consular affairs. They are a cheap form of representation in remote (but tourist) areas where immediate presence can be of crucial importance, not only in the delivery of consular services but also in terms of representation and image-building. After a re-adjustment and adaptation to present-day needs, existing networks may well turn out to become a significant asset in delivering consular services.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

A recent survey showed that the general public in Sweden perceives consular affairs as the most important of all tasks of the foreign ministry. Individual diplomats may have doubts of their own about the importance of consular affairs as part of the overall agenda of the MFA, but citizens generally do not share that sense of perspective. They generally find the media as a powerful ally on their side. It is unusual for the journalists reporting about their own nationals in distress to take the side of the MFA and call for a greater sense of individual responsibility. In most countries the expectations of ordinary people and the pressures to meet public demands are so high and so effective, that they tend to give consular affairs the character of an external dimension of the welfare state.

The media generally report about a supposed MFA failure in consular affairs, and the rapidly transforming media landscape has far-reaching implications for media handling. It is not only the tabloid press that exposes government failure, quality papers also take a special interest in the tribulations of consular work, whereas news and debate on high-profile consular stories do of course spread most rapidly via the Internet. Such disparate challenges call for proactive policies towards the media and the public. Ironically, consular officers' presence and compassion shown to

people in distress are sometimes as important as the actual level of assistance, which is especially true in the case of on-the-spot assistance in times of crisis. The risks of crises are evident as there is only so much one can do in advance, but even a seemingly innocent activity like issuing passports, has the potential to backfire as a result of media involvement. Problems surrounding illegal travel documents and human trafficking may turn routine consular work into a public-relations disaster for the MFA.

Foreign ministries have to come to terms with the fact that they are rarely in control of information. The new media and state-of-the art communication devices generate additional layers of information, provide everyone with instant access to news, and turn individual citizens into active on-line participants in the public debate. Governments will therefore not only have to engage in a more proactive, but also a more open strategy: they need to give credible accounts and even learn to communicate uncertainty. If consular departments succeed in such an approach and manage to increase public confidence in its consular services, this may produce positive results for the limits that governments set to consular affairs, as people become more aware and are likely to take a more positive approach towards government. All too often limits to assistance are now stretched as a result of media pressure, especially on ministers of foreign affairs, who are more susceptible to pressure from parliament and the electorate. A distinct political logic then applies to consular affairs: the bigger the crisis, the bigger the exception.

The first task of consular departments in their relations with the press is to do what is virtually impossible: managing the way in which consular work is treated in the news. In this effort media departments have to walk the tightrope of respecting privacy laws that prohibit giving information about individual citizens,[13] while avoiding accusations of being secretive and untrustworthy. As a second line of approach, MFAs make a greater effort to increase public awareness of the limits to consular services offered, knowing that people tend to score high on expectations but low on knowledge and awareness. The gradual increase of public service targets, guidelines, and service charters in consular affairs can be explained against this backdrop.

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[13] Examples of such laws are the Privacy Act (Canada) and Personal Data Protection Act (The Netherlands). The case of Sweden is exceptional, in that the country has a Secrecy Act which stipulates that all information available to the government is in principle public, unless clear reasons to argue otherwise exist.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMACY

There is no doubt that consular affairs will continue to be a growth business in the years ahead, and that the challenges and problems associated with consular work will not go away. It is part of a trend towards diplomacy's increased dealings with 'ordinary people'. It raises intriguing questions about the changing nature and practice of diplomacy.

First, *diplomacy is increasingly seen in terms of service delivery*, as it is not only dealing with peers or officials and policy but also with customers looking for products and services, involving broader questions about the relationship between the state and its citizens. As argued above, the distinction between high-priority representation and the relatively low-priority service tasks of MFAs and their representations no longer holds. MFAs are turning into public-service organizations. Domestic considerations have the potential to place citizens in distress high on the agenda, whether detainees, abducted children, hostages, or the victims of natural disasters. So far the response of MFAs has been largely defensive and largely focused on individual cases. MFAs do, however, need to regard individual cases in a larger perspective, by stimulating a discussion of the more general consular affairs framework. Meanwhile, within some MFAs, improved career options and professional training increasingly motivate diplomats to take up consular positions. This adds to the improved image of consular affairs not despite but because of its service-oriented character.

Secondly, *diplomacy as public reputation management* is no longer an alien notion to MFAs. It is widely accepted that modern diplomacy is an activity intrinsically related to the overseas image of the country as a whole. Most of the world's MFAs now profess to be into public diplomacy and a substantial number of them now make a sustained effort aimed at both improving their relationships with target audiences abroad and mainstreaming public diplomacy within their own apparatus. What is at stake in consular affairs, as argued above, is not the nation's image overseas but nothing less than the reputation of the MFA at home. Where consular services fall short of expectations, the MFA may be in the dock as soon as the news about citizens in distress reaches a variety of media outlets. In dealing with this formidable challenge, foreign ministries that set up an overall framework of consular policy as well as a media strategy that prevents consular cases from becoming political are likely to be more successful than those sticking to traditional ways.

Thirdly, in an increasingly complex domestic and international environment, there is a growing acceptance of the notion of MFA engagement in *collaborative diplomacy*, consisting of different forms of collaboration with governmental, public, and private third parties. In the future organization of consular work, to be sure, there is no alternative to making the most of various forms of consular networks, both at home and abroad. MFAs may thus develop closer links with civil society organizations and in future become less dissociated from the corporate sector. This is part of a broader development in contemporary diplomatic practice. If anything does indeed characterize diplomacy today, it is the MFAs' gradual expansion of vertical linkages with governmental players and horizontal linkages with non-governmental organizations that are a necessary condition for MFAs' successful management of international relations.

Finally, there is the potential of consulates and also honorary consuls in the redefinition of the roles of overseas missions, as a result of pressures and trends that push towards broader reflection on the future of *diplomatic representation*. The consular workload is bound to increase in the years to come and the 'Cinderella service' will increasingly be seen as an integral part of the practice of diplomacy. What falls outside the scope of this introductory discussion is that globalization may well dictate new roles for consulates that strengthen the overall diplomatic effort. A more in-depth study of consular affairs and various forms of diplomatic representation would contribute to our understanding of the richness of diplomacy today. To be sure, it would fill a void in the study of diplomacy that has received hardly any attention from academics worldwide. A wider academic perspective on consular affairs could even be of some practical use, as MFAs may benefit from further thinking on consular affairs in the context of other challenges for foreign ministries.

Public Diplomacy

KARL TH. PASCHKE
Ambassador and former Under Secretary General at the UN

A NEW DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY? A NEW WORKING METHOD FOR FOREIGN services, a new fad, a priority now which may be considered less relevant in a few years?

Probably not. The term 'Public Diplomacy' has only become popular and widely used some twenty years ago, but it describes one of the key activities of the modern diplomat in many parts of the world today.

What is known as Public Diplomacy nowadays has existed in some form since the early days of international relations, even though for centuries, the work of diplomats used to be conducted primarily 'behind closed doors', in discreet contacts with the governments to which they were accredited. For many people today, this perception prevails and the words 'public' and 'diplomacy' seem like a contradiction.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the modern ambassador is no longer what he was in former days: a negotiator and interpreter of the foreign policy interests of his home country vis-à-vis the host government. In an era where contact between governments, at least those which are close to each other in alliances or other communities, quite frequently are managed directly and not necessarily through the respective embassies, the main business of the ambassador is no longer focused on discreet and confidential dealings with the foreign ministry, but rather by continuous efforts to explain and to canvass support and understanding for the foreign-policy goals of his home country in the host country at large, among government circles, the legislative bodies, the political parties, the business

community, the social partners, the media, and the academic community—
in short: the entire political class of his host country.

Why is that so? Why has it become so much more important to try to
influence international public opinion, to be concerned with the foreign
policy image of one's own country, to actively promote good news and
counteract negative perceptions and prejudices abroad?

Well, because in the past two decades, our globe has changed
considerably, not only because of the fundamental political changes, the
dissolution of the two blocs and the rise of a more multi-polar world,
but for a number of additional factors: Technological progress in many
sectors has been phenomenal, most particularly in the field of information
technology. The computer has revolutionized international trade and
business, but also public administrations worldwide. Globalization has
increased international interdependence. The trend towards more
democracy in the world has led to a more intensive interaction between
governments and civil society, which in turn has caused public opinion
to expect more transparency and accountability for all governmental
activities. International relations are no longer the domain of a chosen
few, but are of concern to the general public. News travels fast and people
understand that what happens in one part of the world usually has
repercussions in distant lands as well. The quantity—not necessarily
the quality—of international news coverage is overwhelming, the media
battle for the hearts and minds of news consumers is as fierce as ever,
but this has not reduced the impact and relevance of stereotypes, clichés,
prejudices, and half-baked truisms on relations between nations.

This is where 'Public Diplomacy' comes in. The modern ambassador
must ask himself almost daily: how is the country which I represent
perceived in the country I am accredited to? Are the foreign policy goals
of my government well understood and appreciated? What can my
staff and I do to correct misperceptions, and to disseminate positive
information? How can we win more friends for our country amongst
the host nation?

It is true, earlier generations of diplomats have also been concerned
with such questions. The reputation of a successful envoy always rested
largely on the extent to which he was 'well plugged in' with the key people
in his host country and on his ability to make friends. However, the
challenge of today's Public Diplomacy is continuous and wider, it is not
a by-product of other diplomatic activities but an end in itself. Public

Diplomacy ranks high in every diplomat's job description. Words like 'Lobbying', 'Networking' or 'Outreach' aim in the same direction, with slightly different connotations.

To meet this challenge, the ambassador must build up and cultivate a dense and stable network of connections in all areas of society. To be credible and convincing in representing his country, he must of course be conversant and up-to-date on all major issues of his home country's agenda. Beyond that, a great deal depends on his personal communication skills. And wherever possible, the ambassador should be sufficiently fluent in the partner country's language to be able to deliver public speeches, give interviews, participate in discussions etc.

Thus, to offer a general definition of the term, Public Diplomacy may be described as 'reaching out to people in the host country, actively communicating through ongoing dialogue with all sections of the informed public in order to generate interest in and understanding for the bilateral and multilateral concerns of the envoy's home country'.

It goes without saying that Public Diplomacy today is not only the responsibility of the head of mission and his press and public affairs officer. As a matter of fact, the challenge to be active and successful on this stage applies to all professional staff of the embassy. Whatever their area of responsibility is, they must always ask themselves the question: how can I 'sell' my topic under the auspices of Public Diplomacy? Is there a public angle in what I am doing which can be exploited? This is perhaps the most innovative aspect of Public Diplomacy: While the ambassador, because of his rank and stature, has a particularly visible role to play, the entire mission has to engage in reaching out to the public in the host country.

Reaching out means actively seeking contact and dialogue, using every opportunity for public appearances, participating in public events and showing a prominent profile. To build up and maintain a network of contacts requires sustained effort, not just a haphazard approach: the public diplomatist must repeatedly demonstrate interest in his partners in order to establish mutual trust. Who are these partners? For obvious reasons, diplomatic networking cannot be indiscriminate, but must select and set priorities. However, one has to keep in mind that at least in democratic countries, public opinion is formed by many, if not all segments of civil society. Therefore, a wide net must be cast and the messages must be tailored and adapted to the various constituencies. Ambitious

intellectual discourse is not always called for, but sometimes a relaxed, laid-back approach suffices; a simple, sympathetic communication may be more appropriate to create attention, understanding, and goodwill among the general public. To generate a better understanding and more knowledge about his home country is, of course, the principal goal of any envoy's public diplomacy work. And in this regard, a realistic appreciation of what people in the host country know about other countries is imperative. One should not have illusions about that. In spite of open borders, foreign travel, television, and the Internet, many nations remain pretty much strangers to each other, and clichés and prejudices still abound. Public Diplomacy must seek both to create a more informed and balanced picture of the ambassador's home country and to demonstrate an active interest in the host country. That makes for goodwill.

The power of today's media in shaping public opinion is recognized in most countries. The first thing politicians do when they come out of a meeting or have just concluded a decision-making procedure, is to speak to the press. In order to respond to the requirements and constraints of TV news, they routinely limit themselves to short statements, so-called 'sound bites' which may not always do justice to the complexity of the issue at hand, but offer the only chance to be broadcast and reach a larger audience.

Ambassadors will find themselves only occasionally in such situations, but if they occur, they must be prepared for that, too. For embassy representatives doing public diplomacy work, journalists are a most interesting and rewarding constituency nevertheless, albeit from a more long-term perspective. It goes without saying that an informed journalist is a better journalist. In the past, the large news agencies and the more weighty national daily papers used to employ so-called 'diplomatic correspondents', journalists who specialized in foreign policy issues and covered the foreign relations of their home country on a permanent basis. In today's media scene, such correspondents have unfortunately become a rare breed, but they still are the most attractive contact partners for ambassadors and press attachés. A background talk with one of them may be more useful than a dozen embassy bulletins. Equally valuable is a trustful relationship with members of the editorial board of an influential paper. Catering to journalists may not bear fruit in tomorrow's edition of their publication, but if it only influences their thinking and the interest which they take in the subject the envoy had discussed with them, then

one can call it successful public diplomacy. After all, journalists are the most effective multipliers and opinion leaders.

Finally, a relatively new public diplomacy tool must be mentioned which has revolutionized the dissemination of information: the Internet.

Most foreign ministries today run extensive, well-documented, and frequently interactive websites; millions of information-seekers make use of this service regularly. When dramatic international developments occur, the number of daily hits skyrockets, clearly indicating to what extent news-gathering and information consumption has changed and intensified through computer technology. A well-organized embassy today cannot succeed in public diplomacy without an attractive homepage, either. It must display a wide array of facts, figures, photos, and reliable information about the country it represents, but also pertinent topical news—which means that the embassy must ensure daily maintenance and updating of its Internet appearance, another important challenge in the growing field of Public Diplomacy.

Canada's Foreign Ministry
Online and Interactive

RON GARSON
Director of the Policy Research Division, Strategic Policy
and Public Diplomacy, Foreign Affairs Canada[1]

INTRODUCTION

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN re-shaping international relations, including the practice of public diplomacy. The rise of the Internet and electronic communications has opened new possibilities for the exchange of information and perspectives between governments and domestic and international publics.

Three years ago, Foreign Affairs Canada launched an innovative website that sought to more deeply involve Canadians in discussions of international policy issues. This website—the Canadian International Policy website (CIP) at www.cfp-pec.gc.ca—uses a range of online features to bring more and more dynamic information resources to Canadian and international audiences. These features go well beyond the traditional staples of government communications—speeches and press releases—to include netcast interviews with experts on international issues, unofficial department papers that offer a glimpse into early policy thinking, and video features 'from the field'.

Public input is also an important dimension of the Canadian International Policy website. Students and members of the public participate in

[1] This chapter is based on a presentation made to a DiploFoundation conference, 'Challenges for Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value', which was held in Geneva from 31 May to 1 June 2006. The presentation was based on materials prepared by the very talented e-communications strategist mentioned in the footnote below—Mark McLaughlin.

e-discussions around 'feature issues' posted to the web and are invited to submit their own policy papers for departmental consideration. In some cases, Canadian universities have integrated these feature issues into their international affairs curricula.

This article provides an overview of the Canadian International Policy website—its rationale, key online features and reach—and also sets out some future plans for strengthening the contribution this site makes to Canada's public diplomacy.

ORIGINS OF THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL POLICY WEBSITE

The Canadian International Policy website has its origins in a strategy developed in November 2003.[2] That strategy had three principal aims:

- First, to put Canadian foreign policy issues into a broader framework so that online members of the public could gain a wider appreciation of the context for their country's international positions;
- Second, to provide a space and opportunity for a public discussion of international policy issues; and
- Third, to make the website a principal source of information on Canada's international policies, through a combination of official and unofficial government documents, netcast interviews with non-government experts, and hyper links to related sites (official and unofficial).

In a sense, the overall goal of the website was to bring departmental communications efforts more squarely into the modern Internet era.

THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL POLICY WEBSITE: HOW IT WORKS

The Homepage

The CIP site features prominently on the home page for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. One click and you're in. It is also often just one click in on the homepage for the Government of Canada: www.gc.ca.

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[2] The creation, development, and implementation of this website has overwhelmingly been due to one individual—Mark McLaughlin, who is the E-communications Strategist in the Policy Research Division. He has brought to his work a creative understanding of the power and possibilities of the Internet and a journalist's knack for 'finding the story'. His skill and imagination are largely responsible for making the CIP a leading website in Canadian government and among foreign ministries.

Visitors to the CIP homepage are presented with the main features of the site and 'what's new'. Illustration 1 (below) shows some of these features from May 2006. The first two items provide links to information on an upcoming feature issue on the site—non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. Information is also provided on other topical concerns, specifically Canada's engagement in Haiti and Afghanistan and the renewal of the NORAD agreement with the United States.

Illustration 1

Canadian International Policy

Welcome to the Department's International Policy Web site. This site features information about Canada's role in the world and other important global issues.

What's New

Canadian Foreign Policy eDiscussions - International Universities and Colleges Participation - May 26, 2006

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, through its Strategic Policy branch, is looking to engage academics and their students from Canadian Studies programs at universities and colleges around the world in the upcoming online discussion on "Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament" (fall '06). **| LEARN MORE**

Canadian University and College Participation in Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament eDiscussion - May 16, 2006

"Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament" is the next eDiscussion topic (Sept. 25th to Dec. 1st). The Department is looking to engage students across the country to provide their views on these issues. We foresee three **ways in which classes could participate** in the eDiscussions. I **LEARN MORE**

Canadian Police in Haiti - May 15, 2006

Graham Muir, Chief Superintendent in the RCMP discusses the role that Canadian police play at the UN mission in Haiti.

Video Netcast (3 min)   Windows Media | QuickTime | Transcript
In English with French transcripts.

See also: Reconstructing Haiti

Canada and NORAD - Renewing the Defence of North America - May 12, 2006

Canada and the United States recognize the importance of the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) to the defence of North America and worked to renew the NORAD Agreement. | **LEARN MORE**

Afghanistan and Canada's International Policy - Reports from the Field - May 11, 2006

Since diplomatic relations with Kabul were re-established in January 2002, Canadians of various expertise have travelled to Afghanistan to assist local efforts in building a prosperous, sustainable, and united nation. | **LEARN MORE**

Staying ahead of the wave: Proactive E-Communications

Much of government communications is traditionally reactive and consists of departments responding to the crises of the day. The CIP site does provide information on issues that have become hot topics in the

nation's media; however, a good deal of its content is developed proactively, whether to provide information on issues that do not see a lot of media coverage or to highlight topics that we think may gain greater public profile in coming months.

An example of that has been the site's feature on Canada's role in Afghanistan, and specifically in the southern province of Kandahar. In 2005, 2,300 Canadian troops were deployed to Kandahar. This represented significantly stepped-up engagement by Canada in Afghanistan. In advance of that deployment, the e-communications strategist, Mark McLaughlin, developed a proposal in consultation with appropriate officers in Canada's foreign, defence, and aid ministries, to post a feature item on Canada's role in Afghanistan on the CIP website.[3]

The strategist flew into Afghanistan himself to film and develop online resources for the feature item, and engaged as well the invaluable support of Mark Sedra, an expert on security sector reform and Afghanistan who was then serving as the Cadieux-Léger Fellow in the Policy Research Division. Illustration 2 provides a snapshot of the type of resources provided on the CIP site. They included netcast interviews with Canada's Ambassador to Afghanistan and links to the websites of other Canadian government departments, including the defence ministry.

This proactive approach to communications has also included reporting on issues that have not been well reported in the media. Two examples are provided below in Illustration 3:

The following **video netcasts** feature the former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Chris Alexander (2003–05), discussing Canada's involvement in disarmament.

Dynamic media: Not just the written word

Another defining feature of the website is its dynamic use of web media. Visitors to the site can find the statements and written texts that typically populate government sites worldwide. What is different about the CIP

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[3] This 'whole-of-government' approach to developing web content is another strong feature of the CIP site. In addition to widely consulting within Foreign Affairs and International Trade as feature issues are developed, the e-communications strategist and his team typically work with other departments, as well as professors and students, in the development of web content. Cooperation is such that other branches of the foreign ministry have proven willing to pool the resources required to get feature issues up and running.

Illustration 2

Feature Issues

Afghanistan and Canada's International Policy
Canada's Role in southern Afghanistan

Canada has made a clear commitment to stabilizing Afghanistan and contributing to the creation of a more secure environment within which the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country can take place. Canada's work in southern Afghanistan will build on a "**whole-of-government approach.**" This includes the deployment of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), and of a Canadian contingent of some 2300 troops to southern Afghanistan, where Canada has assumed command of the multinational brigade headquarters.

The following **video netcasts** feature the former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Chris Alexander (2003 - 2005), discussing Canada's involvement in Kandahar.

Video Netcasts:

Background
Canada remains in Afghanistan today for the same reasons we first engaged with the country: Canada, and the world, have a strategic interest in a secure, self-sufficient, democratic and stable Afghanistan that never again provides a safe haven for terrorists or terrorist organizations. **3 minutes**

▶ **Windows Media**
▶ **QuickTime**
▶ **Transcript**

Canada's Evolving Engagement
Canada is committed to assisting Afghanistan on the path to stability, democracy and self-sufficiency. Our work in Kandahar will build on our whole-of-government approach. **4 minutes**

▶ **Windows Media**
▶ **QuickTime**
▶ **Transcript**

Provincial Reconstruction Teams
Canada has made Afghanistan a top priority engagement abroad – leveraging expertise and assets across a number of federal departments. This policy is reflected in Canada's Provincial Reconstruction Team, an approach to peace support operations where civilian and military components operate as a cohesive team. |
5 minutes

▶ **Windows Media**
▶ **QuickTime**
▶ **Transcript**

Key Issues in Afghan Security
Take a drive through Kabul with security specialist Mark Sedra (see Mark's bio below) as he discusses some key questions surrounding Afghanistan's road to democracy.

See also:

▶ **Protecting Canadians. Rebuilding Afghanistan**
Canada is making important **diplomatic, defence** and **development** contributions to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Our objectives are threefold: to defend our national interests, ensure Canadian leadership in world affairs, and help Afghanistan rebuild into a free, democratic and peaceful country.

▶ **Backgrounder** Canadian Forces Operations in Afghanistan, February 28, 2006, on the website of Canada's Department of National Defence.

Illustration 3

Afghanistan and Canada's International Policy
Canadian Success in Disarmament

Canada is playing an important role in supporting the duly-elected Afghan government and nascent Afghan governance institutions, including by working with other countries, the UN, NATO and various international organizations to help **build Afghan capacity to provide good governance**.

Canada's **leadership in Afghanistan** has yielded much success to date; but the **work on the ground must continue**, and will certainly intensify. We are contributing significantly to the consolidation of peace and improvement of human security.

The following **video   netcasts** feature   the former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan,   Chris Alexander (2003 - 2005), discussing Canada's involvement in disarmament.

Video Features:

🎞 **Heavy Weapons Cantonment**
Canada was instrumental in the establishment of a soon-to-be completed process to canton heavy weapons in Afghanistan. Canadians in Kabul, helped to create the momentum and will for a programme many thought impossible. Thanks to Canadian efforts, 97% of these weapons - over 10,800 tanks, heavy artillery and other weapons - are now safely secured. **| 6 minutes**

▸ **Windows Media**
▸ **QuickTime**
▸ Transcript

🎞 **Demining**
Canada has helped to clear over a third of an estimated 10-15 million mines laid in Afghanistan. However, as Afghanistan is one of the most mine affected countries in the world, much work is still to be done. Follow embassy staff to a mine demolition exercise and learn more about Canada's contribution. **| 4 minutes**

▸ **Windows Media**
▸ **QuickTime**
▸ Transcript

site is its extensive use of netcast videos, the overwhelming majority of which feature interviews with non-government experts (see Illustration 4). More recently, the site has also included pod-casts in its online resource library, which allows students and other users to download items to their iPods for viewing or listening anywhere and at any time. For those who prefer the written word, full transcripts, in French and English, are provided for all interviews.

Two points are worth mentioning here. First, the calibre of experts featured on the CIP site is impressive and includes such notables as Jagdish Bhagwati, Martin Wolf, Hans Blix, John J. Mearsheimer, Robert

Illustration 4

Netcast Interviews

Global demographics and their implications for Canada
Dr. Joseph Chamie discusses global demographics and their implications for Canada. Dr. Chamie served with the United Nations in the field of population and development both overseas and in New York for more than 25 years.

The Concept of a Failing State
Dr. Simon Chesterman discusses the concept of a failing state. Simon Chesterman is Executive Director of the Institute for International Law and Justice at New York University School of Law.

The   Significance and Prevention of   State Failure
Dr. David Carment discusses the significance and prevention of state failure. David Carment is Professor of International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa and a fellow of the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute.

The challenges of the conflict in Sudan
Stephen Brown   is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Ottawa, where he also teaches international development and globalization

Canada's Role in Afghanistan:
Former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Chris   Alexander, explains how Canadian diplomacy is playing a key role in:
▶ **Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Kandahar** and
▶ **Disarmament and Demining**

Security and Afghanistan:
Take a drive through Kabul with security specialist   Mark Sedra   as he discusses some key questions   surrounding Afghanistan's road to democracy.

Canada and the _Responsibility to Protect_:
Dr. Jutta Brunnée, Prof. of Law, University of Toronto. Her recent work has focused on international law-making, on questions of compliance with international law, and on international norms governing the use of force

Concept of Security:
Dr. Barry Buzan discusses the concept of security. Barry Buzan is professor of international relations at the London School of Economics. His work focuses on security, particularly on the theories of security.

Christopher Cushing discusses working in war zones
Christopher Cushing is the Principal Research Fellow at the _Centre   for International Co-operation and Security_ at the University of Bradford, UK. He has worked in conflict areas all over the world for various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including on the frontlines in 13 different war zones.

Rotberg, and James Lindsay. Second, these experts provide users with access to a diverse range of opinions—opinions, moreover, that are not necessarily in line with the official views of the Government of Canada. These netcasts with external experts make up by far the greatest part of the online resources featured on the CIP site. This helps ensure that the site is something more than simply another source of official opinion.

E-Discussions

Perhaps the feature that most sets the CIP site apart from other government sites is its use of e-discussions. Each year, the site hosts 3 consecutive e-discussions of two months' duration.[4] These e-discussions are focused on a single international policy issue, which is highlighted as a 'feature issue'. For example, from September to December 2005, the feature issue focused on 'failed and fragile states'.

Feature issues are suggested by members of the Policy Research Division, by other parts of the foreign ministry and by users of the CIP site. Once an issue is selected, the Division's e-communications team and policy officers begin developing online resources to help provide background and context to the upcoming e-discussions. **Illustration 4** (above) provides an example of some of the resources provided for the failed and fragile states' e-discussion.

A series of questions are also developed to help spark the online discussions and to provide a framework for them. Again, these questions are developed in consultation with policy officers across the government who have a keen interest in the subject matter.[5] Once all the resources have been assembled and the questions developed, the feature issue goes live. Participants are invited to register or log in to the site through a message on the CIP homepage and via an email newsletter that reaches

[4] No e-discussions are featured in the summer. This coincides with the onset of summer holidays for Canadian students and a falling off of on-line visits to the CIP site.

[5] E-discussion participants do not have to restrict their comments to the questions provided, though the discussion is moderated to ensure it remains broadly on-topic. Thus, one question not posed by the department emerged as a hot topic in the failed and fragile states e-discussion—namely, what is a failed state and how can it be defined in a way that does not reflect a specifically Western view of what is or is not a successful state?

some 4,000 people. Participants in the e-discussion can then post submissions of up to 750 words each on the moderated discussion board.[6] Illustration 5 provides an example of the web page soliciting input on a feature issue (and, given elapsed time, the reporting back on the discussion as described later in this article).

Illustration 5

Failed and Fragile States *(from Sept. 26th 2005 to Dec. 2nd 2005)*
eDiscussion Questions and Resources
Sign-up for email alerts on Security and eDiscussions

The Department of Foreign Affairs (FAC) is looking to engage Canadians across the country to provide their views on the topic of failed and fragile states through our online discussion group (open from Sept. 26th to Dec. 2nd).

▸ View eDiscussion submissions

▸ **To participate**, sign-up here

▸ **Already registered?** Login here

▸ **Information for university and college classes** with the eDiscussion in their curriculum

The **International Policy Statement** made failed and fragile states a new priority in Canadian foreign policy. We are now in the process of assembling the people and tools to implement the Statement. Below we pose some **strategic questions that are of particular interest** to the government on the topic of failed and fragile states. However **contributions to the eDiscussion on any aspect of the topic are welcome**.

eDiscussion documents presented to Deputy Minister Peter Harder and the Foreign Affairs Executive Committee on Dec. 9th 2005:
▸ eDiscussion Summary on Failed and Fragile States   PDF VERSION
▸ Summary of the university Policy Position Papers   PDF VERSION
▸ Official Response to eDiscussion on Failed and Fragile States   PDF VERSION

eDiscussion Questions:

Canada's International Policy Statement and Failed and Fragile States
What are your thoughts/comments on the approach taken towards failed and fragile states in Canada's International Policy Statement?
▸ **MORE INFO**: International Policy Statement - Failed and Fragile States: the New Challenge

Short vs long term commitment?
Prevention, stabilization and recovery operations in failed and fragile states tend to require a long term commitment of significant resources. How do we sustain the public and political commitment required to ensure our contribution to the state-building process is durable and effective?

Response criteria?
Canada does not have the capacity or resources to respond to every crisis or request. Under what conditions should we not assist a failed or fragile state?

Stability vs democracy?
Holding elections prior to the stabilization of the security situation and the development of a democratic political culture can contribute to instability. Given this, in cases where there are significant risks of destabilization, should Canada support undemocratic modes of rule in the medium-term in the interests of long-term stability and democracy?

Failed and Fragile Cities?
Many of the challenges associated with failed and fragile states can be traced to major urban centres. For example, stabilization efforts in cities are complicated by high population densities, the difficulty of locating combatants, the high risk of civilian casualties, damage to critical infrastructure and the potential for the spread of disease. Do urban and rural areas differ in the human security challenges they present? Do urban areas require new ways of thinking about human security? If yes, how can existing mechanisms for conflict prevention, stability operations and peacebuilding be adapted to address the particular issues associated with failed and fragile cities?
▸ **MORE INFO** Failed and fragile cities: human security in urban spaces

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[6] A set of civil rules, posted on the site for all to see, is used to moderate the discussion. The main aims of these rules are to prevent racist and hateful speech from appearing on the site and to encourage a reasoned, rather than inflammatory, tone in the online discussions. Beyond these restrictions, participants are free to voice their opinions regardless of whether they conform or not to official government views.

The CIP site has proven to be especially popular with university students, and the Policy Research Division has therefore developed extensive contacts with Canadian universities to encourage their participation in the e-discussions and to solicit their views on the choice of topics for the site and the experts who could be featured there. Interest among universities was such that several integrated the failed and fragile states into their classroom curriculum and these classrooms were then invited to submit a 'policy paper' for posting on the website (**see Illustration 6**). These papers have proven to be of high quality, and offer students the opportunity to test their skills as budding policy analysts. One from the Royal Military College of Canada proved to be influential in shaping the thinking on the failed states issue in a series of round table discussions undertaken by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, one of the oldest institutions in this country that is dedicated to the study of Canada's international relations.

Universities have shown a very strong interest in participating in the CIP site—both in the e-discussions and in helping frame the issues presented there. Given this interest, the e-communications team is seeking to broaden the reach of the site to universities overseas. In June 2006, an email was sent to all Canadian missions asking them to provide information on the CIP site to institutions who host Canadian studies programs. In this way, we hope to share perspectives and resources with individuals abroad (Canadian or non-Canadian) who have an interest in Canada's role in the world.

Once a feature issue has concluded, all submissions and policy papers are reviewed and summarized by officers within the Policy Research Division (see paragraph 3 in Illustration 5). Summaries of the submissions and the policy papers are then posted on the website for all participants to see to ensure that the department has been accurate and honest in how their views are presented. The summaries are circulated throughout the department, including to senior management, and an official response is then drafted by the Division in consultation with relevant parts of the foreign ministry and other government departments. That response weighs the pros and cons of views presented in the e-discussions and also explains the official position of the government on the issues raised. This official response is also posted on the CIP site for all to see.

Growth and success of the CIP site

The CIP site has grown rapidly since its inception. Statistics collected for 2005–06 show that there were about 280,000 visitors to the site and more

Illustration 6

Policy Position Papers

We have asked university classes across Canada to help frame the eDiscussion by providing us with a policy position paper on the discussion topic. | LEARN MORE

Please find the summary of the policy position papers here: HTML | PDF

▸ **University of British Columbia**	POLI 373 "Ethics in World Politics"	HTML PDF (English only)
▸ **Saint Mary's University**	POLI 2315 "Canadian Foreign Policy"	HTML PDF (English only)
▸ **University of Calgary**	INTR 501 "International Relations" Runner-Up	HTML PDF (English only) HTML	PDF (English only)
▸ **Wilfred Laurier University**	PO327 "Post Conflict Reconstruction"	HTML PDF (English only)
▸ **University of Winnipeg**	"Canada in the World" "Canada in the World"	HTML PDF (English only) HTML	PDF (English only)
▸ **Dalhousie University**	POLI 5531 "UN in World Politics"	HTML	PDF (English only)
▸ **Cape Breton University**	POLS 430 "Seminar in International Relations: Human Security"	HTML PDF (English only)
▸ **Royal Military College of Canada**	"Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy"	HTML PDF (English only)
▸ **University of Montreal**	POL 1600 "Introduction aux relations internationales" Runner-Up*	HTML	PDF (French only) HTML	PDF (French only)
▸ **Mount Allison University**	INLR 3101 "Global Governance"	HTML	PDF (English only)
▸ **University of Windsor**	"Political Problems and Economic Development" Runner-Up 1 Runner-Up 2	HTML PDF (English only) HTML	PDF (English only) HTML	PDF (English only)
▸ **Carleton University**	BPAPM 4000 "Seminar in Public Affairs and Policy Management"	HTML	PDF (English Only)
▸ **Bishop's University**	POL 140 "International Relations"	HTML	PDF (English Only)

than 2 million page views. The average length of visit to the site is 17 minutes—an eternity in cyber time. The monthly newsletter advertising content for the site has also doubled from a base of 2,000 subscribers in 2003 to 4,000 today.

The site has also gained strong support and recognition within Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, and within government e-communications circles more generally. Senior management within the foreign ministry is solidly behind the site, and it is considered a best practice for consideration in a thorough review of the ministry's overall

Internet presence and management. Interest in the site has also been shown by other countries. Presentations on the site have been made to the Turkish, German, and Norwegian foreign ministries, as well as to Canadian diplomats in several European countries. In 2005, the Canadian International Policy site won a 'Best Practices Award' in the United Kingdom from the Local E-Democracy National Project, which is supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

And there is one more telling fact that hints at the growing interest in the Canadian International Policy website: It comes up first in a Google search for 'e-discussion'.

CONCLUSION

The Canadian International Policy website demonstrates how the power of the Internet and new forms of media can transform policy dialogue between citizens and government. The scale of this dialogue—in numbers and geography—can be hugely expanded for a fraction of the cost of past forms of public engagement. Likewise, access to information resources—whether in new media or digitized presentations of traditional narratives—is greatly facilitated by the Internet and the home computer.

At the same time, familiar questions about the purpose and use of these dialogues remain and are often raised in relation to the CIP site. Are sites like this primarily there to deliver government perspectives to the public? Or is there real scope to hear differing opinions? And what ultimate end is served by this public engagement? Does it really make a difference in policy development?

The questions on purpose are most easily addressed. The CIP site does provide a forum where unofficial views can be presented, even where they conflict with those of the ministry hosting the site. Virtually all of the experts whose interviews are posted on the site come from outside of government (and often from outside of Canada), and therefore represent independent perspectives. At the same time, there are some considerations that inevitably shape the content provided on the site. The civil rules set the main parameters for what does or does not get posted to the site. But the e-communications team which manages the site is also aware that it is, in the end, a foreign ministry site and that must be factored into decisions on some content—for example, where it might inflame an already sensitive issue, particularly one involving conflict.

What is remarkable is how rarely these kinds of decisions have ever had to be made.

As for the use of the e-discussions and the material generated for and by them, their greatest contribution in all likelihood lies in making available to Canadians a much increased body of information on important international policy issues.[7] Providing a space for online dialogue also offers Canadians an additional opportunity to debate international policy issues. The summaries and responses prepared by the department are helpful to participants insofar as they capture the main challenges and opportunities lying within each issue area. The impact of the discussions on policy development within government is more difficult to describe, given that policy making is not a linear activity but rather an often amorphous process that is shaped by multiple influences. However, what the online dialogues clearly do provide are fresh (read: non-bureaucratic) perspectives, a sharpened sense of the interests and values that Canadians see engaged in different policy areas, and the acceptable parameters that they feel should inform Canada's position on international issues of concern to its citizens.

[7] This is emphatically not to argue that they can in any way replace the textbooks and readings that form the core of university curricula. Often the online resources seem to point students to experts and sources of information previously unknown to them.

Linking Diplomatic Performance Assessment to International Results-Based Management

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INTRODUCTION

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY common in both national governments and international organizations. It derives in large measure from the 'reinventing government' movement of the 1990s, which was intended to make governments more effective (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). In this model, governments are expected to deliver goods and services that will achieve public objectives. Funding priorities should be based on the effectiveness of programs, with resources allocated to those programs that can demonstrate results.

Determining results had been a long-term concern in some international public activities. In the late 1960s, the United States Agency for International Development commissioned a private consulting firm to develop the logical framework, an approach to project design and evaluation that is now in common use.

Performance assessment is now part of the repertoire of most governments. It is intended to help show to parliaments that the funds appropriated for programs have been used wisely. In the United States, for example, the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) 'was developed to assess the effectiveness of federal programs and help inform management actions, budget requests, and legislative proposals directed at achieving

results' (United States Office of Management and Budget, 2004a, p. 1). Similarly, the Canadian Treasury Board mandates the use of what it terms 'Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks' (Canada, Treasury Board, 2005).

The application of performance assessment has been particularly difficult in foreign ministries, especially when dealing with international organizations. The problem rests in determining what elements of the performance of international organizations can be linked to the output of the foreign ministries. Because the results obtained from funds sent overseas are not very visible either to the public or to the parliaments, foreign ministries are under considerable pressure to provide convincing evidence of performance.

To examine this problem, we look first at what an assessment by foreign ministries implies, with a case study of the United States State Department. Then, we examine how international organizations assess performance and explore whether a reasonable link can be drawn between national and international assessment.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT IN FOREIGN MINISTRIES

The main function of foreign ministries is to ensure that the nation's interests are successfully pursued in relations with other nation-states and in international organizations. Determining whether these efforts have been successful, however, is not as easy as it would seem. Part of this is due to the fact that whether an expected result is obtained does not depend completely on the actions of the foreign ministry. Results are heavily conditioned by external factors such as the positions taken by other states, influential non-state actors, and the events in the external environment, all of which are outside the control of the foreign ministry.

Unlike domestic ministries, which can determine the effectiveness of programs by seeing whether roads and infrastructure are built, taxes are collected and services are used, all of which are measurable and can be influenced directly by the ministries concerned, the results of the work of foreign ministries are typically indirect, difficult to measure and not easy to influence directly.

The first problem in the performance assessment in foreign ministries is determining what the national interests are. For some nation-states, this is determined by tradition (what has always been the country's

position), but for most it is itself a complex issue. Beyond a general statement favoring peace and prosperity, more specific interests involve a complex relationship between history, values, immediate and longer-run advantages, as perceived by a nation's leaders. Often these interests are neither clear nor consistent.

The second problem is determining the expected results in terms of these interests. Most foreign ministries are reactive rather than proactive. Their job is to defend national interests—as they are defined—when these are threatened. Promoting these interests requires taking advantage of propitious situations that cannot always be predicted, or seeking to structure the environment so that the interests can be promoted.

In bilateral relationships, a main expected result would be an agreement with another state. This can be measured by the existence of memoranda of understanding, treaties, joint statements, and the like. Separate indicators might include increases in trade after agreements have been signed, a reduction in illegal border crossings, increased extradition, all depending on the substance of the agreements reached.

The problem is greater at the international level, because the national interest is pursued in a complex multilateral environment. In many contexts the national interest is not at all clear. However, one obvious expected result would be that multilateral agreements reflect national concerns. Another would be that funds given to multilateral institutions were used in ways acceptable to the country providing them.

The difficulty in linking these international developments to national performance was illustrated by an effort by the United States Department of State to undertake a Performance Assessment Review Tool (PART) on some of its international programs.

The case of PART

The United States federal government is mandated under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 'to identify both long-term and annual goals, collect performance data, and justify budget requests based on these data' (United States Office of Management and Budget, 2004b). In order to implement the law, the Office of Management and Budget in 2002 developed the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART). The PART was not meant to measure program performance per se (in terms of the outputs and outcomes), but rather was a measure of how well a

program is designed, planned, managed, and achieves results. The results are measured in ways determined by the agency, which allows the ministry concerned to determine its own performance measures and report on them. The PART consists of approximately 30 questions (the number varies depending on the type of program being evaluated), asking for information which responsible federal managers should be able to provide. For instance:

- Is the program designed to have a significant impact in addressing the intended interest, problem, or need?
- Are federal managers and program partners (grantees, sub-grantees, contractors, etc.) held accountable for cost, schedule, and performance results?
- Has the program taken meaningful steps to address its management deficiencies?
- Does the program have a limited number of specific, ambitious, long-term performance goals that focus on outcomes and meaningfully reflect the purpose of the program?
- Does the program (including program partners) achieve its annual performance goals?

These proved difficult to implement, in part because the questionnaires were designed for domestic programs. Custodio (2006) undertook an analysis of the PARTs applied to two programs, Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). He found that in the first case the PART conclusion was positive, and in the second it was negative. In neither case did the results affect the funding for the program. Custodio argued that in part the legislature ignored the findings, but he also suggested that one problem was that the method of determining results was flawed, in that the indicators did not take into account the context in which results appear.

The question then becomes, how can measures be created that will demonstrate national foreign ministry performance, especially in multilateral organizations?

Resolutions and decisions

States belonging to international organizations reach agreements and reflect them in resolutions and decisions. Every member state of the organization can, at some point, participate in the decisions. To the extent

that the decisions reached reflect national interests, joining in the decision by voting for it would indicate that the foreign ministry staff members were functioning successfully. The difficulty in this is that most international organizations adopt decisions by consensus (without a vote) and the consensus positions are determined by groups of states. For example, the European Union develops a common position on most issues—especially in the economic and social area, and most members of the Group of 77 join the common positions agreed by the group.

A state that has a significant interest in a given issue will try to take a lead role in multilateral negotiations, first within its group and then, potentially, in the general negotiations. This can be measured in terms of who prepares the group's negotiating draft, who is given the responsibility for coordinating positions, and who speaks during informal negotiations. In terms of expected outcomes, these might be expressed as follows: the foreign ministry demonstrates leadership in an issue of priority to the country. Its indicator might be the extent to which foreign ministry staff members are given those roles by other delegations.

By adding up all of the areas in which the foreign ministry was attempting to obtain a favorable decision, and calculating the number of instances where its personnel played a leadership role, the ministry can plausibly assess its performance.

Contributions to Funds

A more complex situation exists for financial contributions. In the case of the United States' PART on peacekeeping (United States, Office of Management and Budget, 2004c), the problem was less since no peacekeeping operation could be authorized by the United Nations without the United States' concurrence, because the decision-maker is the Security Council, on which the United States has veto power, and peacekeeping operations are funded by assessments. Even though the national funds go into a general fund for peacekeeping, a link can be drawn to national policy. The same is not true for other general-purpose funds based on assessment, where there may be programmatic elements about which a given state may not agree. Even voluntary contributions, where a state may decide to reduce or eliminate its contribution, suffer from this problem, except when earmarked funds are involved, where a state can determine the use for which the funds are allotted.

In fact, the only way to measure the performance of national contributions is by observing the performance of the fund or program into which the state is making a contribution.

RBM IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

International organizations have increasingly adopted results-based management. This has mirrored the development of RBM in many national governments. The RBM system in most international organizations is similar, as has been noted by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (2004). As part of the planning and budgeting process, the organization specifies its objectives and the expected outcomes of its work during the planning period that will lead to achieving an objective. At the end of the period, the organization reports on whether it has obtained the outcomes.

One intention of this process is to demonstrate to member states that their financial contribution to the organizations has been justified in terms of results. If the performance appraisal is sound, it will provide individual foreign ministries with the evidence that their policies have been useful and the funds allocated through them have been well spent.

LINKING THE NATIONAL WITH THE INTERNATIONAL

While foreign ministries cannot say that their input into the policy-making or the operations of international organizations has caused the observed results, they can say that they have been associated with success. In that sense, they have an investment in ensuring that the international organizations undertake proper performance appraisals that can demonstrate that success.

A weakness in the present system of international performance appraisals is that they are done separately for each organization, using slightly different methods. As a result, it is not easy for national authorities to draw a picture of the results of their financial contributions to the programs. The reporting done by foreign ministries is inevitably piecemeal, if it is done at all. The foreign ministries of all countries, regardless of the total amount of contribution to international organization funds, should have an interest in international performance appraisal, both in terms of methods and institutional arrangements. Because of the formula for allocating assessed expenses, every country essentially pays the same

in real terms. Different countries have different priorities and want them expressed in programs and budgets. This is essentially the basis for the current impasse on UN reform, in which developing countries do not wish to relinquish their ability to influence programmatic decisions, while major contributors consider this an obstacle to management.

In fact, foreign ministries of both developing countries and major contributors have a stake in good performance appraisals at the international level, since both are responsible for convincing their parliaments that the funds provided to the international public sector have been well spent. A solution to the current reform impasse would be to strengthen the institutions that review appraisals and use that information to improve programs. In the United Nations itself, the body charged with this task is the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Considered by the Secretariat and by many of the major contributors to be an ineffective body, it has the potential to perform the appraisal function if its support is upgraded and its importance to foreign ministries is recognized, as I have argued previously (Mathiason, 2004).

The potential for using international performance results in national reporting by foreign ministries is illustrated by the use of PART in the United States. For the 2006 budget, a PART analysis was undertaken of the United Nations refugee program (Office of Management and Budget, 2005). Largely using information provided by UNHCR, including program performance data, the presidential budget office could conclude that the State Department input into the international program was effective.

An effort to strengthen the links between international and national performance reporting can serve to strengthen both the foreign ministries and the international programs with which they work.

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Training

Diplomatic Training around the World

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INTRODUCTION

THERE IS MUCH LITERATURE ABOUT DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN POLICY, YET SO little—in global and comparative terms—about the way diplomats are recruited, taught and trained during their careers. This is even more surprising considering that diplomacy is, par excellence, the method employed by states to communicate and negotiate with each other, through professionals sharing a career, whose objectives and ethical and cultural values transcend frontiers.

This need to learn and exchange experiences brought together, in Santiago, in April 2003, the heads of several diplomatic institutions of the Americas, from Canada to Argentina. The agenda dealt, exclusively, with issues concerning diplomatic training.[1] Some months later, the Thirty-First Meeting of Directors and Deans of Diplomatic Academies and Institutes of International Relations was summoned in Dubrovnik by the Vienna Diplomatic Academy and Georgetown University. At that gathering, the Chilean experience was mentioned and the idea arose to carry out a global research on diplomatic training. At the time, and maybe because of the Santiago meeting, we were entrusted to undertake this study. We welcomed this challenge and, since no other background information

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[1] Academia Diplomática de Chile. Informe de la 'Reunión de Directores de Academias Diplomáticas de las Américas', 13–16 de abril de 2003, Santiago de Chile.

existed on this issue, we made up a questionnaire hoping that with the help of our fellow colleagues, a database could be developed.

The questionnaire covered:

Admission
- Average number of applicants per year
- Average number of vacancies per year
- Age limit for admission
- Academic requirements for applicants
- Are there psychological/vocational tests?

Academic Year
- Hours of teaching time
- Are there courses for foreign students?

Mid-career Training
- Is there a mid-career training program?
- Is mid-career training required for promotion purposes?
- Are psychological tests required for promotion purposes?
- Is there an e-learning program?

Foreign Service
- Approximate number of Foreign Service Officials (FSO)
- Can applicants join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in an upper rank without studying at the Formative Diplomatic Institution of the MFA?
- Approximate percentage of Career Ambassadors?
- Average number of years to reach the Ambassador rank?
- Has a career diplomat ever been appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vice Minister or Under Secretary?
- Percentage of women in the rank of Third Secretary or Attaché?
- Percentage of women in the rank of Ambassador (political appointees included)?
- Please include Syllabus, or on-the-job training programs of your MFA
- Are there career diplomats (active or retired) in the teaching staff of your Formative Institution?
- Percentage of the public/fiscal budget of your country earmarked for the Foreign Service (FS)

Relying on the information obtained, a preliminary version of the study was presented at the Thirty-Second Conference held in Vienna in 2004 and then at the Thirty-Third Conference held in Lima in 2005.

Now that the data from over eighty countries—accounting for nearly 90% of the world population—has been analysed, the results of the survey can be examined with more precision and depth. The 83 countries that participated in this enquiry are listed in Annexure I.

We thank each and every one of the Directors and Deans for the support and patience shown, for clarifying many doubts and making suggestions for the improvement of the initial questionnaire. We are especially grateful to Ambassador Ernst Sucharipa, then Director of the Vienna Diplomatic Academy, who prematurely passed away, and had encouraged us to engage in this study.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Broadly speaking, this survey is aimed at determining the ways in which a MFA recruits its diplomats; the requirements for taking part in the selection processes; the entry examinations and the syllabi and training systems.

However, it does not limit itself to these issues. We thought it was also essential to learn how diplomatic careers evolved once they are initiated; how the career opens to women; if the Foreign Service echelon is or is not abused by political appointments; which is the recognition granted to diplomats, enabling these professionals to culminate their careers as Ambassadors. Without this information, our study would not only be incomplete but—should the answers be unsatisfactory—it would be worth asking ourselves if the efforts to invest time and resources to build up a transient foreign service are justifiable.

This chapter does not consider all the topics covered by this survey; we had to choose among those themes we believed deserved more attention. Besides those mentioned above, we analyse the role of the MFA in foreign policy and diplomacy, and the cooperation among the diplomatic academies and training centers.[2]

MFAS: SIZE DIFFERENCES

Could the results of this survey be distorted because of the huge differences in size that exist among MFAs?

[2] A complete analysis of this research should appear in book form during 2007.

According to the number of employees, MFAs may fall into three categories: mega, medium and small-sized MFAs. Professors Brian Hocking and David Spence,[3] rank the United States as the top mega MFA with a staff of 63,400. It is followed by France (23,700), the United Kingdom (15,900), Germany (11,500) and Japan (10,184). Take note that this data also includes officials that belong to other agencies and not only to the Foreign Service. If, however, only diplomats are taken into consideration, the ranking would be substantially different: USA would lead with 7769, followed by UK with 2308, Netherlands 1519, Germany 1460 and France with 1400.[4] One can clearly see the discrepancies between these figures, given the diverse methodologies used by MFAs to classify their officials.

Another simple and precise way to estimate the size of MFAs is to count their resident Embassies accredited before third countries and international organizations. Following this procedure, the US is again in first place with 179 Embassies, followed by France with 160, Germany 154, UK with 149 and Russia with 148.[5]

However important these mega MFAs may be, they account for not more than 10% of the total. They are the very selected few that play in the 'big leagues'. These differences regarding access to power, influence, international agendas, resources—both human and financial—and technology should be borne in mind when exploring the eventual courses of action and objectives that smaller MFAs and their academies or training centers are able or willing to cope with.

In the vast majority of the cases, the total size is made up of 1500 officials or less, whereas a significant 43% has not more than 500. Barbados, the smallest in this study, has only 50.

Irrespective of size and availability of funds, recruitment, teaching and training of the diplomatic staff in the mega MFAs do not substantially vary from those applied in medium or small Foreign Ministries. What really varies is that those recruits from MFAs with more resources can afford the luxury to choose right from the beginning their specializations including political, economic, consular, business, immigration or

[3] Brian Hocking and David Spence, 'Towards a European Diplomatic System?', Clingendael Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Nº 98 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 'Clingendael', 2005.

[4] Andrea Cascone, 'Comparing Diplomatic Services: Structures, Networks and Resources of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of EU and G8 Member States', Occasional Papers, DIPLO, 2000.

[5] Andrea Cascone, idem.

administrative careers. In other smaller MFAs, by contrast, future diplomats are offered general training courses, whereby they must be prepared to take over any and every function, even administrative tasks.

Career training is certainly continuous and offers a myriad choices in mega MFAs, while in those that are smaller, the training must be occasional and restricted to matters of vital interest in their foreign policy. In some cases, e-learning, video libraries and CD-based training are common tools, while in others, only a remote goal.

RECRUITMENT

Not so long ago belonging to the aristocracy or being wealthy would frequently give a significant advantage to those wishing to join the Foreign Service. Having a private income was a standard requirement, and a letter of recommendation signed by a well-known person could serve as the magic key to enter into the career.

Today the requisites have changed: a university degree is a must, as is fluency in foreign languages, plus having a good psychological or diplomatic profile. Generally the recruitment process is announced with great publicity and with sufficient anticipation, giving clear rules that guarantee transparency and fair play to all candidates. All MFAs, given life cycles, need to renew their staffs. Normally, their Human Resources divisions determine the number of professionals to be hired each year. Once that number is established, a public selection process is called through the mass media and Internet. University centers are also visited, looking for graduates willing to pursue a diplomatic career.

It doesn't matter much whether the MFAs entrust their Human Resources divisions, Academies, Institutes or Training Centers with the calling, selection process and appointment of the candidates. What is really important is that the process is widely advertised and transparent, and that only the best candidates are accepted. The requirements for admission are very similar: except in the United States all MFAs demand a university degree for the entry examinations. In most selection processes, besides a university degree, candidates should also speak other languages. Once taken in the Foreign Service, the MFAs devote a large part of the syllabus to improve the language proficiency of their new recruits.

As for age, several situations exist: half the MFAs do not mention age, while 42% put an age limit of 35. The US allows a maximum of 59, the highest of all. A very special case is that of Indonesia, which sets a

maximum of 28 for those candidates holding a bachelor's degree; 32 for those with a master's degree and 35 for those with a doctoral degree.

Despite the high academic standards required, in all countries there is a high demand for a diplomatic career, a profession that is universally recognized as challenging, attractive and full of opportunities. This explains the high ratio between applications and vacancies around the world: in the United States, there is one vacancy for every 300 candidates; in Brazil, 1 for every 125 candidates; in the UK, 1 vacancy for 120 candidates; in Australia and Thailand, one vacancy for 100 candidates.

As an example, consider the selection process in Finland, which, with its 500 diplomats, ranks as a small-sized MFA. In 2004, 826 candidates, all holding a university degree, applied to fill 30 vacancies. There was no age limit. They were examined by an admission and educational committee selected by the MFA along with representatives of universities, trade unions and chambers of commerce. Candidates followed a 4-stage process: 1. Submission of requested documentation (university grades, CV, introduction letters and an essay on the reasons underlying their desire to be admitted); 2. approval of a current affairs and general knowledge exam; 3. the highest 98 scores would be submitted to psychological tests and interviews, where a candidate's knowledge was not relevant. The top 42 scores followed on to the 4th stage, consisting of a final interview and language examinations. The top 30 were selected for training, which would last about two years and which we will discuss later on.[6]

Consider the screening process in the United States for the selection of Foreign Service Officers. Each candidate has to choose one of five career paths: management, consular, economic, political and public diplomacy affairs. This decision is almost final, as changing to another path is a long and cumbersome process. There is a wide campaign on the media publicizing the State Department's examination process. The criteria for applications are: to be a citizen of the United States, from 20 to 59 years old. A college or university degree is not required. No language proficiency is asked for but a good command in foreign languages is a plus. The examining commission is formed by officials from the State Department. Every applicant has to pass a written exam and an oral assessment. The written exam lasts a whole day and consists, in its

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[6] Nicolás Cimarra Etchenique, 'El Modelo de Acceso a la Carrera Diplomática en los Paises Nórdicos' in 'Cuadernos de la Escuela Diplomática de España, Nº 27, 2005, pages 33 to 37.

first phase, of different subjects: 50 multiple-choice questions, English expressions, behavioral and personality tests, and essay writing. From a total of about 20,000 to 30,000 applicants for some 300 to 400 vacancies, only about 20% to 25% pass the test. The second phase, the oral assessments, takes another day. There are both individual and collective assessments of the applicants, that take into account several elements: criteria-judgment; experience and motivation; oral and written communication; initiative and leadership skills; teamwork; cultural flexibility; composure; calm, impartiality and the ability to adequately face challenges, inter alia. Successful candidates need to undergo a security background investigation and a medical clearance. The selected applicants are listed in a register 'Eligible Hires', according to the scores obtained, where they remain for up to two years. If they are not selected for employment within such period, they are removed from the register and if they so choose they must begin the process again.[7]

Sir Harold Nicolson in 'Diplomacy'[8] listed the qualities of an ideal diplomat: truthfulness, accuracy, calmness, good temper, patience, modesty, and loyalty. It is also taken for granted that he shall be intelligent, knowledgeable, wise, prudent, warm, joyful, courageous and tactful. Command of foreign languages—critical for interacting with diplomats from other nations—is, obviously, a requirement.

But as Xiaohong Liu wisely remarks,

Nicolson's 'ideal diplomatist' is modelled on exclusively European, mainly British, and American experiences. When he discusses the changes in postwar international diplomacy with the rise of newly independent countries, Nicolson sees a dichotomized world: the west and the east. He sees the former relying in the old system of trust and truth, the latter playing a game of deception ascribed either to communist ideology or to 'oriental mentality'... Then Liu adds: 'to date the diplomatic practices and experiences of other traditions have yet to be fully introduced and integrated into the conventional wisdom of diplomatic studies'.[9]

[7] Report of the Meeting of Directors of Training Institution for Diplomats in the Asia Pacific Region. Santiago, Chile, 7–10 June 2004, page 11.

[8] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, Insitute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington DC, 1988, Chapter V, 'The Ideal Diplomatist'.

[9] Xiaohong Liu, *Chinese Ambassadors. The Rise of Diplomatic Professionals since 1949*, University of Washington Press, 2001, page xii.

Surely some interesting research could be done in this area.

Going back to Nicolson and the fifteen qualities he has listed—which certainly no human could attain in their entirety—only one is easier to verify: 'knowledge', generally acquired with education, attested by diplomas or certificates, which, as already seen, nearly all MFAs demand from candidates wishing to join their Foreign Services. However, how are the remaining 14 qualities—making up the 'diplomatic profile' regarded as crucial for a successful career—going to be measured?

A fundamental question arises: do we search for a professional, with outstanding academic credits but a weak diplomatic profile? Or a candidate with a good diplomatic profile but modest academic performance? Or should he/she have a balanced mixture of both ingredients? We already saw that knowledge is a 'must' and that 99% of MFAs demand a university degree, hopefully, with proficiency in one or more foreign languages.

The survey also highlights another fact: for 66% of MFAs, academic excellence is not enough. They also expect an adequate diplomatic profile. The possession of knowledge is clearly important, but having the diplomatic profile seems indispensable. This calls for reflection: if the diplomatic profile prevails over knowledge in some entry exams, it is due to the assumption that successful candidates should attain solid professional knowledge during their career, while the diplomatic profile, if it is not the one required at the average application age of 25, will hardly be modified at a later stage of their lives.

Results regarding the psychological tests, supported by regular follow-ups during the whole career, have been excellent, which explains why more MFAs are adding them as an important component in their screening process. It should also be noted that among the remaining 33% of the MFAs, some do not apply these exams because of cultural reasons or for fear of being accused of lack of transparency. This group of 33% favours knowledge in their recruitment. The fact that a candidate lacks an adequate diplomatic profile does not mean, of course, that he/she does not possess the necessary conditions to successfully perform in other professional activities.

Asking each MFA to provide a detailed report as to how the diplomatic profile test is administered would certainly have exhausted the patience of our colleagues. For this reason we decided to describe the manner in which the Chilean Diplomatic Academy administers this process since 2001, which is quite similar to many of those applied in other MFAs, as shown by the replies to our questionnaire.

In the Chilean case, a team of psychologists, independent from the MFA, but with ample experience in screening processes for the Judicial Academy, was hired. They met with high, medium and low-level FSO and even with some of their partners, in order to get a clear picture about the working conditions and family life of the diplomatic world. As a result of the interviews, an evaluation model with twenty aptitudes was established to measure several abilities, similar to those applicable in other countries in their entry examinations: 1. Vocation for the diplomatic career; 2. Intellectual level; 3. Communication and empathy; 4. Social dexterity; 5. Teamwork; 6. Self-evaluation; 7. Motivation for achievement; 8. Entrepreneurial capacity; 9. Effectiveness; 10. Social judgement; 11. Decision making; 12. Attitudes to change; 13. Evaluation; 14. Negotiation abilities; 15. Emotional intelligence; 16. Tolerance to stress; 17. Integration; 18. Tolerance to frustration; 19. Adaptation to other cultures; 20. Social awareness.

The psychological tests applied are:
- Rorschach Test
- Thematic Apperception Test, TAT
- Completion of Sentences Test
- Edwards Inventory, EPPS
- Individual psychological interview.

The time devoted to interviewing each candidate was three hours (tests and interview) and two hours to study each case and prepare the relevant report. To insure that all candidates are informed of the importance and specific weight of these tests, when the public announcements are made for the entry examinations to fill FSO vacancies, with some 200 candidates competing for 10 vacancies, it is clearly stipulated that 'the psychological examination shall be fundamental for the selection of the 25 candidates reaching the final phase' and that it 'will consist of several tests and personal interviews to search for the profiles required for diplomatic duties'.

If despite obtaining high marks in knowledge tests a candidate is not selected, this could indicate a failure to fulfil the diplomatic profile requirements. In that case the candidate may request an interview with the Director of the Academy and the head psychologist for a confidential explanation of his or her evaluation. The Academy has neither intervention rights in this last instance nor does it keep records of psychological tests.

After having administered these tests within the Chilean MFA for five years, certain conclusions can be drawn:

- Unsuccessful candidates have raised no claims for a lack of transparency in the administration of tests;
- The members of the screening commission—chaired by the Director of the Academy—during the final interview of candidates have generally coincided with the opinions made by psychologists about the candidates. It must be noted that the commission interviews a candidate first, and only afterwards the head psychologist discloses the results of his evaluation.
- The senior officers and professors of the Academy have witnessed an improvement in the vocation and commitment of students ever since these tests began to be administered;
- MFAs' Directors noted in their reports a greater vocation, team spirit, solidarity and initiative on the part of officers admitted upon compliance with the diplomatic profile requirements.
- Psychologists affirm that these tests have a certainty rate of 90%; however, according to results, this percentage has been overtly exceeded.

In brief, the Chilean experience has been very positive since the implementation of the diplomatic profile requirements in the selection process.

Another question regarding psychological tests was included in the survey: whether it was also being applied to Foreign Service officers during their career, particularly when promoted to positions involving greater responsibilities. Responses indicated that they were administered only in 11% of the cases, generally when dealing with promotion from First Secretary to Counsellor—this we found disturbing. From our point of view it would be reasonable to expect that these tests should be given again when the diplomat begins to make decisions, lead working teams, and hold executive positions involving more responsibilities. In due time, let us hope that these percentages, so low today, will become the general rule, as this is being required for recruitment purposes.

THE ROLE OF THE MFA

We firmly believe that MFAs will continue to play a decisive role in the conduct of world affairs and that diplomacy is the most effective method to reach, recover and maintain a peaceful coexistence among nations. Anecdotes predicting the end of diplomacy shall have to wait until earthlings divest themselves of all their frailties. Perhaps then the conflicts of interest that have always accompanied humans may vanish, and we

might be able to give diplomacy a well-deserved respite. But until that magic moment arrives, diplomacy shall continue to be the most reliable, civilized tool to prevent disputes or bring peace to an increasingly wider, interconnected community, eternally overwhelmed by tensions and perils. We make this 'statement of principles' since some specialists refer to the decline of the MFAs.[10] However, as shown by Brian Hocking[11] and also by this same author, together with David Spence[12]—and we absolutely agree with them—neither the MFAs of Europe or of other regions share that vision. Nor does this survey support that assertion. On the contrary, MFAs the world over maintain the key position as the valid interpreters of the mind and voice of their countries when dealing with other nations.

However, it is also utterly true that the past few decades have witnessed the appearance of other actors that claim their share in the international arena: Parliament, NGOs, other state agencies, academia, business, trade unions and, of course, the media. As a result, the MFAs today do not have the monopoly—if they ever did have it—in the involvement and management of world affairs. Nevertheless, as stated by Stephanie Smith Kinney:

> The Internet, non-governmental organizations and Wall Street may now provide opinionated new players in an increasingly complex international arena, but they still do not and cannot speak for the nation states themselves. Nor can they speak for those entities which would like to become recognized as nation states. This function for the foreseeable future will continue to rest with the officially designated and recognized agents of each state or aspiring entity. Nor just anyone can or will be able to do the job; those who do it should be properly prepared.[13]

Faced with this reality, as asserted by Professor G.R. Berridge, 'a diplomatic service that is well resourced and above all well staffed can give

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[10] Among others, see Shaun Riordan, 'The New Diplomacy', Polity Press, UK, 2003.

[11] Brian Hocking, 'Foreign Ministries: Change and Adaptation', London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999.

[12] Brian Hocking and David Spence, 'Foreign Ministries of the European Union: Integrating Diplomats', Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2002.

[13] Stephanie Smith Kinney, 'The Culture of Diplomacy in 2015: What Kind of Service Will We Cultivate?', Diplomacy in the Information Age, July 2000, Center for Information Strategy and Policy (CISP), available in www.cisp.org/imp july_2001/07_01kinney.htm

a State a significant increment of power and influence'.[14] Doubtlessly, this is one of the many reasons underlying a country's efforts to provide its diplomats with the best training it can afford.

The role of a MFA as a formative institution can go, of course, much further than its fundamental task of training diplomats: the increase of power and influence has a very strong multiplying effect if the MFA also provides support to private or public establishments involved with third countries using, where necessary, to accomplish this assignment, regional centres managed by the MFA to reach the most isolated places inside its own territory. This type of action, employed by some medium and small countries, apart from improving the performance of those institutions, creates an influential home constituency for the MFA, an objective that is not easily achieved. In any case, this is an issue that deserves to be examined so as to consider the multiple functions a MFA can develop in the international field to fortify its foreign policy. Having said this, let us return to the making of a diplomat.

Acknowledgment of the importance of good diplomatic training goes back a long way. It was already demanded during the Renaissance, when the first permanent embassies were established, as stated by François de Callières (1645–1717):

> The Great Duke of Tuscany, who was a Prince of great wisdom and penetration, was complaining one day to an ambassador of Venice, who passed through Florence on his way to Rome, that that Republic had sent him in the quality of resident, a man without conduct, and without judgment. Upon which the ambassador made answer to him: I am not at all surprised at it, for we have fools enough at Venice. To which the Great Duke replied: We have likewise our fools at Florence, but we do not send them abroad to take care of our affairs.[15]

This study will deal, precisely, with the manner in which MFAs may prevent these embarrassments and confront this challenge to adequately train diplomats.

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[14] G.R. Berridge, 'Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger', *Studies in Diplomacy*, gen. eds, G.R. Berridge, Maurice Keens-Soper and T.G. Otte, 2001, p. 3.

[15] François de Callières, *The Art of Diplomacy*, H.M.A. Keens-Soper and Karl W. Schweizer, University Press of America, p. 171.

TEACHING FOREIGN POLICY AND DIPLOMACY

What are diplomats taught and trained in their MFAs? Fundamentally, MFAs teach and train them on foreign policy and diplomacy.

Lord Strang defines the former as the discipline that embodies 'the purposes, intentions or objectives pursued by its Government in the conduct of relations with the Governments of other States'.[16] In a very graphic definition, Peter Marshall writes that 'Foreign Policy is about what to do and diplomacy how to do it'.[17]

Having defined foreign policy and diplomacy as above, a clear distinction should be evident regarding 'international relations/affairs', a subject we could term as basically concerned with the theoretical and historical aspects of the interaction among nations. Kishan S. Rana makes this point very clear when he writes: 'We assume that the purpose of training is not only to impart knowledge of international affairs, but also to train personnel in diplomatic craft skills. This core fact limits the degree to which academic training is of practical use for diplomatic services. A typical course in a university, focused in international affairs just does not meet the needs for practical hands-on training for this profession.'[18]

By their very nature, MFAs are the institutions basically responsible for formulating, planning and implementing the foreign policies of each country and, therefore, it is obvious that they should also be the best qualified to take over this task or, in exceptional cases—as with the United Kingdom—to discharge them through other learning centers. The same should be said regarding the teaching of diplomacy.

This does not exclude, of course, as John Dickie points out that 'the formulation of foreign policy is usually the product of many sources outside as well as inside the Foreign Office, with inputs for Members of Parliament, on the spot staff of NGOs, academic experts, businessmen... foreign correspondents'.[19] But then, inputs to foreign policy are one thing, formulating foreign policy is another.

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[16] Lord Strang, *The Diplomatic Career*, London, André Deutsch Ltd., 1962, p. 115.

[17] Peter Marshall, *Positive Diplomacy*, London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997, p. 1.

[18] Kishan S. Rana, 'Diplomatic Training Options' (unpublished paper).

[19] John Dickie, *The New Mandarins. How British Foreign Policy Works*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2004, p. 6.

TRAINING: SYLLABUS VS TRAINING ON THE JOB

John Dickie, citing the memoirs of Sir Bernard Borrows, recalls that when Sir Bernard started career in the early 1930s there were no training courses: 'you were assigned to a slightly older mentor who told you the mechanics of the business and then you gradually worked yourself in'.[20] This learning by osmosis given by elders to newcomers was the type of schooling applied in most of the other MFAs until a more sophisticated way of training developed as from the middle of the twentieth century, with the appearance of Academies and Training Centers within the foreign services.

So nowadays, once a candidate has been selected, his next step shall be to start his studies at the Diplomatic Academy or Institute or have on-the-job training at his MFA, where surely an important part of his teaching staff will consists of active and retired diplomats. Professor Paul Meerts distinguishes between four main models of Training Centers: Diplomatic Academies, Schools of Foreign Service, Institutes of International Relations and International Training Organizations. In his booklet—an excellent example of substance and synthesis—Professor Meerts offers 'some guidance to governments and/or institutions, wanting to create diplomatic training centers in order to enhance the knowledge and skills of their junior and mid-career diplomats'.[21]

In our work, however, we will only concentrate on the formative institutions within MFA. The need to train diplomatic personnel is beyond dispute. The consensus is that diplomacy is not to be improvised and that this career demands permanent improvement, acquired and developed either at a Diplomatic Academy or Institute, a Training Centers or through training programs. Some countries, perhaps too small or new to have their own training centers, settle this problem by sending their officers abroad, thanks to cooperation agreements with other foreign institutions.

There is a wide network of agreements of this kind, under which professors, students, and publications are exchanged and several seminars, which offer short or long-term courses, are organized, to which foreign young diplomats are invited. The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign

[20] John Dickie, ibid, p. 43.
[21] P.W. Meerts, 'A Short Guide to Diplomatic Training', Netherlands Instituut voor Internationale Betrekkingen 'Clingendael', 2000, p. 6.

Relations of Malaysia is one of the most active in this regard, as evidenced by the training programmes offered.[22]

In this field, we should also refer to DiploFoundation whose task is, as it states in its website, 'to assist all countries, particularly those with limited human and financial resources, to participate meaningfully in international affairs through education and training programs, research and the development of information and communications technologies for diplomatic activities'.[23]

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has a Multilateral Diplomacy Program giving 'in-country training and technical assistance, including tailor-made courses and workshops for government officials, training needs assessments and assistance in the development of diplomatic training institutes and curricula'.[24]

The most ancient Diplomatic Academy in the world is the 'Pontificia Academia Eclesiástica', established in 1701, restricted to priests entering the Foreign Service at the Vatican. The oldest secular Academy is the Vienna Academy, established in 1754. Especially since the 1940s, new Academies, Institutes and Training Centers were created, to the point that, today, practically every MFA has one, as proved by the responses to this survey.

In a Diplomatic Academy or Institute, the instruction is basically provided through courses that can last up to two years and require completion of an established syllabus. In 18% of cases, these studies can entitle the candidate to obtain a postgraduate degree. In the Training Centers, instruction consists of shorter courses, varying from one day up to several months, followed by long training periods at the MFA and in Missions abroad. But whatever their name, they are all after the same purpose: to recruit first-class Foreign Service officers and give them, throughout their whole career, the best possible homemade professional education and training.

A major similarity is also noted as regards syllabi and training systems, surely because the international agenda is shared by all, irrespective of regional and cultural differences. Few could have been as precise as Peter Marshall in this respect: 'Whatever its size, whatever the extent of its international involvement and whatever the scale of its professional

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[22] 'The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations' (IDFR) Training Programs', 2006.

[23] DiploFoundation: www.diplomacy.edu/.

[24] UNITAR: se www.unitar.org.

diplomatic activity, every country is at the end of the day faced with the same facts of international substance and process.'[25] These syllabi, coinciding in the basics, coexist with specific local, regional and worldwide interests that are considered in the particular design of the syllabus of each country, together with high-level conferences, seminars, round tables and visits to institutions or places of special interest. The most frequently offered courses are listed in Annexure II.

It is obvious that both the curricula and the training courses will vary since they must adapt to the ever-changing needs of the international agenda. The real differences that can be observed are rather connected with the availability of resources, both human and financial. So mega MFAs may offer more courses, languages or internships abroad than smaller MFAs, which sometimes are faced with serious restrictions even to fulfil their basic goals.

Let us go back to the Finnish case. Finland does not have a Diplomatic Academy, but applies the training system. As already seen, the top 30 candidates are selected for instruction consisting in international relations courses and mock negotiations—three months—language courses and several tests, followed by a 6 to 9-month internship at least in two MFA departments, and 4 to 6-month periods working at a mission abroad. Upon conclusion of this stage, which may last about two years, the candidate shall receive a letter from the MFA inviting him or her to join the Ministry.[26]

The Foreign Ministry of Argentina, whose Foreign Service strength is over 900 diplomatic officers, has a Diplomatic Academy, which annually accepts some twenty-five students, all of them holding a university degree, from an average of some 125 candidates. They study theoretical and practical courses essential to the building up of the diplomatic knowledge in the globalization era during four terms, each consisting of twenty weeks. There are advanced language studies and other courses, such as introduction to diplomacy; diplomatic theory and practice; Public international law; foreign policy of Argentina; contemporary international policy; international relations theory; international negotiation; economic analysis elements; country economic analysis; export promotion; consular theory and practice; Argentinean culture; oratory; export promotion;

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[25] Peter Marshall, ibid, p. xv.
[26] Nicolás Cimarra Etchenique, ibid.

public regulations and management; protocol, and diplomatic and consular practice.

It also holds special seminars on the main issues of the foreign policy of Argentina, focused on opportunities and challenges posed by the 21st century. In addition to the above, they receive the visits of national and foreign figures, professors and other personalities lecturing on issues within their field of study. Classes are given from Monday to Friday, full-time. Afternoons are devoted to English and Portuguese courses aimed at obtaining the respective international certificates. Candidates also train in other state agencies and take part in negotiation exercises and crisis settlement games.[27] After the two-year training cycle, candidates passing all the courses join the Permanent Active Foreign Service staff, at the lowest levels, i.e. Embassy Secretaries and Third-class Consuls.

The United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) uses on-the-job training; no prior diplomatic experience is required. Selection is based on the abilities, not the knowledge of the candidate, as the FCO will train an officer throughout his career. The first objective is to familiarize new diplomats with the FCO structure and working spirit. During the first two years they shall undergo intensive training, be assigned to an FCO department for professional or specialization courses, thematic courses and management courses. There are relatively short courses (3–5 weeks) for new entrants. Most of their training is done on-the-job, mixed with short courses, both in-house and external. Before going overseas, staff is given a period of full-time training for their next jobs. This process continues throughout an officer's career, including the most senior. The list of some of the main in-house training courses offered by FCO include foreign-policy issues, consular courses, political work and negotiating courses, drafting and effective speaking and economics. Many of these courses are contracted to outside agents whose experts set up and conduct the programs, regularly reviewed by the Head of the Training Center of the FCO.[28]

Successful Japanese candidates must, during the first three months, follow courses at the MFA training institute on Japanese culture, conferences on the State system, economics and international law. During

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[27] 'Reunión de Directores de Academias Diplomaticas de las Américas', document presented by Argentina.

[28] John Dickie, ibid, p. 51.

the next 21 months, they work as apprentices at an MFA department and then they are seconded abroad for two years, in order to consolidate the knowledge of a language of their choice. There they shall fully be devoted to learning a language at a university and sit for periodic examination at the Japanese embassy. This apprenticeship is also followed by other MFAs within the region.

<div align="center">CAREER PLANNING</div>

Career training for Foreign Service officers is required in 81% of MFA and in 68.5% of the cases, it is indispensable for promotion. These figures show the relevance that MFA place on the professional improvement of its diplomats during their career. Those who fail to follow or pass these courses shall certainly have their prospects for advancement restricted.

In some countries training is also a requirement for Ambassadors but, unfortunately, it is hardly the general rule. This omission is even more distressing and can have major consequences if, as we shall see below, one takes into account that an important percentage of Ambassadors are political appointees. In this respect, there is an evident contradiction regarding the training demands made upon the young recruits and professional diplomats throughout their professional life, as compared to those requested to political appointees who will be in charge of a mission abroad, even though many of them have no professional qualifications. As Kishan S. Rana correctly states: 'Objectively speaking, there are very few situations where a non-career Ambassador offers something unique for the advancement of national interest that a career official cannot deliver.'[29]

Walter Astié-Burgos states that throughout a career in the Foreign Service several stages exist, each of which requires different abilities.[30] At first, at the Secretary levels, academic training has little importance; the work done is predominantly operative. At this stage, practical experience is gained in handling a myriad of daily diplomatic affairs and issues. Upon promotion to Counsellor, Minister and, particularly, Ambassador, academic training turns critical, since when they reach these ranks, they

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[29] Kishan S. Rana, *Bilateral Diplomacy*, DiploHandbooks, 2002, p. 140.

[30] Walter Astié-Burgos, 'Perfil y formación del diplomático en el nuevo siglo', Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior, junio 2000.

acquire an influential position in the decision-making process, definition of strategies or recommendation of policies.

In mega MFA, career training shall certainly be continuous and offer hundreds of choices, while mini MFAs may offer only occasional courses in those areas that are of paramount importance to a small-sized Ministry.

The Centre for Education and Training (CET) of the Indonesian MFA is an excellent example of a mid-career Foreign Service four-month training course for Second and First Secretaries, which is a pre-requisite for promotion, with in-depth studies on Foreign Policy development and a sharpening of their diplomatic skills. There is also a Senior Foreign Service Officer course pre-requisite for those who will be promoted to Minister Counsellor, regarding an understanding of the development of problems related to diplomacy and Foreign Policy, decision making, problem solving and in making recommendations on regional and global issues and trends. At the end of each course, CET formulates a comprehensive individual report to be conveyed to the Minister of FA. This report is then stored in the central database of the DPA as part of the personal individual dossier.[31]

The Mario Toscano Diplomatic Institute of Italy establishes for Counsellors a course including, inter-alia, the following subjects: an introductory course (1 day); foreign policy and Italian society (10 meetings); aspects of the Italian culture (3 days); European Union issues (2 days); conferences and round tables on current political, cultural and social issues (several days); strategic issues (1 day); seminar on communications (5 days); seminar on diplomacy, companies and institutions (3 days); international organizations (2 days); political and diplomatic security (6 days); psycho-social training on interaction and communications dynamics (2 days).[32]

E-learning is used in 24% of MFAs, particularly for career training. Many others are expected to incorporate such courses in the near future.

WOMEN IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

Only in the first decades of the twentieth century did women begin to be admitted—although reluctantly—into the Foreign Service. In the UK they were able to apply to the Diplomatic Service in 1943 but were required

[31] 'Meeting of Directors of Training Institutions for Diplomats in the Asia Pacific Region', document presented by Indonesia.

[32] www.esteri.it/ita, see 'Corso di Formazione Professionale Per Consiglieri di Legazione'.

to resign on marriage until the regulations were changed in 1972. The first British woman Ambassador was appointed in 1962,[33] and the first of the People's Republic of China, in 1979.[34] Today, practically all diplomatic services around the world include women, although in the FS they are still a minority. This survey shows that in 13 countries women outnumber men among Third Secretaries, while in 38 of the 83 countries surveyed, they occupy more than 30% of these posts. Yet, at the level of Ambassadors, there exists a sizable gap in the numbers; in just 9 countries they occupy more than 20% of the ambassadorial posts (Sweden is the highest with 28%, though 54% of its diplomats are women). Please see Annexure III.

Surely, this difference in percentages between Third Secretaries and Ambassadors is explained by the fact that the recent incorporation of women is not yet reflected at the higher levels, something which should take place in a few years, as they advance in their careers. On the other hand this reduction could also be due in part to the rules that our society still imposes: marriage, maternity, housewife responsibilities or child education, which obliges them to choose at a certain stage between a successful career and their family life.

In any case, there is no doubt that their participation is on the rise, as can be seen in some MFAs which up to now did not allow them in, but are considering their admission. Uruguay is the perfect showcase of this positive trend: with only 1% of women Ambassadors, it has opened up the career in such a way that today an impressive 66% of their Third Secretaries are women.

COOPERATION AMONG TRAINING CENTERS

As stated at the beginning, one reason for this survey was the striking shortage of information about the institutions that, within MFAs, are responsible for recruiting and preparing their diplomatic staff.

Apart from the annual meeting called for by the Vienna Diplomatic Academy and Georgetown University, where Foreign Service training issues are not always discussed, the only other meetings at a regional level we knew of were the ones convened during the eighties and nineties by the Diplomatic Academy of Mexico with the participation of some Latin

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[33] John Dickie, ibid, p. 5.
[34] Xiaohong Liu, ibid, p. 142.

American and Caribbean countries. In these meetings nevertheless, recruitment, teaching and training matters were not considered.

In this sense, the 2003 and 2004 meetings in Santiago of the heads of Diplomatic Academies of the Americas and of the Asia Pacific Region, respectively, were a breakthrough with an agenda that included such topics as recruitment procedures, comparison of syllabi and teaching methods, the use of psychometric testing in selection processes, distance learning and cooperation.

Since then, there have been further meetings in Madrid and Costa Rica. In September 2006 it will be the turn of Uruguay to host the Ibero-American[35] Congress System, where over twenty diplomatic training institutions within the Americas, Spain and Portugal will gather to analyse and discuss their concerns. These have all been very rich experiences regarding diplomatic training and, surely, it would be to the benefit of training institutions of other regions if they followed up with this example.

One of the many results of these encounters has been the creation of cooperative networks among Ibero-American Diplomatic Academies, Institutions and Schools, which have undertaken the pledge to advance in different areas, including the strengthening of the professional diplomatic career, to carry out annual training courses, increasing research in international issues and continue with the exchange of publications between diplomatic academies.[36]

Sadly, another result of this study shows that only 37% of MFAs offer free international training to young foreign diplomats from third countries on a permanent basis. The MFAs which accept foreign diplomats are principally those which have Diplomatic Academies or Institutes. One could conclude that inviting foreign diplomats to MFAs using on-the-job training represents a challenge that many have not yet been able to solve. These international courses, apart from the benefit of learning and acquiring experience in other regions—sometimes far away from the native country of the young diplomat—establish professional links among all the national and foreign students, creating lasting bonds throughout their career and a positive relationship among MFAs and their formative institutions.

[35] 'Ibero America' includes the Latin American countries and also the two European countries of the Iberian peninsula: Portugal and Spain.

[36] 'Acta de la III Reunión de la Asociación de Academias, Institutos y Escuelas Diplomáticas Iberoamericanas', Madrid, octubre, 2005.

Chile, among others, offers every year an International course for Young Foreign Diplomats from June through December. There are full scholarships for the least developed countries that include air fare, a monthly allowance, medical insurance and free tuition. Candidates must be put forward by their MFAs and speak Spanish. In 2006 young diplomats from Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Japan, Paraguay, Peru, People's Republic of China, Russia, and Vietnam participated. Throughout the years, over 200 students from 50 countries of all continents have taken part in these courses.

Surely there are many other forms of cooperation between the MFA that could also be encouraged in other areas that are particularly sensitive for the diplomatic career, for instance in administrative matters, that could also be implemented.

RESPECT FOR THE CAREER

At this point we should ask ourselves whether all the energy and trouble spent in recruitment, teaching and training described above to build a specialized professional career is worth the effort. We have stated that any policy favouring training at a MFA, as adequately expressed by Professor Berridge in a quotation above, shall improve its management and accomplishments, and strengthen the international power of the concerned country.

In this sense, a process applied intelligently within an atmosphere of respect for the diplomatic career would be an investment in professional resources that should pay high dividends. If this is not the case and the career is abused by political appointments that damage the Foreign Service echelons, the eventual benefits that are sought through constant and sophisticated training would be wiped out by the demoralization that stems from these violations and, even worse, may cause tension within the MFA and affect its performance, an issue that has been mentioned in several studies.[37]

This does not, in any way, mean turning our backs to measures that may fortify the MFAs, as is the case with the Foreign Services of the

[37] Among others see Brian Hocking, *Foreign Ministries: Change and Adaptation*, p. 218; John Dickie, ibid; and Enrico De Agostini, *Diplomatico: Chi è Costui?: Miti e Realtà di una Professione che Cambia*, Milano, Italy, FrancoAngeli, 2006.

United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, and New Zealand, among many others, which admit lateral entries for specialists, without interfering with the Foreign Service echelons. When such incorporations are made in a transparent and non-discriminatory process, and not used as a feud to pay political favours, these measures should be most welcomed. In the same way, the system should not protect those professionals who, for several reasons (poor performance, ethical violations or other failures), duly verified, do not deserve to continue in the Foreign Service. To partly clarify this issue, questions were included which can lead to determine the existence or non-existence of a professional diplomatic career in the countries surveyed.

In order to ease these doubts, we put the three following questions:

1. Does the career always start at the lowest rank or is there a possibility of entering directly to mid and high positions in the echelon, taking unduly advantage of other Foreign Service Officers?
2. What percentage of Ambassadors are career diplomats as compared to those politically appointed?
3. Have there been career diplomats who have filled the positions of Minister, Vice-Minister or Under Secretary? If the answers to these questions are positive one could infer that we are in the presence of a professional Foreign Service within a strong MFA.

On the first question, we observed that admission to the career by the lowest rank only is mandatory in 47% of cases. Regarding the other 53%, a clear distinction should previously be made between appointments based on professional or technical needs, called under very precise, fair and transparent rules, and those that are arbitrary and political, which can cause so much harm to the foreign service. 'Lateral entry' when carried forward through a public selection process to fill highly-specialized jobs, should not be criticized if due respect and equal opportunities for FSO are observed.

In any case, the survey showed that 19% of MFA recognized they applied a fair system of lateral entries, which should be added to the 47% of 'entry to the lowest rank only'. We could assert then that 68% of MFA respect and support these rules, while a significant 32% do not meet these minimum requirements, and cannot pretend that they have a professional Foreign Service.

The percentage of career Ambassadors is also an indication of the existence of strong professional cadres. In 54% of the countries polled,

the number of these Ambassadors surpassed 80%, which can be considered an acceptable level of professionalism. Central and South America, the Middle East, and Africa have the lowest percentages, although in these regions Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Uruguay, Egypt, and Israel all have more than 80% of their ambassadors coming from the FS. Please see Annexure IV for the full responses.

Nominating a political Ambassador should be the exception to the rule, restricted only to those with high qualifications for the post. Definitely, so as not to incur in the wise remarks expressed by the Great Duke of Tuscany, it should not be used as the playground of a spoils system for friends or for failed activities in other areas. No country, however powerful or small can afford such self-imposed limitations in the international arena, which generally carry with them loss of power and prestige.

The Foreign Affairs Committee Report of the British Parliament on the Foreign Office of 2002—as cited by John Dickie[38]—could not have put it more bluntly in emphasizing its strong opposition to the practice of making political appointments to ambassadorial posts: 'We believe that political appointments are generally detrimental to the Diplomatic Service and can only be justified if the individual concerned is judged to be superior in merit to any FCO candidate'.

The percentage of career diplomats that have been appointed as Ministers, Vice Ministers or Under Secretaries can also be an indication of the power and recognition the career holds in a country and among its government. The responses indicate that career diplomats have attained such positions in 88% of the MFAs.[39] However, for this influence to be real, these appointments should be frequent and not occasional. Unfortunately this point was not part of our survey.

CONCLUSIONS

MFAs are, by definition, the best suited institutions to train their personnel on foreign affairs and diplomacy. Moreover and despite differences in MFAs in size, the selection of recruits, the curricula, training, the career activities, prospects and expectations of diplomats are very similar in all these institutions and among their professionals.

[38] John Dickie, ibid, p. 157.
[39] Replies from countries that due to their political systems, cannot name FSOs in these positions, were not taken into account.

Another special trait of this career is that although the work of a diplomat evolves around all layers of the society where he is accredited, there is also a strong interaction with his foreign colleagues—particularly those of the host country—with whom he basically shares a common agenda.

These similarities also apply to the ethical and behavioural principles that are generally respected by the 'diplomatic community', even in spite of the social or cultural differences that may exist between these professionals.

As Stephanie Smith Kinney writes:

> Diplomatic services around the world—inc1uding our own—do more than represent and serve national interests. They also serve a larger international purpose, that of knitting the multi-state system together, through a web of relationships and common parlance, practices and values that facilitate relations and negotiations among contending nation-states. As such, diplomats and diplomacy help order a messy—often dangerous—international arena.[40]

This 'diplomatic identity' reinforces the need to cooperate in the diplomatic academic realm, even more so in this rapidly changing world scenario with a complex agenda that requires very well-trained diplomats. To be able to comply with this challenge, the formative institutions of a MFA must, among other requisites:
- be very demanding and transparent in the admission process;
- avoid duplicating courses that can be taught in universities or institutes of international relations developing, at the same time, very close ties between the MFA formative institutions and other public or private Academic Centers.
- have a modern and flexible curricula, including all aspects and uses regarding the global impact of information technology, inciting creativity and innovation;
- concentrate on the foreign policy issues of the international agenda that are important to one's own country without losing sight of the world agenda;
- offer diplomatic training not only to the new recruits but also throughout the whole career of the FSO, with permanent follow-ups.

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[40] Stephanie Smith Kinney, Center for Information Strategy and Policy (CISP), July 2001, available at www.cisp.org/imp/july2001/07_01kinney.htm.

Ad hoc courses should be given to political appointees, specially those named at the higher echelons, political Ambassadors included;
- open up to non-diplomatic staff of the MFA, to other civil servants and interact with the private and public sectors;
- organize bilateral and regional encounters with other Diplomatic institutions;
- develop free training courses for young foreign diplomats.
- solve problems that affect the morale of diplomats and cause desertion from the Foreign Service: among others, lack of respect for the career, slow pace and an absence of transparency of promotions and postings and inadequate salaries.

As already mentioned, diplomatic training and international cooperation among these formative institutes is a subject that has not been researched enough and should be encouraged further.

A recent excellent publication by young students of the Diplomatic Academy of Spain in 2005, cited above, examines case situations regarding recruitment and training in seven countries. This is the first response we know to the Dubrovnik challenge of 2003, which confirms the urgent need to study more profoundly in this area.[41]

Let us hope that many other such efforts will follow and that their results will be shared and discussed among our formative institutions. This would surely be the best way to raise the professional standards we are all striving for, as well as to reinforce the vital role that the MFAs and its diplomats must display in order to improve the prospects of a more peaceful world.

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[41] 'Los procesos de selección y formación de funcionarios diplomáticos en los principales países del mundo'. Cuadernos 27 de la Escuela Diplomática de España, 2005. Several authors. The countries examined are Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Canada and the US.

Annexure I

THE 83 COUNTRIES THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

1 Albania; 2 Algeria; 3 Argentina; 4 Australia; 5 Austria; 6 Azerbaijan; 7 Bangladesh; 8 Barbados; 9 Bolivia; 10 Brazil; 11 Bulgaria; 12 Burkina Faso; 13 Canada; 14 Chile; 15 Colombia; 16 Costa Rica; 17 Croatia; 18 Cuba; 19 Czech Republic; 20 Denmark; 21 Dominican Republic; 22 Ecuador; 23 Egypt; 24 El Salvador; 25 Estonia; 26 Finland; 27 France; 28 Germany; 29 Greece; 30 Guatemala; 31 Honduras; 32 Hungary; 33 India; 34 Indonesia; 35 Iran; 36 Ireland; 37 Israel; 38 Italy; 39 Japan; 40 Jordan; 41 Kazakhstan; 42 Kenya; 43 Lebanon; 44 Lithuania; 45 Malaysia; 46 Mexico; 47 Mongolia; 48 Morocco; 49 Netherlands; 50 New Zealand; 51 Nicaragua; 52 Norway; 53 People's Republic of China; 54 Pakistan; 55 Panama; 56 Paraguay; 57 Peru; 58 Philippines; 59 Poland; 60 Portugal; 61 Republic of Korea: 62 Rumania; 63 Russia; 64 Saudi Arabia; 65 Serbia and Montenegro; 66 Slovakia; 67 Singapore; 68 Slovenia; 69 South Africa; 70 Spain; 71 Sweden; 72 Switzerland; 73 Thailand; 74 Tunisia; 75 Turkey; 76 Ukraine; 77 United Arab Emirates; 78 United Kingdom; 79 United States; 80 Uruguay; 81 Vatican; 82 Venezuela; 83 Vietnam.

Annexure II

Accounting	Administrative Affairs
Bilateral Relations	Business and International Economy
Case Studies	Computer Skills
Communications	Conflict Resolution
Consular Law and Practice	Crisis Management
Cultural Issues	Cultural, Political and Economic Promotion
Cultural Politics	Decision Making
Diplomatic Language	Diplomatic Practice
Drafting and Effective Speaking	Economic Analysis of Foreign Countries
Energy	Environmental Affairs
Ethics	Export Promotion
Foreign Investment	Foreign Policy
Futurology in Foreign Affairs	Geopolitics
Globalization	Human Security
Human Rights	International Cooperation
International Economy and Trade	International Monetary System
International Organizations	International Security
Languages	Leadership
Macro Economy	Migration Policies
National Economy	National History
Natural Resources	New World Order
Non Governmental Organizations	Peace Processes
Planning in Foreign Policy	Political and Economic Negotiations
Politics of Oil	Protocol
Public Diplomacy	Public/private International Law
Reading for Critical Analysis	Regional Integration
Relations with the Private Sector, with NGOs and with the Media	Relations with the Public Sector, Parliament and Armed Forces
Social Issues	Strategic and Security Affairs
Sustainable Development	Team Management
Tourism	World History

Annexure III

Percentage of Women Diplomats (rank of Third Secretary and Attachés)

1	Uruguay 66%		Canada 40%	33	Azerbaijan 20%
2	Finland 64%	16	Portugal 39.4%		Dominican Republic 20%
3	Croatia 60%	17	Argentina 39%		Russia 20%
	New Zealand 60%	18	Japan 38.8%	34	Brazil 19.4%
4	Ireland 58%	19	Greece 38.3%	35	Albania 18%
	Thailand 58%	20	Peru 38.2%		Chile 18%
5	Norway 57%	21	Mexico 36.9%	36	Algeria 16.4%
6	Colombia 54.9%	22	France 35%	37	Malaysia 15%
	Sweden 54.9%	23	Ukraine 33%	38	India 13%
7	Australia 50%	24	Indonesia 32.2%		Italy 13%
	Panama 50%	25	Morocco 30%	39	Kazakhstan 11%
	United Kingdom 50%		P.R.China 30%	40	Slovakia 10.3%
	United States 50%		R.of Korea 30%	41	Netherlands 10%
8	Rumania 49.3%		Spain 30%		Nicaragua 10%
9	Israel 48%		Turkey 30%		United Arab Emirates 10%
10	Ecuador 47.1%	26	Costa Rica 26.6%	42	South Africa 9.4%
11	Bulgaria 47%	27	Hungary 25%	43	Venezuela 7.2%
12	Philippine 45%	28	Cuba 24.3%	44	El Salvador 2%
13	Guatemala 43%	29	Denmark 24%		Jordan 2%
	Paraguay 43%	30	Germany 23%		Kenya 2%
	Slovenia 43%		Vietnam 23%	45	Iran 1%
14	Czech Republic 42%	31	Egypt 22%		
15	Austria 40%	32	Lebanon 21%		

Percentage of women Ambassadors (including political appointees)

1	Sweden 28%	10	New Zealand 17%		Bulgaria 10%
2	Colombia 25.5%		Thailand 17%		Malaysia 10%
3	Slovakia 25%	11	Finland 16.5%		Nicaragua 10%
4	Canada 24%	12	Paraguay 16%		Peru 10%
	Guatemala 24%	13	Australia 15%	17	Turkey 9.6%
5	UnitedStates 23.5%		Norway 15%	18	France 9%
6	Slovenia 23%	14	Czech Republic 12%	19	Chile 8.8%
7	Croatia 21%		Israel 12%	20	Greece 8%
8	Egypt 20%	15	Ireland 11%		Lithuania 8%
9	Mexico 19%	16	Argentina 10%		United Kingdom 8%

21 Ecuador 7.4%

22 Denmark 7.3%

23 Austria 7%
    Germany 7%
    P.R.of China 7%

24 Brazil 6.9%

25 Cuba 5.8%
    Lebanon 5.8%

26 Venezuela 5.6%

27 India 5.5%

28 Kenya 5.1%
    Rumania 5.1%

29 Dominican
    Republic 5%
    Morocco 5%
    Vietnam 5%

30 Algeria 4.8%
    Indonesia 4.8%

31 Albania 4.5%

32 Azerbaijan 3%
    Spain 3%

33 Jordan 2.5%

34   Kazakhstan 2.2%

35 Japan 2%

36 Russia 1%
    Uruguay 1%

Annexure IV

Percentage of career Ambassadors

1	Austria 100%	Peru 90%		Rumania 65%
	Denmark 100%	R. of Korea 90%	19	Bulgaria 60%
	Estonia 100%	Russia 90%		Cuba 60%
	Ireland 100%	Sweden 90%		Chile 60%
	Switzerland 100%	Uruguay 90%	20	Jordan 57%
	Thailand 100%	9 Argentina 88%		Serbia & Montenegro 57%
2	Germany 99%	10 Czech Republic 85%	21	Croatia 50%
	Portugal 99%	Lithuania 85%	22	Paraguay 50%
	Spain 99%	11 Albania 80%		Venezuela 50%
	Turkey 99%	Algeria 80%	23	Honduras 45%
	United Kingdom 99%	Morocco 80%	24	Kazakhstan 40%
3	Brazil 98%	Pakistan 80%	25	Nicaragua 35%
	Egypt 98%	Tunisia 80%	26	Bolivia 30%
	Finland 98%	12 Philippines 77%		Burkina Faso 30%
	Greece 98%	13 Hungary 75%		Ecuador 30%
	India 98%	Slovakia 75%	27	Costa Rica 25%
	Vatican 98%	14 Mexico 74%	28	El Salvador 22%
4	France 97%	Ukraine 74%	29	Colombia 20%
5	Malaysia 95%	15 Bangladesh 70%		South Africa 20%
	Netherlands 95%	Indonesia 70%		United Arab Emirates 20%
	New Zealand 95%	Kenya 70%	30	Guatemala 19%
	Norway 95%	Poland 70%	31	Saudi Arabia 4%
6	Australia 94%	Vietnam 70%	32	Dominican Republic 1%
7	Japan 93%	16 UnitedStates 69%		
8	Israel 90%	17 Slovenia 66%		
	Lebanon 90%	18 Azerbaijan 65%		

Value from Training
A Requisite Management System
ISO 10015 and its Application

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INTRODUCTION

THE SCOPE OF DIPLOMACY HAS BROADENED FROM TRADITIONAL, STATE-TO-state relations to also include non-state actors (Saner and Yiu, 2003), thereby resulting in a multitude of new challenges for Ministries of Foreign Affairs and traditional diplomats. Learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge is no longer a 'nice to have', it has become an absolute necessity for today's diplomats.

As stated by Kinney (2006), the continued growth and increasing complexity of international and regional diplomatic processes and negotiations requires that more diplomats are given training and provided with learning experiences in the diplomatic tradecraft in the coming decade. A view shared by Rana (2006) who suggests that 'training is more important than ever for diplomats'.

As most Ministries of Foreign Affairs face budget cuts or frozen budgets, meeting these new challenges through training becomes increasingly difficult, particularly as proper training for effective management is often the first item to be cut from the MFA's shrinking budget. Hence, proper

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utilization of scarce training resources is a must requiring more effective and more efficient management of training processes and training systems.

In the past, the training of diplomats was either outsourced to universities or organized internally within governments through a) a School of Public Administration, b) a Diplomatic Academy attached to Ministries of Foreign Affairs or, c) a training unit within the MFA utilizing external and internal speakers and trainers.

Traditional diplomatic training tends to be academic in orientation and less application-and management-focused, but in today's dynamic and crisis-prone international arena where new complex problems emerge in sometimes rapid succession and where alliances form, shift, and dissolve quickly, much of the pre-programmed and predominantly history-oriented learning and curricula of traditional diplomatic training no longer ensures the acquisition of new competencies (defined as the ability to apply knowledge, skills, and behaviors in meeting requirements) to fit today's performance demands of contemporary diplomacy. Diplomatic schools and institutions have not been perceived as responding to these new challenges and work requirements in a timely and apt manner.

WHY CONSIDER QUALITY ASSURANCE?

The need for improving the cost structure for delivering diplomatic training, and the need to increase the effectiveness of diplomatic training have become more pressing these days as budgets are being cut, but the demand for training is increasing. At the same time, the customers (MFAs), are demanding greater accountability from the service providers (diplomatic training institutions).

Matteucci (2006) in considering ways and means of enhancing the performance of MFAs, has put forward four major points for adoption by the diplomatic community and the MFAs. These are to:
(a) Determine the cost of doing business;
(b) Mobilize the know-how about best practices;
(c) Establish internal checks and balances;
(d) Husband the people in the organization.

While item (d) is the core business of diplomatic training institutions, the other items (a to c) have an indirect bearing on how diplomatic training institutions should manage their own affairs and practices.

In contrast to traditional training 'administration', a new approach

is needed, based on managing training activities, namely 'training management'. Training management is designed to make sure that the training results in the acquisition of new and relevant competencies is subsequently applied to the field of work to ensure the improvement of organizational performance of the diplomatic service.

Such a managerial approach to training has to be considered seriously and adopted by the diplomatic community if the service providers want to survive and thrive in these times of great turbulence and partial breakdown of diplomatic processes.

Some diplomatic training institutions have improved their training content and methodology, but most of today's diplomatic training has not gone far enough and does not yet ensure that the training offered relates to actual performance improvement in our Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Embassies.

On the institutional governance and management front, little has changed. Matteucci suggests (2006) that Quality circles could be adopted which have been used in Japan to mobilize institutional know-how. However, quality circles have their limitations in ensuring a truly comprehensive training quality management system and in delivering the expected results.

High organizational performance depends on high human competence. As Rana (2005) stated: '*Human talent is the only real resource in a foreign ministry*' (italic added). Hence, the higher the competencies of its employees (diplomats), the higher are the levels of the respective organization's performance (Jacobs, 2001). According to Noe (2005), training is 'a planned effort by (an organization) to facilitate employees' learning of job-related competencies'. Therefore, training should help employees/diplomats to develop competencies which in turn contribute to the organizational performance of their respective MFAs.

The old notion that training is routine business is no longer adequate; instead, quality assurance (QA) should be an integral part of the internal management of diplomatic education and training institutions so that continuous improvement becomes the norm rather than the exception.

TRAINING WITHOUT QUALITY ASSURANCE IS A HIGH-RISK INVESTMENT

Capacity building for training is crucial to ensure the successful performance of diplomats and of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. However, ministers also need to take into account that training as an instrument

for change and improvement often does not provide expected results. Many times, investments in training are not successful and intended objectives through training are not met, leading to disappointments and unhelpful attributions of blame. Worst of all, ineffective training can easily provide the constituencies with a false sense of confidence, thinking that competence deficits have been effectively improved, when in fact the opposite might be the case. Inefficient and ineffective systems of education and in-service training exist in many countries (Saner, Strehl, Yiu, 1997).[3] However, it would be misleading to look at the education and training sector as if it were a beauty contest. What matters most are the results (skills acquisition, know-how acquisition and increased behavioral competencies of trainees), not output figures (number of trainers, number of training programmes or number of training Centers etc.). At the final end it is the outcome measures, which determine whether or not a given training system is effective or ineffective.

WHAT IS A QUALITY ASSURANCE IN DIPLOMATIC TRAINING?

To be effective, efforts to build individual skills and knowledge must be embedded in an overall framework to ensure that diplomats can apply their new skills on the job, be it at headquarters, or at larger or smaller missions, to improve their performance and productivity in international relations and in regard to the operations of a field office; otherwise, individual competencies might improve, while organizational performance stagnates or declines.

MFAs that want to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the information and telecommunication technologies, for example, do not just need to train a few diplomats on how to use e-mail and search engines to monitor current events. On the contrary, a whole suite of inputs is required, including: (i) skills in public diplomacy in a virtual online environment (e.g. an interactive approach to online communication for the general public, rather than simply putting up a few statements on a website), (ii) performance management (e.g. how to assess productivity and performance results), and (iii) organizational values and norms concerning transparency and the sharing of information.

[3] The results of our comparative research involving 10 central governments and two provincial governments were published by the International Institute of Adminstrative Science, Brussels, 1997.

Quality assurance in this context is about making sure that learning will close reported competence gaps and prepare diplomats for future challenges. It is about ensuring that individual learning will be transferred back to the ministry and will impact the MFA's overall performance, measured in productivity, quality and impact. Quality assurance therefore requires a management system and involvement of the stakeholders in determining the training needs, selecting the appropriate training modality and approach, and monitoring the delivery of diplomatic training before, during and after the training takes place.

A 'canned' diplomatic training program might be sufficient for the general orientation of the new diplomats-to-be, but is no longer sufficient for mid-career and senior diplomats who not only have diplomatic roles and functions, but also perform leadership, supervisory, and managerial roles and functions of a department at an embassy or a consulate. Training programs for these categories of diplomatic personnel require differentiation, tailoring, and context-specific application in order to be meaningful and effective.

In order to achieve real results, diplomatic training must go beyond an 'event' type of approach that focuses on providing short topical seminars or focusing on traditional basic generalist courses. Instead, diplomatic schools and training units within MFAs need to be more closely integrated into the service delivery (or production) of diplomacy and international relations and involve seasoned diplomats—not only as occasional speakers but also as key partners with regard to the identification of training needs, training design, monitoring, evaluation and post-training support and mentoring. In other words, the full impact of diplomatic training can only be accomplished if there is a learning culture ingrained within the MFA, if there is line-management involvement, and if there is a diplomatic training function which drives this learning and development process. Otherwise, diplomatic training remains academic, abstract and decoupled from the day-to-day operational challenge of practicing diplomatic tradecraft and managing the MFAs.

WHAT ABOUT THE QUALITY OF TRAINING INVESTMENT?

What quality system could best support a Ministry of Foreign Affairs in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its SSD training? Different quality standards and instruments are available to measure the quality of

training, such as ISO 9000, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), or some form of Total Quality Management systems.

Several governments have used either of the three quality instruments mentioned above with mixed results. Some felt these standards were sufficient, others considered the three instruments as being too bureaucratic, too industry-oriented and not sufficiently adjusted to the peculiarities of the training process. A survey of seven countries indicated a trend away from the three traditional quality instruments.[4]

However, none of the quality instruments mentioned address the actual pedagogical process itself, nor the interaction between organizational performance objectives and the training intervention within companies or public organizations.

ISO 10015: the new solution to the quality question

Realizing the need for more sector-specific guidance for quality assurance of training, a working group was created within ISO to draft a standard for training. Twenty-two country representatives developed the draft text over several years, culminating in the publication of a final official standard ISO 10015 issued by the ISO secretariat in December 1999 (Yiu and Saner, 2005). The new ISO standard offers two main advantages, namely:

a) being based on the process-oriented concepts of the new 9000: 2000 ISO family of standards, and hence being easily understandable for administrations already used to ISO-related Quality instruments; and

b) being a sector-specific standard, that is pedagogically oriented, offering MFAs specific guidance in the field of training technology and organizational learning.

What follows is the description of two key features of the new ISO 10015 standard.

What is ISO 10015?

ISO 10015 Quality Standard for Training is one of the QA instruments available that emphasizes stakeholder involvement in defining training needs, uses independent third parties for regular reviews, and focuses

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[4] Raymond Saner; 'Quality Management in training: generic or sector-specific?', ISO Management Systems, Geneva, July–August 2002, pp. 53–62.

on the learning outcome and on-the-job transfer. Therefore, ISO 10015 ensures that the core competencies needed by the MFAs to adapt to the changing environment of world politics and to safeguard a country's needs and interests are fostered through training.

The ISO 10015 quality standard, available since 2000, offers the most succinct quality assurance criteria for training and continuing education to date and is available for private and public organizations interested in improving their returns on training investment. The main features of the ISO 10015 quality standard for training are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

The core elements of an ISO 10015 training management system consist of the following: a decision-making tree (Part A) and a training cycle (Part B). Part A deals with the *raison d'être* for training (the why) and the competence gaps of MFA staff that impede on the performance of a MFA or a mission; Part B deals with the actual development and implementation of training (the how to).

Looking at the diagnostic tree below (Figure 1), a MFA has to determine first what is the performance challenge that it faces and what are the causes of this challenge. It should ask itself why it is currently not able to reach expected performance goals? Such performance goals could be set for example by a Performance Management System[5]—is it because a
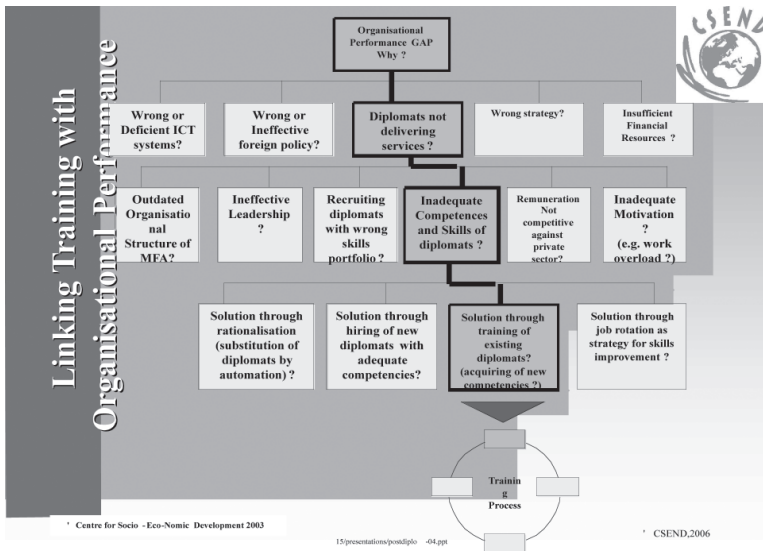
Figure 1: Linking Training with Organizational Performance (Part A)

MFA is governed by inadequate laws and policies? Or might it be that the new laws and policies are in place but the procedures to apply them are missing? Is the quality of its administrative services poor because the diplomats do not know how to apply them?

If the performance gap is linked to underperforming diplomats, then the Ministry should ask itself, why do our diplomats underperform—is it because their competencies do not fit the job requirements? Are they remunerated below labor market rates and hence are demotivated or ready to switch jobs and move to the private sector? Is the current MFA's leadership deficient, causing diplomats to feel demotivated? If none of the above is applicable, it might be that their underperformance is due to a lack of skills and/or knowledge. If so, then training would be the right solution.

ISO 10015 in this regard offers a clear road map for guiding a MFA in making sound training investment decisions by asking the top MFA line managers (department heads) to connect training to performance goals and use it as a strategic vehicle for individual and collective performance improvement. As a result, the success of training is not only measured by whether diplomats have improved their personal/individual competence, but also whether diplomats have positively contributed to the Ministry's organizational performance.

ISO 10015 can help link Part A (organizational performance needs) with Part B (competence acquisition through training). The standard provides a systematic and transparent framework for determining how training programmes can contribute to the overall performance objectives of the organization/institution, while simultaneously identifying whether other interventions are needed (e.g. non-training-based interventions). The training management system thus leads to better design *ex ante* and delivers data for the continuous improvement of training systems.

ORGANIZING DIPLOMATIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE BASIS OF PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES

Training as an intervention strategy is called for once the MFA has established that the training of current diplomatic staff is the optimal approach to closing the Ministry's performance gap. Subsequently, the

[5] For performance Management in MFAs, see Rana (2004).
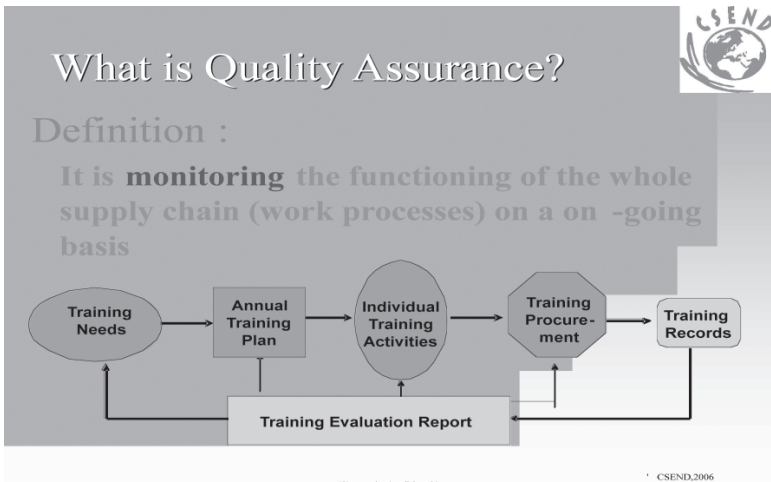
Figure 2: What is Quality Assurance?

next critical phase for investing in people is that of establishing an appropriate training design and effective learning processes. Diplomatic training needs to be seen as a production process as indicated in Figure 2 above.

Applying ISO 10015 to External Training Providers (Outside of MFA)

Applied to for instance a Diplomatic Academy or a School of International Relations located outside a MFA (e.g. attached to a university), one can visualize the educational production process in a similar manner as depicted in Figure 2 above but applied to a more formal educational setting where inputs (budget, curriculum etc.) and outputs (e.g. minimum–maximum number of students per year trained) are set by the government's ministry of education. However, what is often missing in formal higher educational settings is an effective quality assurance system which guides and governs the pedagogical process of academic teaching. In this regard, ISO 10015 could also serve as a management tool to ensure that diplomatic schools conduct their education based on agreed high-quality pedagogical processes as depicted in Figure 3 below.
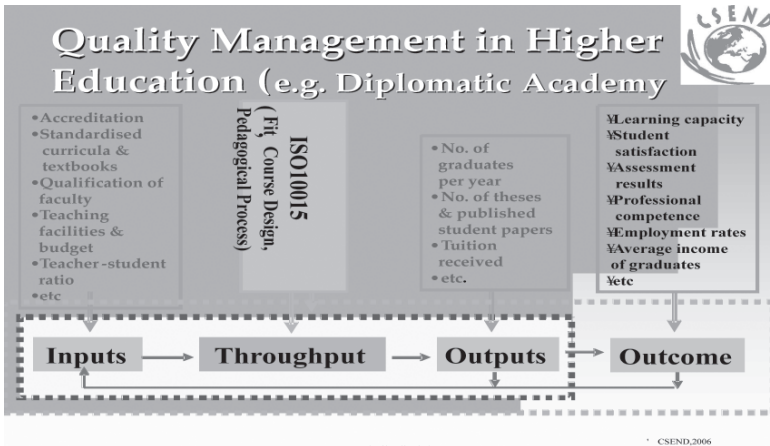
Figure 3: Quality Management in Higher Education (e.g. Diplomatic Academy)

Applying ISO 10015 to in-service diplomatic training (within MFA)

Applied to in-service diplomatic training (training conducted by a unit within the MFA), ISO 10015 offers easy-to-use guidance on how to organize diplomatic training in an efficient and effective manner. Following the well-known Deming Cycle, ISO 10015 defines training as a four-step process, namely, Analyse–Plan–Do–Evaluate. Each step is connected to the next in an input and output relationship (see Figure 4). As a quality management tool, ISO 10015 helps to specify the operational requirements for each step and establishes a procedure to monitor the process. Such a transparent approach enables training management to focus more on the substantive matter of each training investment rather than merely on controlling the expenditure.

Unlike other quality management systems, ISO 10015 helps an organization link training pedagogy to performance objectives and link evaluation with the latter as well. Such a training approach provides an organization with constant feedback regarding its investment in competence development. Similarly, at a higher aggregate level, ISO 10015 offers MFAs the opportunity to examine their training models and to validate their training approaches and operating premises with the use of comprehensive data.
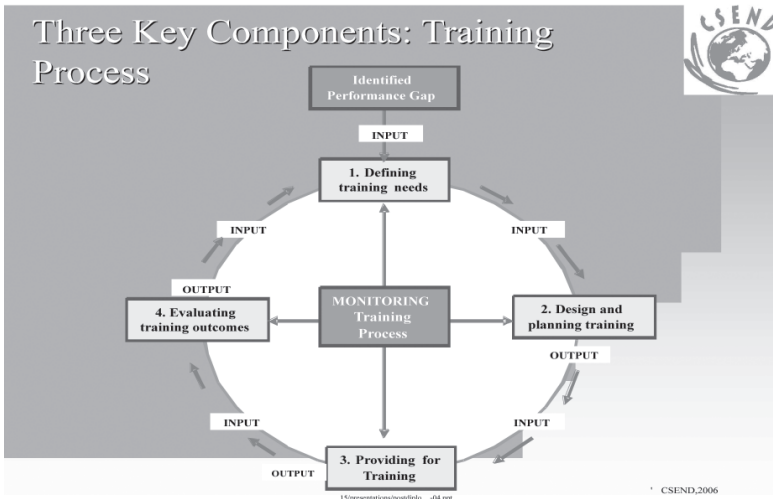
Figure 4: Three Key Components of Training Process

For procurement purposes, ISO 10015 offers practical guidance on how to prepare a *training specification plan* as the basis for tendering (if required) and for contracting training providers. The same document also provides the framework for training evaluation which goes beyond the 'happiness scale' that is commonly used to evaluate training (Kirkpatrick, 1967).

While diplomatic training schools/institutes provide most of the training through their own faculties, a significant portion of their training delivery is actually done by external trainers. These outsourced training activities tend to be either of higher level or of a more technical nature. ISO 10015 can be used to ensure the effective selection of service providers and better 'fit' between learning and performance improvement.

Potential Benefits of an ISO 10015-Based Diplomatic Training Management System

Structured approach to diplomatic training investment and utilization

Instead of leaving it to a diplomat's own discretion about what to learn and how to ensure continuous self-learning, an ISO 10015 training management system allows the MFA to take a systemic approach in

identifying the competence requirements of its key functions and incumbents within the ministry, and in subsequently systematically investing in their competence maintenance and skill enhancement. Instead of treating staff development and diplomatic training as de facto part of the staff benefits, an ISO 10015-based management system can support the MFA in its efforts in 'reinventing' itself and in strengthening its institution capability by closely linking the organization's development needs with the individual learning of its diplomats.

Instructional systems development

In addition to the need for effective capacity-building management and quality assurance systems for 21st-century diplomacy, the process of developing instructional systems should be given greater consideration during the design phase of diplomatic training initiatives. Too often, subject matter experts, such as international relations specialists or seasoned diplomats, focus on topical issues of international relations, because this is what they know and are interested in, while overlooking or ignoring institutional and managerial issues that are crucial to ensure sustained and effective outcomes. Subject matter experts (and programs designed and managed by them) tend to undervalue the task of needs assessment and thus fail to consider the full breadth of factors that act to either enhance or inhibit performance.

Professional approach

The adult training literature offers new models for instructional systems design that are more compatible with the real 'business' environment (global competition, fragmentation and decentralization of power, non-state actors and fringe groups), utilizing the 'life case' method[6] and other interactive methods to address the changing political context of today's world. This invariably means that diplomatic training should be seen as contributing to improving the performance of diplomats and performance of the MFAs. Adult training professionals can help subject matter experts design their instructional programs in such a way that they meet the needs of adult learners (e.g. shifting the pedagogy to a more learner-centered, experience-based and interactive approach) and their organizations.

The application of a quality assurance management tool such as ISO

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[6] This can be in the form of a life-case study, or life-case simulation.

10015 would bring additional benefits. Too often, outdated learning models continue to be deployed in the field of international relations and diplomatic studies. The adoption of ISO 10015-based training quality management systems would encourage diplomatic training schools and institutes and experts/trainers to pay more attention to the impact of their training and hence to adopt appropriate and innovative training methodologies and to ensure a high level of 'teaching' competency among instructors.

EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO TRAINING DIPLOMATS IN
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Based on the performance gap analysis, an MFA could for instance decide to close its diplomat's performance gap (see Figure 5) with regard to Public Diplomacy by organizing training programs on public diplomacy. The organization of such training programs could for example consist of:

1. Concrete definition of training needs for specific target groups;
2. Custom-tailored training (and instructional) design and planning for training;
3. Providing logistical support for training, actual delivery of training and post-training follow-ups;
4. Evaluation of training at different Kirkpatrick levels (1967).
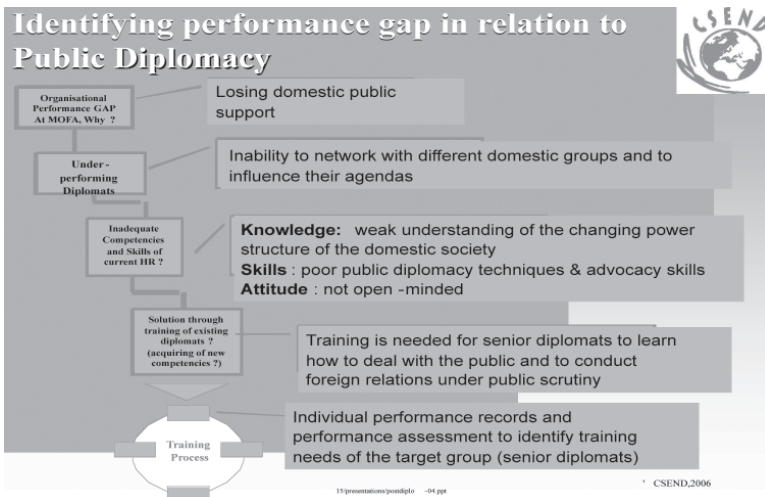
Figure 5: Identifying a performance gap in relation to public diplomacy

The illustration of this training cycle is presented in Figure 6.
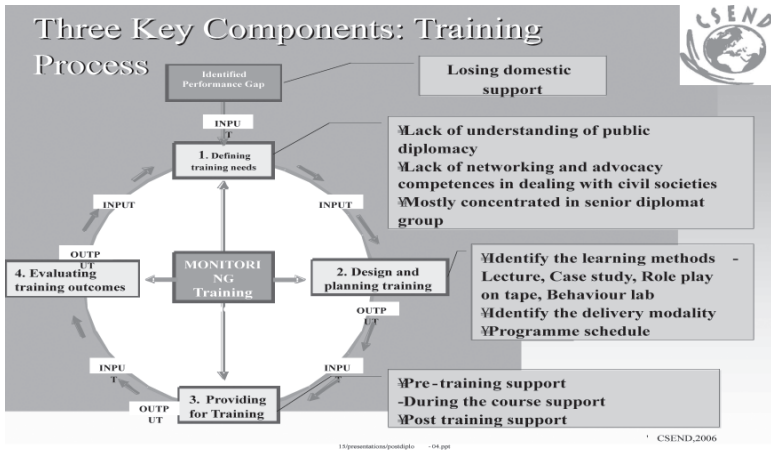
Figure 6: Illustration of a structured approach to the training cycle

CONCLUSION

In light of the rapidly changing and increasingly complex nature of today's international relations and diplomacy, Ministries of Foreign Affairs need more urgently than ever before to invest in diplomatic training. Only the quality of a Ministry's human capital can ensure long-term competitive advantage in our knowledge economy and in postmodern diplomacy. In a knowledge-based economy, training is 'mission critical' and should not be considered as an activity 'nice to have' and therefore dispensable at times of budget cuts or difficulties. Instead, MFAs should aim to ensure resource optimization and greater effectiveness of training investment.

Diplomatic training, as one of the most frequently used approaches to tackle performance issues, needs to be managed carefully like any other major investment. ISO 10015 offers a new and sector-specific quality management tool to ensure the link between the training and organizational performance needs of today's MFA. It also offers a transparent and easy-to-follow process to ensure a sound and logical link between the four steps of any diplomatic training process and an MFA's mission and performance requirements—thereby strengthening the expected results of such training investment. The expected outcome of training investment should be two-fold, namely to increase the personal competence of

diplomats and a concomitant increase of organizational performance of the Ministry of Foreign Afairs. Without a *structured* approach to training and a *predictable* process for continuous improvement, such expectations cannot be fulfilled.

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Innovations in Diplomatic Training

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ALL FOREIGN MINISTRIES FACE THE CHALLENGE OF ADAPTING THEIR organizations, structures, and practices to the changing requirements of a rapidly evolving global community. Economic development changes the relations of power between states. Non-state actors grow in number and influence, edging governments to the sidelines in much of international finance and commerce. Multilateral institutions proliferate. New transnational issues are added to the traditional diplomatic load. The growing sophistication and ubiquity of the Internet transform what it is possible to know, and when. Advances in communications technology make possible closer relations between center and post, drawing posts more firmly into the central policy process. Governments struggle to keep up with the volume and pace of these changes, usually needing more work to be done, but typically with less money and fewer people.

Training can both lead and lag behind this process of adaptation. On the one hand, those charged with preparing the foreign ministry's diplomats, freed from the tyranny of the in-tray in a minister's office or department, can lead the way in thinking through how changes in the international system impact upon the nature of diplomatic activity, consequently also on what the ministry is for, what diplomats do and how they should be equipped for these changing roles.

Equally, however, diplomatic academies can be conservative institutions, staffed by those nearing retirement, better at preserving tradition than at responding to new challenges. Separated from the policy coalface, trainers

can become dangerously isolated. A continual dialogue between the trainers and the practitioners is needed to ensure that the training offered remains at the cutting edge.

The International Forum on Diplomatic Training brings together each year the directors of diplomatic academies and institutes offering diplomatic training from some sixty countries on all continents. These annual discussions reflect trends in programs of learning and development for diplomacy. In recent years, three notable strands of innovation have emerged: (i) in substance; (ii) in methodology; (iii) in the constituencies served.

INNOVATION IN SUBSTANCE

Five key areas of training have risen in prominence: consular affairs, crisis management, public diplomacy, energy and environment, and preparation for work in specific multilateral institutions.

(i) Consular work sometimes has been regarded as a second-order activity in comparison with the work, for example, of the political section. But with the rise of international terrorist activity and asymmetric conflict, immigration issues, border controls and concern for citizens' security abroad have moved consular work to the center of the political agenda. As more resources are devoted to dealing with this growing interpenetration of external and domestic affairs, more officials need training. And as the range of threats and challenges grows, so the variety of consular skills required expands, including an effective liaison with other ministries, governments and multilateral institutions. In a sense, every diplomat is now to some extent a consular officer, and training needs to reflect this reality.

(ii) Whether there are more crises than there used to be, or whether we simply now have the means of knowing more about them, governments face growing public demand for effective crisis management in response to conflict, terrorist activity, or natural disasters. Programs of training in planning, coordination, leadership and teamwork within a ministry or government are well established, but increasingly they are being designed to prepare officials for coordinated work between governments, non-government organizations, and multinational institutions.

(iii) The global communications revolution and the spread of democratic governance have changed relations between citizens, states,

and non-state actors. Few governments are immune to popular pressure. Most recognize that the realm of diplomacy has expanded far beyond state-to-state relations, and that they need to communicate effectively with people at home and abroad. As a result, the training for public diplomacy has moved to the middle ground of human resources development. This includes offering to all diplomats the kind of training in image and message management once reserved to press and public affairs officers and cultural attachés.

But beyond this, it also means preparing diplomats for a profession in which a core task—possibly even the core task—will be in making and facilitating connections between people, not just selling a national policy and sensing other national moods, but serving also as a conduit for a complex engagement between societies.

Some will argue that this is what a good diplomat, properly dug into the local community, has always done, reporting back to the ministry on what it all means. The difference now is that in a world in which the government is only one of many players in an ever more sophisticated web of interpenetrated relations, a diplomat has the opportunity—and responsibility—of serving, influencing, and responding to many more customers than just his or her foreign ministry. Training in public diplomacy therefore needs to reflect that multi-dimensional reality, providing mindsets and tools for working effectively beyond the boundaries of what most diplomats have thought that their job should entail.

It is conceivable, though, that the great emphasis placed on public diplomacy in recent years may be nearing its apogée, just as trade promotion waxed and waned some years ago as a key priority task. As the velocity and scale of change in global relations have increased, many foreign ministries have responded to the loss of a definitive function by taking on more and more tasks in a doomed attempt to continue to deal somehow with everything external. Public diplomacy may prove to be the terminal overspill.

As parliaments, line ministries, and local authorities increasingly deal directly with government and civil society in other countries, foreign ministries may revert largely to the skilled and specialized business of managing relations between states, and between states within multilateral institutions.

This is not to say that diplomats will retreat behind closed doors; they will need to continue to engage intelligently with all kinds of groups, not

least with the media. But the task of strategic outreach, public diplomacy as such, may become a devolved para-diplomacy of government, quasi-autonomous and private entities working across borders in loose harness, professionals in the business of connecting peoples.

(iv) The fourth key area of growth in training is in the field of energy and environment. These two key functional issues cut across all ministerial and departmental boundaries.

As the competition for energy resources increases, the political dynamics of energy dependence intensify. Energy suppliers hold a newly potent political weapon in offering or withholding supply. The surging energy demands of China, India, and other developing countries alter the patterns of trade and investment, as well as relations of power. Foreign ministries have to be alert to the changes, and this requires being well integrated with the ministries of trade, industry, finance and energy.

High-speed economic growth challenges attempt to moderate the environmental consequences of that growth. A growing public awareness of the impact of climate change forces governments to respond. Foreign ministries often provide the inter-ministerial coordination for effective national action at the international level. Coordination and negotiation of technical issues clearly require specialist preparation, even if the most complex technical details are left to the experts. In this area as in almost all others, training needs to enable a diplomat to understand the work of other ministries in order to work usefully with them.

(v) The fifth area in which training has advanced rapidly is in the preparation of officials for effective performance in multilateral institutions. The number of institutions has increased considerably, as well as their complexity and the scope of their remit. The linkages between them are multi-layered. Each has its own ethos, rules, and norms. Diplomats need to know how a specific system works, and how that system is connected to others, in order to promote and defend national as well as shared interests successfully in negotiation. They will be working alongside non-diplomats and non-government people, and will need to understand the different interests and pressures which impact upon them.

Training therefore needs to be targeted on the specifics of working in New York or Brussels, Shanghai or Addis Ababa; on the differences between negotiating in the General Assembly and the Security Council, on working with the European Commission and the Council Secretariat. Some skills are generic, but without being underpinned by specialized knowledge

drawing on the experience of those who know each system from the inside, those skills will not be able to be deployed to maximum effect.

None of these five key issue areas is new. The political significance of each has grown, though, requiring ministers and their officials to devote greater attention and more resources to them, including training.

INNOVATION IN METHODOLOGY

Budgets everywhere are tight, training budgets are amongst the most vulnerable, and the cheapest training option is normally the experienced talking head. In societies where age, authority, and wisdom are revered, it can also be the most valued option, though better at transmitting core values and traditional practices than at innovation. And not all are able to learn best from a lecture; research shows that of all forms of imparting knowledge, it suffers the lowest rate of retention.

Where resources and imagination allow, three alternative approaches have grown in prominence: interactive learning, media-assisted learning and online learning.

(i) Interactive learning engages participants in role-play and simulation exercises, building substantive knowledge, professional skills and personal self-confidence through practice. Every department of a ministry or section of a post abroad will have its own core tasks, the intelligent simulation of which can help raise standards of motivation and performance in training.

In a number of training institutions, separate exercises have been devised for each key aspect of a diplomat's work. In the field of political work, for example, these include taking a record of conversation, drafting a report, lobbying, identifying and drawing out a source, assimilating and making sense out of a mass of new information, and assessing the impact of one change of policy on other policies. In each such exercise the main thing is that, working individually or in pairs or groups, participants take active responsibility for their own learning rather than being passive receptacles in which information may or may not find temporary shelter.

The time and resources required of trainers for advance preparation can be a deterrent. It takes a lot of work to develop a good exercise, getting on top of the issues, writing instructions, preparing lines to take, devising interlocking positions which will generate pungent debate, and challenging negotiation. If exercises are based on real issues, as ideally they should be in order to offer participants useful current knowledge while developing

personal skills, more work still is required to keep the material up to date. Not all foreign ministries are prepared to commit the investment up front. Not all trainers are prepared to make the effort. But the reward in terms of enhanced awareness, durable knowledge, and professional development can be proportionately great.

(ii) The second innovation in methodology is media-assisted learning. This is a process developed by the UK-based Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies. It involves using pre-recorded television news broadcasts as vehicles for the development of policy analysis and structured decision-making. Each 10–15 minute broadcast is based on a current political issue, but the news announces a new development which requires participants to work out what has happened, what it may mean to their government and to others, what if anything they should do about it, and finally what to say about it in public if the need arises.

The broadcast is an exercise designed primarily to develop political thinking. Following this, participants meet in groups representing one or other country—a Permanent Member of the Security Council, for instance—and try to see things through the eyes of that government, to define its interests and to understand its perspective. Diplomatic training often looks at the world only through the prism of national interest; this device tries to encourage people to look at issues more widely, thinking through how the different interests of multiple actors may impact on one another and on the policies of one's own country.

It is also an exercise in management and teamwork within policy-making. The policy meeting following the broadcast normally lasts only thirty minutes, not long enough to unravel the layers of a complex issue and come to an agreement on a national response. Effective time management is essential. The group as a whole needs to draw on the knowledge, experience, and ideas of all its members. The chair of each group is responsible for keeping the discussion structured, forward-moving, and focused on the objective.

Each broadcast deals with a particular issue, and can be offered on its own. Two or more broadcasts help to progressively build up competence in the process, and confidence in formulating and promoting one's own ideas. Each scenario is based in a different region of the world, confronting participants with different policy conundra. Repetition of the process reinforces the lessons learned.

Finally, the exercise can offer opportunities for training in personal presentation and media skills. Following the policy meeting, the chairs of each group and perhaps others act as spokespersons in short 5–7 minute video-recorded interviews with a media news team. The principal objective is to help participants think on their feet in response to challenging questions, drawing on the policy lines their group has just agreed upon. Subsequently, each interview is reviewed with the individual, concentrating mainly on the content of what he/she has said and how he/she has chosen to say it, assessing how well each has done in using the interview to get across key national messages.

(iii) The third growth area is online learning, facilitating career-long, self-accessed self-development freed from the constraints of time and space.

Computer-based self-learning programs are pretty well established as an element of blended learning in many foreign ministries. Often, however, these have been limited to training in the more mechanical routines—self-administration, resource and project management, drafting style. Fewer ministries have embraced CD-Rom or online programs for training in negotiation or complex decision-making. (Defence ministries are ahead of most foreign ministries in this area of development.)

The leader in this field is the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Their Virtual Campus is an exceptional tool for distance learning by both Canada-based and locally employed staff. Other foreign ministries have started to follow the Canadian example, notably those in India and the United Kingdom.

The leading innovator is the DiploFoundation, with its programs of online learning in bilateral diplomacy, public diplomacy, and international trade diplomacy. Their use of hypertext annotation of course materials enables participants in their courses to engage directly with one another and with the tutor in real time, despite being separated by many time zones.

The obstacles to further development of online learning for diplomacy are mainly attitudinal, and to a certain extent practical. There is still a sense for many in the profession that diplomacy is a face-to-face art which can not be practised usefully on a desktop. Line managers may not readily allocate staff time to online learning while at work. And learners themselves may find difficulty in separating themselves from the pressure of duties and deadlines in order to concentrate on a training program.

But as the programs become more sophisticated, and the pressure on budgets and staff time becomes no less acute, the online option is bound to be more widely adopted. Its value is already recognized in providing cost-effective professional development for locally employed staff and for staff at posts who cannot easily be spared to return to the center for training. That is perhaps its principal contribution—making more training available to more people—within a portfolio of different forms of learning.

The biggest deterrent for most ministries to online learning, as to each of these innovative methodologies, is the relatively high front-loaded cost. It is a tough decision for cash-strapped ministries to take when the output in terms of enhanced performance cannot be demonstrated in advance. The initial investment, however, invariably leads to resource savings over time.

INNOVATION IN THE CONSTITUENCIES SERVED

Foreign ministries operate less and less on their own. Most face resource constraints. These two factors have given rise to four new trends: (i) the engagement of locally employed staff in more areas of the work of posts abroad; (ii) the conjoined training of officials from a number of ministries engaged in related areas of external affairs; (iii) the growing participation of non-state entities in government programs of professional development; (iv) the beginnings of transnational cooperation as governments look to shared representation within regional structures.

(i) Locally employed staff are the spinal column of most missions abroad, providing continuity, institutional memory, and irreplaceable understanding of the host community. Typically, however, their roles have been fairly narrowly circumscribed to support functions. The locked door separates them from core political tasks.

This is beginning to change, more rapidly in some countries than others. Pressures of work and budget and the increased openness of Internet-driven societies make it decreasingly sensible to choose not to use the full capacities of a highly educated local staff. Where politically possible, local staff is brought into the political section, notably for the analysis and interpretation of the political scene in the host country. Training in political thinking thus may be required just as much for local as for home-based staff; the United Kingdom now trains both within the same course, encouraging a clearer appreciation of the work

and capacities of each group by the other, and helping to build more effective and efficient teams at post.

(ii) As the management of external relations is no longer the exclusive preserve of the foreign ministry, if ever it was, it makes little sense to train diplomats in a silo. Yet most diplomatic training is still carried out within the ministry, for the ministry and by the ministry.

Gradually, and especially at mid-career and more senior levels, officials from a number of ministries working in related areas are being brought together in conjoined programs of training. This innovation offers one obvious benefit and two potential benefits: first, cost-effectiveness in avoiding duplication of training across government; second, improved prospects of coherence and coordination in policy-making as officials gain a closer understanding of the perspectives, priorities, and working practices of their counterparts in other ministries; and third, with luck, sounder policies as officials begin to automatically consider factors outside their respective boxes.

(iii) Just as ministries see the value of working more effectively together, so state and non-state entities begin to draw on their respective experiences as each becomes increasingly aware of the contribution the other can make towards improved performance.

This has been achieved thus far largely through secondments between government and business, in both directions, but principally from government to business. However, a number of foreign ministries now routinely recruit people at mid-career level from the private sector and from civil society organizations for temporary appointments which enable the ministry to learn from their knowledge and experience.

It would make sense, similarly, to bring together people from the public, private, and voluntary sectors in programs of professional development, thus replicating in training the inter-sectoral nature of external relations in reality. There are few examples yet. But as effectiveness in foreign affairs now requires governments to work successfully with non-state actors, most of whom place training higher on the list of corporate priorities (with resources to match) than governments usually do, foreign ministries can only gain from cooperating in such multi-entity programs.

(iv) Finally, though not without considerable caution and some reluctance, diplomatic services begin to train with each other.

This trend began in earnest in the early 1990s, when a number of countries offered programs of diplomatic training to the new states and governments of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It has been strengthened further by twinning programs between foreign ministries, and by the development of the European Diplomatic Programme which brings together each year young diplomats from all the EU Member States, Commission, and Council Secretariat in a series of joint training modules. Similar processes can be observed in the Americas, in Asia and Africa.

There are obvious benefits to foreign ministries in such cooperation. Officials who have lived and worked together for weeks and months with their homologues from other countries bring an added dimension to foreign policy thinking. National interests are no less clearly delineated, but a better knowledge and a greater awareness of other national interests and priorities, and of shared interests, make at least possible more profound policy-making. For a member of a trans-national grouping such as the European Union, joint training may facilitate shared representation abroad, which can be both a budget saver and an influence multiplier, especially for smaller states with a limited network of posts around the world. And since so much of diplomacy is now carried out in multilateral institutions, whether permanent or peripatetic, the more intimately national representatives understand others' positions and practices, the more professionally effective they are likely to be.

Equally, foreign ministries may see dangers in joint training. Shared representation may represent the thin end of a wedge, at the other end of which lies closed missions, shrinking administrative empires, and dwindling national influence. As national boundaries become next to meaningless in many aspects of international intercourse, the arguments for the necessity of discrete representation in this or that aspect anyway become weaker. And officials working together in permanent negotiations can develop a greater allegiance to their common objectives than to the narrower interests of their respective governments.

Yet, as the global community becomes functionally integrated, and diplomats find that they can promote interests better through effective cooperation than in wrapping their national cloaks more tightly around them, the advantages of building common standards and sharing best practice in diplomacy would seem to outweigh the potential drawbacks.

The degree to which governments have adopted these four new approaches varies widely as yet between countries. But changes in international affairs steadily challenge institutional boundaries, and demand an adaptation of traditional practices. In this case, training diplomats

together with officials from other ministries and with representatives of
the private and voluntary sectors as well as of other governments simply
replicates the way in which diplomacy now works in the real world.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, these three sets of innovation in substance, methodology,
and constituency of training suggest that, increasingly, the core task for
diplomatic academies and training departments is training for change.

Foreign ministries need to provide staff with the skills and mindsets
which will enable them to adjust smoothly to developments in their own
ministry and in international affairs more widely. This implies focusing,
for example, on the skills required for working flexibly within teams formed
and re-formed on demand, with a less obsessive regard for hierarchy in
decision-making. Staff would need training for effective time management
under pressure, and for policy formulation synthesizing the perspectives
and coordinating the actions of multiple actors.

Human resources departments are often the first target when ministries
face pressure for budget cuts and downsizing. Yet in order to remain
effective players in the consortium of actors in external affairs, foreign
ministries will need to sustain and promote through their training
institutions the capacity for continual innovation.

The Future

How to Survive Budget Cuts— and Thrive

ALDO MATTEUCCI
Former Deputy Secretary-General, EFTA

IN 1994–5, AS THREE OF ITS SEVEN-MEMBER COUNTRIES LEFT EFTA (EUROPEAN Free Trade Association), a small international organization located in Geneva and Brussels, management was asked to cut its budget by about 60%—without reducing essential services to the remaining four members. I was part of the management. We survived and subsequently—if not consequently—thrived and trebled our output. This experience is of limited immediate value today, of course. Let us say that it has been a trigger, though, for my ensuing interest in the matter. Should I be asked the question: 'How did you do it?', my spontaneous (hence subjective) answer would be: 'Simplification and motivation, and as outcome: on the whole empowerment.' These two themes underlie my remarks today.

Budget cuts are acts of a lesser God. Only adroit adjustment brings survival. We must take budget cuts as an opportunity to enhance organizational strengths by implementing reforms. But what reforms?

Clear goals and objectives as well as adequate means are essential for the good performance of an organization—this is what we strive for. The private sector is very successful in achieving this balance. Profit expectations are its unfailing guide, no matter how numerous the objectives and the means of production—relative prices are the measure of all things. In theory, it is a matter of economic engineering.

Alas, a thick fog of uncertainty covers the world of action. One is forced to fall back on trial and error, which is fine, provided, one is able to ruthlessly decide what is to be pursued and what is to be discontinued. Profitable products survive on the shelves for another day. The enduring success of the market system is not so much in 'picking winners'—for conditions change continuously—but in identifying and disposing of 'lemons'; and doing so very quickly.

Economic theory is silent on how the process of trial and error should work. The existing market system has created specific institutions to implement it. As the economist Schumpeter pointed out long ago, *limited liability* (which makes risk-taking possible) and *bankruptcy* (which weeds out undeserving activities) are the twin pillars upon which the success of the market economy rests. In the end, command economies were bankrupted wholesale by their inability to secure the bankruptcy of particular activities.

To sum up, this is the much simplified view of how the really existing market system works:

(a) as part of a fully interconnected system, relative prices provide a guide for establishing production *priorities*;

(b) relative prices are a rapid and unfailing *feedback* system;

(c) bankruptcy is the unassailable mechanism for *weeding out failures*.

This short introduction is needed because in the public sector, there is a desire to be as 'efficient' as the private sector. The public sector is perceived as bloated, ineffectual, and in need of reforms. What better way to achieve this than by introducing private-sector methods?

As a preliminary step, private-sector terminologies and titles are introduced to replace the old and venerable ones—the ambassador now is to be the CEO—in order to underscore the drive for efficiency. Is it going to work?

If only it were so simple… Only if we knew how the private sector works at its core would we be able to mimic it effectively in the public sector. All the mouthing about the 'private sector' approach is otherwise just another exercise in 'cargo-cult'—natives on Polynesian islands building mock airstrips in the expectation of airplanes full of goods landing consequently.

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The public sector evidences the greatest difficulties in achieving a balance between objectives. Why? After all, the market is good at establishing

relative prices for various cars—on the whole, consumers do judge them in terms of one another. Why can't we 'make up our minds' when public choices are involved? The trouble is, public choices are about incommensurables. We have no unambiguous way of expressing health goals in terms of education, or security in terms of equity. Voting is as close to a 'pricing system' as we can get, but since the votes are not interlinked through the common denominator of the market—money and costs—voting can yield contradictory results (as Kenneth Arrow demonstrated long ago) and in any case it is little more than a 'beauty contest', for the voter does not reveal his preference in knowledge of the (financial) consequences of his choice.

I do not propose that there is a way to resolve this valuation problem, though we may be able to attenuate it by clever modelling. I can, however, point out one implication of this state of affairs. The political game inevitably promises more than can be achieved with the allocated budgetary means, which are essentially pre-determined. Imbalances ensue.

The issue of dealing rationally with the imbalances between goals and means is urgent. Today governments and administrations are drowning in their own policies. Or to use a contemporary image—ministries have become both 'policy- and administratively obese'.

This obesity has two main (interconnected) origins. The first one has already been mentioned: too many objectives for the resources at hand. Nothing new here—being overstretched is the fate of most past empires. What is new is the formal deliberative character of policy formulations today, which makes the selection process the more complex if not downright cumbersome. Lord Castlereagh wrote his own three-page instructions for the participation in the Vienna Congress, and read them out to his colleagues in the British Cabinet before he set off. The rest he winged. This would no longer be possible today, as we go out of our way to identify obvious and hidden stakeholders, and hear and heed minority views.

The other and more subtle (and contemporary) source of 'administrative obesity' is 'documentability', or 'transparency'. Driven by a sometimes prurient press, the public scrutiny of public policies and administrative processes has become an obsession. Every step is carefully 'lawyered' and 'due process' reigns supreme. The problem is compounded by technical feasibility: what the computer renders feasible, politics renders compulsory. Nothing wrong per se with transparency, but it comes at a significant cost.

The outcome is predictable. Self-administration and 'due process' verification displaces substance. More resources are used to achieve fewer and fewer outcomes—the layman's definition of 'obesity'. The consequence of 'policy obesity' is a lessened responsiveness of the public sector to demands. If the public is dissatisfied, so are the civil servants. Motivation is declining rapidly, even in elite ministries like Foreign Affairs. A general call for reform—if not outright privatization—is heard, and this, in the short term at least tends to accentuate problems.

Is this the public sector's fate? Not necessarily. After all, the market too is not always good at 'picking winners'. But one thing the market is good at—weeding out poor products, thanks to bankruptcy. Here is a fundamental difference that needs addressing. How do we create an institutional mechanism for the public sector to achieve the same effect as bankruptcy in the private sector? How do we get rid of obsolete and ineffectual policies and processes?

The issue is one of good housekeeping, disposal of waste policies and processes. As we all know, housekeeping is a humdrum affair; it is not about picking winners, where glory and fame could be earned, or a place in history—or in the board room. It is about staying fit and lean—about terminating what is not essential, even if it is desirable.

This is also an ongoing task. If for no other reason, it has to be carried out internally. To this end *internal* or managerial accountability is needed—e.g. mechanisms equivalent to bankruptcy for less significant policies and activities. Today explicit mechanisms do not exist, even though necessity drives a haphazard process of 'muddling through'.

It is my intention today to explore administrative elements towards a 'bankruptcy' or 'redundancy' system for public administration. I propose:

(1) methods determining opportunity costs of activities in terms of time spent on them;

(2) in the event of new tasks, I propose mandating a simplification of tasks as well as binding offset in terms of existing tasks. There would be unassailable internal structures and processes to ensure that calls for simplification and offset are not just so much eyewash on the way to the next round of 'task creep'.

Time Management or Determining Opportunity Costs

It was the habit of one of my former bosses to congregate everyone every day for an hour for what we cynically called 'morning prayers'. Bored

with the proceedings, I once worked out that this autocratic display represented one whole man/year, or 6–7% of total available time for the chronically understaffed office. My boss did not like the finding.

Time budgeting is widespread in the private sector. The painter I'm about to employ will measure the square meters he is supposed to paint and multiply them by an empirical coefficient (usually supplied by the trade organization) reflecting the cost per square meter. Presto, he can make a fairly accurate offer of the cost.

We should adapt and adopt such a budgeting methodology. What if a meeting is called? The invitation would have to include a pro-forma estimate of the time and personnel involved. When you click 'send' on a long e-mail that you want to distribute to everybody and his brother, a window should pop up with this question: You are about to impose X hours of reading on the system. Do you really want to send it?

One would start by establishing the time cost of simple activities—such as a meeting. Progressively, using such simple building-blocks, more complex activities would be subject to budgeting. One could progress to 'collateral costs', once the direct costs have been better understood. How far one can go would be determined inductively on the basis of experience and needs.

It should be noted that such budgets are 'pro forma'. Their purpose is to provide the decision-maker with a *sense* of the effort involved in carrying out a decision. In this light, 'orders of magnitude' are sufficient. Orders of magnitude are more than sufficient in ranking the cost-effectiveness of planned activities. Once such a budget is established for, say a series of meetings, the task of choosing those worth attending becomes surprisingly simple. At least one government represented here today requires price tags for ministerial junket trips—with significant results. Why not generalize this?

When state enterprises in command economies were privatized, one major obstacle to increased efficiency was the lack of economic sense in the workforce. The concept of waste was foreign to them—they just did what they were told, and damn the cost. Does it sound vaguely familiar?

The mirror to time budgeting would be *time accounting*—recording how units and individuals have allocated their time between identified tasks and activities. In my concept, time accounting would not be used so much for individual control—it would be a record-keeping device aggregating rough quantitative data for assessment and planning purposes.

Why am I focusing on time? The largest single cost item in the MFA's

budget is personnel. Time management is the way best to use personnel. Far from me, the thought of gunning for full-scale centralized and inflexible time allocation: my ambition is far more modest. I'd simply settle for obtaining a fair idea of how time is actually spent or should be spent within the Ministry.

Once such basic elements are in place and validated by experience, we could move incrementally to more complex budgeting. What if the administration issues a new administrative rule? A prerequisite for approval would be an estimate of the time involved in its implementation. Too ambitious an objective? The software offered by the private sector, e.g. to manage expense accounts, comes with an estimate of the time involved in using it and thus the cost savings that can be obtained. Is it too much to ask from an administration that harbors ambitions to be 'as efficient as the private sector', by establishing for their in-house software, protocols and procedures of equivalent information?

As we move along further, we can establish the costs of certain policies. Pursuing 'human rights' issues does not simply involve the number of people in a Human Rights Division, but the work generated in other sections of the ministry and the diplomatic network. Once we have a rough idea of the cost involved, we can match this to outputs or even outcomes. Or we may use the values to obtain opportunity costs—what we forego in other areas: is it more effective and sensible to spend time on human rights, or on economic and commercial issues?

The next step would be to establish *indicative* time–budget benchmarks to be matched against time accounting data so as to spot blow-outs early on. The benchmarks would apply to individual policies, but also to the time allocation patterns of organizational units like an embassy, or the individual. An example: the benchmark could establish that an ambassador should not allocate more than 20% of his time to administrative tasks.

The benchmarks should function both as allocating devices as well as circuit-breakers aimed at avoiding work overloads from competing claims on available time of the individual or unit. To continue with the same example, as soon as the ambassador approaches his benchmark for time spent on administration, he should review his work and delegate or delete tasks, in order to stay within the benchmark. Armed with the quantitative data showing that the imbalance is structural, he may approach the center for remedy.

Benchmarks may be overridden—through a deliberate decision. The decision ought to be both justified and explicitly *compensated*, however.

Based on explicit findings, activities that no longer fit into the time allocation budget are declared 'bankrupt' or 'redundant' and struck from the list of tasks to be carried out.

More basically, what I propose is nothing more than making explicit and conscious what takes places anyway, in a hidden and muddled fashion. The alternative to the deliberate scuttling of redundant policies and activities is 'compensation creep'—units or individuals choosing on their own what to do first, what to do later, and what to abandon. We all have felt the effects.

Is my proposal not an additional burden on the harried civil servant? Yes and no. As work today is mostly mediated through the computer—even reading newspapers—the PC can be harnessed to gather data. The costs of certain patterns remain relatively stable. Once established, the data-gathering effort can be reduced to sampling. The key, in my view, lies in its impact on motivation. If it can be shown that such data-gathering and budgeting leads to work simplification, and a de-listing of obsolete activities—in other words, that this data-gathering effort makes a difference in the daily life of the bureaucrat—it will be quickly adopted. Moreover if it can become a tool of individual empowerment at the workplace, it will be a winner.

Towards a 'bankruptcy' process

I consider 'task overload' to be a major—if not the major—threat to the well-functioning of an organization; yet I see no structured, neutral, and effective way to deal with it.

'Task overload' occurs at the micro-level: the individual and the unit. It also occurs at the macro-level—the ministry as a whole. I propose to deal with both these issues in turn.

Within the framework of 'service contracts', e.g. between the embassies and the center or between the head and its staff—i.e. at the micro-level—annual tasks and activities are agreed upon. Once signed, these contracts (as their name purports) are binding for *both* parties. Changes in the 'service contract' would have to be negotiated, should new priorities emerge—as they will. For this eventuality, there should be explicit rights and obligations concerning a 'task overload'—an *obligation* to compensate for the new task by declaring an equivalent existing one redundant AND the *right* to refuse uncompensated new tasks.

This give-and-take approach should become a habit, and a sign of

mutual respect. In normal circumstances the process would be informal and flexible—most people are prepared to put in the extra effort, if it is properly acknowledged. This is obtained by the explicit provision of the 'circuit-breaker' ensuring that the bargaining can take place fairly and the outcome is not determined by authority or guile. Exercising the right of refusal—triggering the 'circuit-breaker'—is, like war, an admission of defeat for all concerned.

Such rights and obligations operate not only for individuals, but also for smaller and larger units. So I'd envisage both the ambassador and the embassy demanding (and receiving) compensation for an unexpected ministerial visit—lest they be turned into a glorified travel agency.

This, however, is not enough. There is no one to speak up for the integrity of the system as a whole and against overall 'task overload'. This is new. In the private sector, 'task overload' is not such an issue—why the public sector? For a good reason—if a firm wants to expand production, it is free to hire and obtain credit. As long as profits are confidently expected at the end of the year, the firm faces no insurmountable obstacle in adapting resources to goals. This is not the case in the public sector, where resources have been fixed in a general budgetary process. As a result, there is an inevitable conspiracy between political leadership and the CEO of the Ministry wanting to do too much with the given resources. When carried to an extreme, the system will buckle under the pressure— by making mistakes. The system needs an independent voice and advocate to defend it against excess tasking. This advocate is expected to be unassailably neutral between activities.

The diplomatic inspectorate (DI), in my view, is best placed to take on this role, for in its roaming surveys it is able to obtain a good, unbiased, and unvarnished view of the actual working of the system. Unfortunately, the DI is currently used mostly in a 'control' mode, to verify individual compliance, or to spot the occasional malfeasance, the breaking of PC rules in human relations, rather than as an instrument to verify the well-functioning of the system.

Next to the traditional inspection role then, I would envisage for the DI a planning role as well along the lines indicated above, aimed at ensuring the integrity of the system. In its new capacity, the DI would aggregate and evaluate the 'time management' information for the development of 'pro-forma budgets' and 'benchmarks'. The Head of the DI would furthermore be part of the top management structure. In his new role,

he would report on actual time allocation, establish forecasts of 'blow-outs', identify compensation needs and advice on all matters concerning the integrity of the system.

Proposals for new policies that are submitted to the management structure should include concrete proposals for 'task offsets'. The DI would assess such proposed compensation prior to the launch of a major new activity. The DI would be able to block, or at least delay implementation, should the offset measures appear inadequate. In this way, the DI would become the 'ombudsman' for the system. Finally, the DI would take the lead in making proposals for the simplification of procedures, or set corresponding simplification targets.

Is this not the task of Administration? In order to be effective, an advocate for the system must be unassailably neutral towards all claimants on the resources of the Ministry. Administration has itself become one of the major sources of tasks—it is thus not in a position to speak credibly about simplification. Nor is the integrity of the system a task for the trade unions, which report to the membership and not the political structure.

My proposal aims to force the discussion about scuttling tasks that are no longer a priority, out into the open and to make it one of the core management tasks. The proposed rules and structures would make an explicit addressing the issue compulsory. This is the equivalent of determining in a neutral way the 'bankruptcy' of tasks that are no longer deemed useful. The DI would facilitate the process and be its guarantor. The DI, therefore, should have sufficient powers to force management into compliance.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

If these suggestions sound terribly outlandish and far-fetched—they are not. Let us be quite clear on one point. The system does it anyway—often in a muddled or downright devious matter. Anyone who has viewed *Yes, Minister*, on television knows about the ways in which the civil service outwits unpleasant or unreasonable demands. What I propose is to make an existing process accountable. As the saying goes—what has to be done is worth doing well.

Some of my proposals—like time accounting and budgeting—have long been implemented in the private sector. Others—such as the *obligation* to compensate and a *right* to refuse uncompensated new tasks—arise

from the specific character of the public service. The inflexibility of the budget constraint should be matched by an equally inflexible system for preserving the system from overload.

The direct effects of the proposals have been highlighted. A word now about the collateral impact: in my view, my proposals would do wonders for motivation—for the individual and the units, they amount to empowerment. When the responsibility for the proper working of the system is widely shared, I would expect it to work more smoothly, and more effectively.

My proposal has an added advantage. It can be implemented incrementally—in a 'trial-and-error' fashion, adapting it to the culture of each ministry. One may wish to begin small—a unit or even an individual is used to test the concept, to enucleate difficulties, and test its limits. Success will make us confident that we can enlarge the scope of the reform to larger units. Failure spells a rapid and painless demise. Experimental success will facilitate adoption throughout the system, for the benefits will be there for all concerned to see. In other words, this approach would be quite different from a top-down approach which yields discontinuities in the running of the Ministry and has an implicit risk of catastrophic failure.

I am aware that my proposal flies in the face of current fashion for military–industrial structures in public service. Such proposals start from the point of view that a coherent set of objectives can be established at the top and that these objectives will percolate down the system for effective implementation—provided the 'principal-agent' problem can be resolved by appropriate incentives. The main justification for such proposals lies in their analogy to the private sector.

My contention is that such proposals are doomed to failure. They are but 'cargo cult'. They ignore the fact that the public and the private sector are inherently different. I have made my case here by pointing out that the public sector has no bankruptcy system for eliminating inferior policies. I have made proposals to remedy this situation.

Two other core problems remain—the problem of developing a coherent set of objectives as well as that of timely and precise feedback—reality checks, if you wish. I intend to take up these issues in another framework.

E-Diplomacy
the Challenge for Ministries of Foreign Affairs

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INTRODUCTION

KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION FORM THE BASIS OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES. Whenever new knowledge and information management tools are introduced, a discussion of their impact on diplomacy usually follows. This was the case with the telegraph, the telephone, and the radio.[1] In the mid-nineteenth century, after receiving the first telegraph, Lord Palmerston is reported to have exclaimed, 'My God, this is the end of diplomacy!'

Diplomacy survived the telegraph as well as subsequent technological innovations. In fact, each new major technological device has prompted reactions similar to Lord Palmerston's. The introduction of computers, the Internet, and other tools described collectively as information and communication technologies (ICT), was no different. The advent of ICT prompted academics, diplomats, journalists, and the general public to deliberate on the nature of possible changes to diplomacy. Diplomacy will survive. However, it remains important to explore the scope and nature of the impact of ICT/Internet on diplomacy, especially with regard to the functioning of foreign ministries.

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[1] For more information about the influence of technology on diplomacy in history, please consult: K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, London, Routledge, 1995, pp. 22–50; and M.S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450–1919*, London, Longman, 1993, pp. 110–19.

Methodology

This chapter tells a story about the use of computers and the Internet in diplomacy. It also aims to bridge the existing gap between practice and theory. The lack of communication between practitioners and researchers has had an increasingly crippling effect in the field of diplomacy.[2] In today's fast-changing world, well-grounded explanations and sound theories are crucial. However, the speed of modern life leaves practitioners with little time to reflect and to position their efforts within a broader context. This is where theory is needed: theories should elucidate and, possibly, predict.

Practitioners are often discouraged from consulting academic writings because of specialized terminology, complex explanations, and a lack of relevance to practical problems. While the complexity of theories often reflects reality, in some cases the use of specialized terminology is merely a 'turf protection mechanism'.

This chapter aims to bridge the gap between practice and theory. First, it anchors its narrative within a diplomat's daily routine, from early morning to late evening. Second, it divides the coverage of each daily sequence (or activity) into two parts. The first part, entitled STORY, describes the work of a fictitious diplomat named Ana Gabel. After the story section, the section entitled COMMENTS provides reflections on the events of the story, some of them grounded in theory.

The story of Ana Gabel presents a sequence of Ana's activities during a busy working day and depicts a number of situations that use ICT/Internet in diplomatic activities. The storyline combines elements of routine and crisis diplomacy. The crisis elements bring some tacit and discrete forms of diplomacy into sharper focus. Crises often trigger retrospection and reform, in which the trappings of day-to-day routine and inertia are displaced and real problems and issues come to the fore.

In the story, Ana has to deal with an environmental emergency. After an accident at a huge oil storage depot in a neighboring country, oil spilled into a major international river creates a risk to five countries

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[2] Paul Meerts focuses on the relationships between practitioners (diplomats), academics, and trainers in the field of international negotiations. The lack of communication between these three groups is conditioned by both different interests and perceptions. For more information, please consult: Paul Meerts, 'International Negotiation Learning Process; Practitioners, Academics, Trainers: The Chicken and The Egg', *Pin Points Newsletter*, International Institute for Applied System Analysis, no. 26, 2006, p. 7.

downstream. Ana's country will be the first polluted by the oil slick. Major risks to water-supply systems, agriculture, and the overall ecosystem require urgent regional action.

Terminology

Various adjectives and prefixes are used to describe Internet-related developments; these include 'cyber-', 'virtual', 'e-', and 'digital'. Their origins can be traced back to the 1990s. Their use also implies different social, economic, and political influences on the development of the Internet. For example, both 'cyber-' and 'virtual' were used by early Internet communities, mainly academics and Internet pioneers, 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 commercialization of the Internet in the late 1990s. In the policy sphere, the European Union started to use the prefix 'e-' in order to describe various ICT/Internet-related policies such as e-science and e-health. 'Digital' came into use primarily in technical fields. It also received prominence in the context of the 'digital divide' discussion.

In the international arena, the prefix 'cyber-' is rarely used, with the exception of cyber-crime found in the title of the Council of Europe's 'Convention on Cyber-crime'. The term 'virtual' is also rarely used in international negotiations. The prefix 'e-', as used in the international scene, appears extensively in the final documents of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in order to describe various fields including e-health, e-science, and e-learning.[3] The prefix 'e-' has been particularly favoured by the European Union.

In this paper the prefix 'e-' is used in order to describe the e-diplomat. 'Virtual' describes the 'virtual embassy'. The main reason for the latter usage is to highlight the non-physical nature of such an embassy.[4]

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[3] In the WSIS preparatory process, the prefix 'e-' was introduced at the European regional preparatory meeting in Bucharest (used 18 times in the final document). After that, Asian, American, and Western Asian countries fully adopted this prefix and used it more than 10 times in the WSIS regional conferences. The prefix 'e-' was clearly established as the main means to describe Internet-related social, economic, and cultural developments.

[4] 'Virtual' and 'e-' were also used to describe the ICT-driven changes in diplomacy and diplomatic techniques, including virtual diplomacy, e-embassy, and virtual consulates.

Who is Ana Gabel?

Ana, in her mid-30s, is a professional diplomat in charge of environmental affairs. At university, she participated in experimental art projects, round tables on philosophy, social activist projects, and spent time with anarchist groups. Most of her university friends were surprised when Ana joined the diplomatic service. They were very sceptical of government activities and viewed diplomacy as a formal, elitist profession.

Ana's friends from her student days are now active in environmental matters as members of NGOs and civil society groups. She meets them often and tries to explain that diplomacy involves more than the procedural rituals that they perceive as unnecessary and a waste of time. Ana's student experiences have helped her to deal with the multistakeholder environmental scene. She has also found environmental diplomacy to involve a particular blend of her profession (diplomacy) and her activist drive (the environment).

Although Ana is always busy, she decided to invest some of her time in developing ICT/Internet skills. The senior staff members in the Ministry's ICT department were thrilled. Usually, diplomats are sceptical about the use of ICT and the Internet. Ana became their champion and their mutual interest proved to be a good basis for cooperation.

9:00. AFTER A QUIET WEEKEND…A VERY BUSY MONDAY

Story

After a pleasant and relaxing weekend, Ana is back in the office. Monday is not her favorite day. She is startled by a telephone call. A major oil accident posing a huge environmental hazard has just taken place, a situation calling for crisis management. Ana has to travel to the capital of the neighboring country immediately to prepare a regional response. Many thoughts are running through her mind. Where should she start? What documents should she bring? What policy interests will be involved? Does she have all the information she will need? How should she consult the experts? How should she handle the media?

It is difficult to predict the course of the events. Ana needs extensive information to support various possible developments. As she is not sure of access to the Internet from the meeting venue, her first step is to retrieve all the documents and other materials she may need from the ministry's Intranet. Fortunately, a few weeks ago, the ICT department

replaced a hard-to-use search engine with a simple Google-style search tool. What a relief! Nevertheless, her search results in a long list of documents, too many to consult individually during tense meetings. Still, it is better than nothing. She downloads the documents to her notebook.

Another idea! A few months ago, colleagues from the ICT department used her as a guinea pig in the development of a Lessons Learned database. They helped her to create a number of 'lessons learned' sets. One was similar to the current oil spill crisis. She downloads this material.

Comments

TYPES OF INFORMATION USED IN DIPLOMACY

Adequate ICT solutions to the access of information reflect the management of three types of information in diplomacy: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured information.

Structured information has a clear logical structure and is used in consular activities, in administrative support for diplomatic activities, and in archive collections. Typical applications involving structured data are address databases, mailing databases, and library databases.[5] Semi-structured information and documents dominate diplomatic activities. Most diplomatic documents contain descriptors, such as title, date, type, and keywords, which can be stored within a database. The texts of diplomatic documents can be decompiled through self-sufficient textual elements, such as paragraphs or articles. For example, international treaties can be decompiled into smaller structures. Unstructured information has no consistent structure; it often consists of free narrative-based texts.

These three types of information require different information tools to exploit them. Structured data can be managed through databases and semi-structured data through hypertext techniques.[6] Unstructured data can, in principle, be managed through expert systems technology. Even

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[5] The address database is a good example of an application that supports structured data. Each record within an address database contains data with the same structure: name, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address.

[6] Hypertext is a non-sequential way of presenting information, where the author designs a network of ideas, concepts, and information. Ted Nelson coined the term hypertext in 1967 because he believed that a text system should reflect the hyperspace of concepts implied in the text. Hypertext is the conceptual basis of the World Wide Web, today's dominant Internet service, implemented through the hypertext mark-up language (HTML).

in the case of the existence of proper tools, however, the implementation of proper information management systems is a major task that requires changes in operational procedures and professional culture.

The magnitude of the challenge was illustrated by the post-9/11 analysis of the United States security sector's information management systems. FBI director, Robert Mueller, said about his agency's information management system: 'It would have been very nice if at some point in time I could say that you put into our computer system a request for anything relating to flight schools, for instance, and have every report in the last 10 years that had been done that mentions flight schools or flight training and the like kicked out. We do not have that capability now. We have to have that capability. And, beyond that, we ought to have the artificial intelligence that...doesn't require us to query it, but automatically looks at those patterns. And that's the type of technology we need to enhance our analytical capability.'[7]

IMPORTANCE OF ARCHIVES FOR DIPLOMATIC SERVICES

Today, archives are known by various terms, including 'databases' and 'document repositories'. Having adequate and accessible archives is a key precondition for the proper functioning of a ministry of foreign affairs.[8] Archives are the main container of institutional memory. Some researchers believe that ICTs and the Internet have brought about the 'dark age' for archives.[9] For example, documents typed on computers and saved on local discs usually remain unarchived. It is not clear what materials and written records will be preserved for future generations. Without proper archiving strategies, our times may leave fewer material traces than previous ones, which used more primitive communication methods including stone, papyrus and parchment. Accessing needed information within diplomatic archives remains the primary challenge of a diplomat, despite technological advances.

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[7] See: www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,52853,00.html.

[8] Historians usually point to the need for archives and the organized storage of diplomatic documents as the main reason for the establishment of the first ministries of foreign affairs.

[9] CBS News describes the risk of disappearing records as 'A Digital Dark Age'; Consult: 'Coming Soon: A Digital Dark Age'; available at www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/01/21/tech/main537308.shtml.

11:00—THE MEETING BEGINS...

Story

After a short flight, Ana is welcomed at the airport by Victor, chargé d'affaires *ad interim* in their embassy. Ana and Victor arrive at the conference center. Ana meets colleagues from other countries including professional diplomats and environmental specialists. As usual in environmental negotiations, inter-professional communication will be one of the main challenges. Ana has many questions and dilemmas. Will we be able to deliver to the high public expectations back home? Can we agree about rapid and coordinated action avoiding prolonged negotiations? Can we avoid a 'zero-sum' approach and find a real win-win solution, as this emergency requires?

Ana needs to connect to the Internet to receive timely instructions from the Ministry and to monitor the first reaction of political and public opinion at home. It would also be helpful to consult the research and academic profiles of a few of the negotiators. Unfortunately, Ana does not have wireless access. Victor proves to be a real asset here. He sets up access via his mobile phone and establishes a Bluetooth connection between his notebook computer and Ana's, creating a small network. However, the security of communication via a public network is still an issue to consider.

Comments

Use of Notebooks and the Internet in Conference Rooms

Internet access is becoming a common facility at many UN meetings. The main breakthrough occurred with the introduction of wireless technology (wi-fi).[10] An evolution in Internet access was observed during the WSIS process between 2002 and 2005. At the beginning of the WSIS process in 2002, wi-fi was a recent technological innovation used by participants from technically advanced countries and only in specially designated areas. At the end of the WSIS process (2005), wi-fi had become a mainstream tool for many participants.

Wi-fi access introduced many developments to traditional conference

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[10] 'Wi-Fi' is the underlying standard which is used for wireless communication by computers, cameras, TV-sets, and other digital devices.

diplomacy. It facilitated the participation of an increased number of civil society and business sector representatives at the WSIS meetings. Through wi-fi, they managed to be present at the WSIS meetings and continue their regular work through the Internet. For diplomats, a wi-fi connection provided constant contact with their ministries of foreign affairs and other government departments involved in the negotiations. In some cases, a wi-fi network of notebooks enabled the coordination of initiatives among representatives physically present in the conference room. Computer exchange complemented and sometimes replaced the traditional ambience of diplomatic meetings involving short chats, *tête-à-tête* exchanges, and corridor diplomacy. Physical movements can reveal the dynamics of negotiations or even be part of diplomatic signaling. This aspect of *in situ* diplomatic negotiations will change with the use of wi-fi.

Some small states, and others, created virtual wi-fi based networks in the conference room and were able to react quickly to proposals, amendments, and other interventions proposed at meetings without leaving their computers.[11] It was an effective way of coordinating national positions in multilateral negotiations.

The wi-fi connection also provided real-time reporting from diplomatic meetings. Participants, especially those from civil society, commented on developments in the conference room via blog, chat, and other Internet-based facilities.

Security of Communication

Security is an important issue in the use of ICT/Internet in diplomacy. However, the traditional image of secretiveness of diplomatic services can overemphasize problems of security. The problem of information systems security requires a well-balanced approach. An analysis of United States diplomatic practices published in the document, *Equipped for the Future*, suggests that the State Department should exchange its current ICT policy of 'risk avoidance with one of risk management. The atmosphere at State has to change from information policing to information providing. The State Department must accept the fact that in an information-

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[11] Small island states created virtual networks during the WSIS negotiations, helping them to organize timely responses to new initiatives in the negotiations. They were also able to coordinate interventions and procedural moves.

intensive environment, not having access to information can be riskier than losing control over a particular piece of information'.[12]

11:30—THE FIRST PROBLEM…

Story

Ana recalls Murphy's Law: 'Anything that can go wrong, will.' The history of this region provides ample reason for thinking like this. She detects the first signals of diplomatic manoeuvring. Some countries wish to play a leading role in the environmental cleaning efforts and compete for a seat in the 'Ad Hoc Environmental Committee'. Who will host the Committee? Ana cannot change the negotiation dynamics. She has to play the game, which needs new tactics. Given the effects of the oil spill, her country should host the Committee. For this, she has to lobby hard. How can she strengthen her cause? How far can she go in lobbying?

She remembers that some competing countries have not signed and ratified basic environmental protection treaties, but she does not have the relevant facts at hand. The ministry's database will help. She searches for the treaties ratified by her country and not ratified by the other countries. The result is both useful and interesting.

One country pushes aggressively to host the committee. She notices uneasiness around the table. This is the right moment. She brings up the discrepancy between that country's ambition to host the Committee and their weak environmental credentials, including the fact that they are not party to the most important environmental conventions. Ana carries the room with her.

Comments

SEARCH AND DATA-MINING

Today, most people associate searching the Internet with Google. However, Google has its limitations, especially when it comes to structured data. Our story shows one example involving the highly structured data of international conventions. Information about international conventions,

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[12] *Equipped for the Future, Managing US Foreign Affairs in the 21st Century*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington, DC, 1998, p. 23.

including texts, signatures, and ratifications, are generally available on the Internet. However, the full diplomatic and political usefulness of locating information is attained only through the capability of advanced searches using various logical operators. In Ana's case, for example, the crucial information was a list of all environmental conventions signed by Ana's country and not signed by other countries. This illustrates how technology can provide value-added elements.

Techniques for extracting data from vast collections are called *data-mining*. The collation of information regarding UN voting patterns is an example of using data-mining techniques in diplomacy. The US diplomatic service gathers and processes voting data from the UN to discover the voting patterns of countries of particular interest to the United States. Thus, interesting information derived from data-mining can be used for further diplomatic activities.

12:30—COORDINATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES...

Story

Although Ana has a broad negotiating mandate, she is aware of numerous international policy constraints. Her country is a member of the European Union, which has detailed environmental regulations. Whatever she negotiates at this meeting must be in accordance both with European Union and broader international regulations. The negotiations have raised the controversy about the application of the 'polluter pays' principle. She needs to consult with the European Commission and other member states of the European Union. Some of them are present in the negotiation room, but most are not. She uses a simple e-diplomacy tool—the mailing list.

Comments

MAILING LIST FOR INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DIPLOMATIC COORDINATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION[13]

The European Union (EU) uses COREU ('correspondence EU') for coordination among member states and their diplomatic services. 'Coreus'

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[13] These comments are based on a description provided by Ambassador Victor Camilleri, Malta's Permanent Representative to the UN in New York.

are generated by the Commission, the EU Secretariat, the Presidency, or individual member states, and are circulated among all EU members through a central point in the EU secretariat. The circulation system is rather well structured—the original coreu message goes to one (or two) points in each member state (usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and then it becomes the responsibility of each member state to diffuse each coreu internally according to its own procedures. The system is crypto-protected.

In diplomatic centers, such as New York, EU permanent missions have mailing lists for the coordination of their activities. The EU mailing list in New York is called CIREU. The emails are generated by the Presidency, the Secretariat, or individual member states, and circulated to all missions through the EU Secretariat. Each mission then applies its own internal procedures. This system is not crypto-protected.

Both the COREU and the CIREU systems, while not directly interactive, permit participants to react to developments and to each other in a coordinated way. Any member wishing to send a coreu in response to another coreu is free to do so. Sometimes a 'silence' procedure is applied, setting a deadline for responses, e.g. a draft paper on which members are requested to comment.

MAILING LISTS

Mailing lists are often used for communication in international circles. They were particularly important during the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process. Some mailing lists, such as the Internet governance list, became focal points for shaping views on Internet governance issues. Although civil society made the majority of postings, those public lists were carefully followed by all stakeholders, including diplomats and governments. Sometimes mailing lists are helpful in testing new ideas and diplomatic signaling.

A mailing list was also the official exchange tool of the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG). The WGIG involved four physical meetings, held in November 2004, February 2005, April 2005, and May 2005. Between these meetings, the 40 members relied on a mailing list for ongoing discussions. Thousands of messages were exchanged between regular meetings. The multistakeholder composition of the Working Group (diplomats, business people, NGO representatives, academics) was also reflected in the utilization of the mailing list. Diplomats were very reluctant to use the mailing list as a medium of communication,

confirming the in-built professional caution to put matters in writing that might eventually create an official commitment.

13:00—LUNCH BREAK...TIME FOR INFORMAL LOBBYING

Story

Lunch is a good time for lobbying. The organizers anticipated this and provided a buffet lunch. The seating order for a traditional lunch would have required delicate diplomatic manoeuvring. Ana approaches a colleague from a country that is still undecided about hosting the committee. She comes up with a good opening, remembering that his country is actively lobbying for a top-level position in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Ana proposes some horse-trading.

However, Ana does not know whether her ministry has already pledged support for some other candidate. She uses her personal digital assistant (PDA) that contains a constantly updated candidature database. Good news! Her country has not yet committed support to any candidate. She can offer a swap. She wishes the ambassador were present. Making such a decision is risky, but she has to act. Her colleague accepts this offer. A key player in the negotiations is now on Ana's side.

Comments

CANDIDATURE DIPLOMACY

'Candidature diplomacy' puts pressure on diplomatic services, especially in the main centers of multilateral diplomacy (New York, Geneva) where most 'candidature swapping' takes place. Lobbying for candidates involves many aspects, including a country's prestige, the personalities involved, and an extension of national political dynamics.[14]

In the case of dozens of parallel candidatures, a considerable management burden rests on diplomatic services, especially those of small countries. Since every vote counts towards an election in the UN and other international bodies, every country is involved in this process.

[14] The higher the level of a post in an international organization, the more political the candidature process becomes. Lobbying is often a part of national political calculations (e.g., party in power, positioning of former prominent leaders of the country).

- coordination of activities: lobbying takes place simultaneously through different channels; New York and Geneva, bilateral missions, and direct contacts between ministers and senior officials. How does a country ensure that it does not offer support to several candidates for one post? This can be assured through the use of a candidature database.
- coordination of swapping support: hundreds of parallel candidatures for international posts, involving lobbying for the support of almost 200 states, makes this a complex exercise; for government officials, it is important to have access to all the data to determine which support can be swapped.

13.30—THE MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE...

Story

During lunch, Ana receives an SMS from the capital requesting support in drafting the Minister's statement for a press conference scheduled at 15:00. This places an extra burden on her time as she is already busy lobbying; technology provides her the means to multitask and call upon other resources.

Ana logs on to the Ministry's Intranet. Using the Ministry's Skype-based system, she contacts Zoe, her predecessor in the environmental department, currently based at the Embassy in Athens. Ana seeks her assistance in drafting the Minister's statement. Both are advanced users of Mindmapping software, enabling them to open up a drafting space to brainstorm on key elements for the press conference. Ana includes the latest policy information, of which her predecessor is unaware, including their country's candidature to host the Environmental Committee. As Ana is called away, Zoe completes the draft for the Minister's press conference before 15:00.

Ana recalls the considerable public interest in the environmental crisis and has an idea! She is a great believer in blogging and other Web 2.0 Internet tools. She remembers Victor's discussion with a lecturer on public diplomacy about the relevance of the Internet in shaping public opinion. His main point was that Internet-based conversations (many-to-many) are gradually superseding the traditional media broadcasting approach (one-to-many).

Ana asks Victor to use his blogging skills to disseminate positive information about the environmental negotiations through Internet-based communities and professional circles. Victor is in a difficult situation. He is an excellent blogger, but a few years ago he almost lost his job when his ambassador was warned that he was participating in a politically controversial blog popular in the receiving state. Strictly speaking, he had broken Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations that specifies that diplomats should respect the laws and regulations of the receiving state and avoid interference in the internal affairs of the receiving state. Fortunately, this participation went unnoticed by the receiving state and the incident resulted only in a reprimand from his ambassador.

Ana, who has already taken a few risky steps, decides to accept responsibility for Victor's blogging. They now have to create an appropriate message. It cannot be a standard press release, as nobody in the 'bloggosphere' would take this seriously. An informal message is drafted, clearly including substantive information from the negotiation process. The environmental community, NGOs, academia and civil society, maintain an interest and an open 'radar' when it comes to information on key negotiations. The result: numerous replies are posted within a matter of minutes. The blog message contributes to shaping public opinion and creating a positive spin on the environmental negotiations.

Comments

Integrated Diplomatic System (Ministry and Missions)

Communication can be optimized through technology. In our story, Zoe moved to a particular embassy due to personal reasons. Her broad experience and knowledge of the environmental field could have been lost. Through the use of ICT, Zoe's knowledge and skills were made available when they were most needed (crisis management). With an integrated diplomatic system, all talents, knowledge, and experience can be activated wherever they are located.

Document Drafting

Ministries of foreign affairs operate through preparing internal documents, including reports, drafts, internal instructions, and various administrative documents. The management of documents has been substantially

influenced by the development of ICT/Internet, which can be observed by comparing the process of drafting in ministries of foreign affairs twenty years ago with the current process. Twenty years ago, the preparation of any document required an elaborate process. Diplomats would usually handwrite the text and send it to a typist, who would send the first typed version to a superior for comments. The revised version was re-typed and the document gradually went up the hierarchical ladder until the responsible person signed it.

The complexity of the process and the need for the involvement of a typist and other collaborators created a special environment for drafting documents. From the diplomat, it required more concentration, involvement, and responsibility than writing, for example, an e-mail. A typed document had an element of 'finality'. With the exception of the corrections of minor mistakes, any change required a complete retyping of the document. This method of drafting documents also determined organizational structure, the need for personnel, workflow procedures, and control and feedback mechanisms.

Computers have changed the way documents are drafted by making changes simple. What may have required time-consuming retyping of an entire document in the past now demands only a short time using word processing software. The ease of making changes, allowing greater flexibility, can lead to side-effects, such as a lack of attention in drafting and a lack of focus on details.

One potential disadvantage in the electronic preparation of documents is a limitation in the preservation of a document's intermediate versions. Traditional diplomacy archives used to contain all versions of documents, from the first draft prepared by a desk officer to its final version. As now only the final version is kept, it is possible that the wealth of knowledge and information gained in the drafting process may be lost.

Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is probably as old as diplomacy. Since the early days of the profession, diplomats have promoted the image of their countries. Instead of public diplomacy, however, this was called propaganda and foreign cultural relations. What is new today in public diplomacy?[15]

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[15] For a comprehensive introduction to public diplomacy, see: Jan Melissen, ed., *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, London, Palgrave/Macmillan, 2005.

First, with globalization and the widespread use of the Internet, images and appearances have attained a growing importance in international relations. Joseph S. Nye described this as a transition from 'hard power' to 'soft power', which is mainly understood as power over opinion.

Second, increasingly the distinction is blurred between a domestic and a foreign audience in public affairs. Traditionally, diplomatic services had different approaches in cultivating a domestic public and an international public. Since the introduction of the CNN and other global media, both domestic and international audiences are addressed simultaneously.

Third, the Internet and, in particular, 'Web 2.0', has demanded new patterns of communication. Instead of a one-to-many broadcasting approach, the Internet uses a many-to-many conversation approach.[16] Awareness of this difference has been particularly relevant with the introduction of 'Web 2.0' and the growing relevance of blogs. Bloggers have become important shapers of public opinion. For our story, the most important development is the use of blogs in public diplomacy. A few recent cases demonstrate some potential problems in the use of blogs by diplomats and negotiators. The BBC recently reported that Jan Pronk's blog[17] provoked the Sudanese government to expel Pronk swiftly.[18] Pronk's blog, which criticized the Sudanese government policy in Darfur, presented some sensitive diplomatic observations normally dispatched in an encoded format to headquarters or a national capital. In another case reported by BBC, Croatian diplomat Vibor Kalodjera was recalled to his capital due to blog postings which included comments on the US presidential campaign. Finally, the Syrian Ambassador in Washington, Imad Moustapha, is reported to have used a blog as a method to bypass political isolation in Washington.

The use of the Internet in public diplomacy raises many issues. How to adapt to the informality of the Internet? How to train diplomats to communicate through the Internet? Would informal Internet commu-

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[16] A recent survey by *The Economist* puts the media challenges of 'Web 2.0' in a broader context: 'As with the media industry revolution of 1448, the wider implications for society will become visible gradually over a period of decades. With participatory media, the boundaries between audiences and creators become blurred and often invisible.'... One-to-many 'lectures' (i.e. from media companies to their audiences) are transformed into 'conversations' among 'the people formerly known as the audience' ('Among the Audience, Survey of new media,' 22 April 2006, p. 4).

[17] See www.janpronk.nl/index120.html.

[18] 'Blogs—the new diplomacy?' Consult: news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6083632.stm.

nication go beyond the limits of diplomatic communication specified in the Vienna Convention? Ministries' guidelines on communication need adjustment to exploit the communication opportunities and challenges coming from new media.

14.30—COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT AND OTHER DETAILS...

Story

Diplomatic negotiations are illustrative proof of the saying that the 'devil is in the details'. Ana's diplomatic victory is evident, but now she should make sure that it is not lost in details. The first issue is to negotiate the composition of the secretariat of the future Environmental Committee. This will involve expenditures, particularly relevant because of constant budget cuts. Ana receives an indication from her capital of the maximum budget she can commit for the Secretariat. Other countries have also made financial pledges. She now has to assign sums to various positions and activities in the Secretariat. Her intention is to staff the secretariat with experts, with a minimal administrative structure. In order to negotiate various scenarios, she uses an Excel table. Formulas help her to see the financial effect of each choice.

The next step is to decide the terms of reference for the Committee. Although she has a solid background in environmental issues, oil pollution is new to her. She has to start with understanding the meaning of some core concepts. Her first step is to consult Wikipedia. It is a valuable source, but she is also aware of its limitations.[19] The next step is to consult a small online environmental community back home. She has developed a good rapport with them and she is accepted as a peer. Victor manages to gather this community on Skype so that they can have a quick chat. All open technical issues are clarified. She can finalize her proposal.

Comments

THE DIPLOMAT AS MANAGER AND ADMINISTRATOR

As administrative and support staff are reduced, diplomats, especially in small missions, increasingly deal with managerial and administrative

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[19] The main limitation is the reliability of information found in Wikipedia. It does not have the editing and quality control procedures utilized by a printed encyclopedia such as Britannica.

tasks, including human resources, financial matters, computer networks, and logistical issues.[20] Surveys of diplomatic training courses show little management training. Courses on time management, human resource management, drafting, reporting, managing information systems and managing a small diplomatic mission may help to address this perceived need.

GENERALISTS VS SPECIALISTS

David D. Newsom stated: 'For most of the Twentieth Century, the international diplomatic agenda has consisted of questions of political and economic relations between nation-states—the traditional subjects of diplomacy. After the Second World War, new diplomatic issues arose, spurred by the technical advances in nuclear energy and electronics.'[21]

The diplomatic agenda is increasingly multidisciplinary. Diplomats need specialized knowledge in areas such as trade, arms control, the environment, and the governance of the Internet. Internet tools can be particularly useful in building and maintaining networks with groups and professional communities that may be important partners in multilateral diplomatic negotiations.

MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIPLOMACY

The introduction of new actors is one of the characteristics of modern diplomacy. The availability of the Internet and ICT has directly influenced the shape of the current international scene. For many non-state actors, mainly NGOs, the Internet is a tool that enables them to participate actively in international relations. They can organize international campaigns, lobby for treaties, and advocate for policies, through the intensive use of websites, discussion groups, and e-mail.[22]

[20] Some activities, such as managing human resources, were performed by diplomats in the past as well. They had to deal with both superiors and subordinates, which involved necessary motivation, delegation of tasks, and planning of human resources. Currently, those tasks are often placed under a management title. Numerous techniques and tools are available for human resource management, yet management techniques cannot replace human judgement and intuition!

[21] David D. Newsom, 'The New Diplomatic Agenda: Are Governments Ready?', *International Affairs*, January 1989, p. 29.

[22] One of the frequently quoted examples is the negotiation of the Mine Ban Treaty. The initiator of the signing of the Treaty, Jody Williams, who received the 1997 Nobel Prize, indicated that one of her main tools for starting the campaign was the Internet.

Multistakeholderism is particularly noticeable in diplomatic negotiations of highly technical issues such as the environment and Internet governance. Many non-state actors have high levels of expertise and they have become important partners to diplomats. Even if diplomats invest more time to acquire the necessary knowledge, they will still remain novices in the field. It is important for them to develop strong cooperative partnerships with various professional and knowledge communities. Those communities can be found in NGOs, civil society, academic, and research institutions. Multistakeholder diplomacy is becoming an integral part of diplomatic practice.[23]

15.30—POINT OF ORDER...

Story

Ana thinks that the negotiations are steadily moving forward. Still, her experience tells her to expect surprises at any time. Suddenly, the representative of the opposing side—competing to host future committees—proposes that the host of the Executive Committee should cover all expenses, and calls for a vote on this point. This would far exceed the funds allocated by Ana's ministry of finance. Ana knows that this vote may get approval because the other countries involved would not object to putting the financial burden on Ana's country to save funds. Ana needs a procedural tool to block this move.

She remembers that a Point of Order can be used in such a situation, but she is not completely sure of its details and needs to look it up. However, she does not have any book or manual nearby. Now she realizes the advantage of online learning: she still remembers the lively debate about the 'Swiss Army Knife of Multilateral Diplomacy', with a one-page presentation of the key techniques of multilateral diplomacy. Ana finds the map in the learning space and reads about how to use a Point of Order. Ana makes the Point of Order to stop the vote on financial aspects and suggest additional negotiations in order to reach a consensus. The negotiators support Ana's proposal.

Ana needs to close the financial chapter. In order to do this, she needs

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[23] For a more detailed elaboration of the concept and examples of multistakeholder diplomacy, see Kurbalija and Katrandjiev, eds, *Multistakeholder Diplomacy: Challenges and Opportunities*, Diplo, 2006.

to send a few e-mails. One is 'internal', for her ministry of finance. The other two e-mails should be sent to two diplomats from other countries. She needs to suggest a few solutions for financial support for the Committee. E-mail provides a good balance between the informality of face-to-face chat and the high formality of an official diplomatic note. However, e-mail is not without risks. Last year she sent a very informal e-mail to a diplomat colleague, which almost led to a diplomatic crisis. Ana has learnt to draft her e-mail messages more carefully.

Comments

INFORMATION GLUT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Diplomats have to deal with an information glut. In order to preserve their mental and creative potential, they need to externalize unnecessary information. This can be done through storing such materials in an easily accessible format, such as graphical presentations, and accessing this information when needed.

USE OF E-MAIL IN DIPLOMACY

Electronic mail (e-mail) is the most widely used Internet application for both private and professional communication. The use of e-mail in diplomacy can be divided into two areas: internal communication within a ministry and external communication with other institutions and officials abroad and within the country. The usage of these two types of e-mail requires different working procedures, security protection, archiving, and registration.[24]

Like all communication media, e-mail influences the message, as is indicated in the famous McLuhan adage, 'the medium is the message'. The medium influences the way institutions function. In this respect, e-mail is similar to previous communication facilities. For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the introduction of the telegraph centralized diplomacy, with the result that diplomats in missions had less flexibility in their operations. They were 'on the other side of the wire'. The telegraph also influenced the bureaucratization of diplomacy and the

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[24] For more information consult Baldi, Gelbstein and Kurbalija, *Appropriate Use: Guidelines and Best Practices for E-mail and Other Internet Services*, Diplo, 2003.

introduction of hierarchical structures.[25] In its initial phases, the telegraph was very expensive. It forced diplomats to write very concise messages.

A number of elements of e-mail communication may 'influence the message' in diplomacy.

- E-mail is asynchronous. Unlike spoken conversation, we do not have to reply immediately. It introduces a possible pause—not often used—that gives an individual time to reflect before responding.
- E-mail removes many elements of direct communication that are important in diplomacy. Body language, eye contact, the nuances of pitch and stress are lost. This dehumanization has both negative and positive results. According to David Maister, this aspect of e-mail communication 'promotes the importance of reason and logic, and reduces bias due to gender, racial or national background, or appearance. It is profoundly democratic'. However, e-mail can create misunderstandings in communication and potentially escalate minor conflicts. An issue that can easily be resolved in direct communication can become a major cause of conflict in e-mail communication.
- E-mail preserves a written record of communication.

OFFICIALITY OF E-MAIL

E-mail is considered a form of official communication. In the business sector, e-mail has triggered several high-profile lawsuits in the United States. In diplomacy, only one case of legal relevance has occurred regarding a clearly stated official e-mail communication. In early 2002, a suspected hacker intercepted e-mail sent by the EU-representative in Ankara, and leaked it to the press. The content of this e-mail might have seriously endangered the already tense relations between the EU and Turkey. The EU demanded action from Turkish authorities in order to protect its representative's correspondence according to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Ultimately, e-mails sent by diplomats can commit their country. One of the main challenges in keeping e-mail communication official is its use for both private and professional communication. For example, the same

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[25] 'The cost, secrecy, and aura of importance surrounding telegrams made foreign policy officials hesitant to process them to lower-ranking bureaucrats', in David Paul Nicles, *Under the Wire: How the Telegraph Changed Diplomacy*, Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 35.

application can be used for informal discussion on family arrangements for the evening and for an official exchange. Diplomats can easily slip from informal exchange into something that can commit their country.

Deniability and E-mail

Prestige is an important part of diplomacy. Diplomats represent their country, and any failure on their part can be extended from the person to the country. This is one reason why diplomacy is seen as a risk-avoiding profession. Even when risks have to be taken, diplomacy has created mechanisms to help a diplomat retreat gracefully. For example, diplomatic ambiguities can give a diplomat a way to retreat from possible adverse repercussions. In many diplomatic negotiations, 'face-saving' is considered an essential part of a final deal. Ultimately, diplomats have to deliver the result of their work to a domestic constituency. Deniability is deeply entrenched in diplomatic communication.

In e-mail communication, deniability is both difficult and complex. First, the informal nature of e-mail exposes diplomats to unexpected interpretations of messages. The typical way of writing e-mail does not involve careful drafting or the consideration of possible interpretations and the use of a message in other contexts. This risk is multiplied because e-mail can be easily forwarded and disseminated to numerous recipients, limiting the scope for deniability when compared with traditional diplomatic communication. Second, e-mail introduces immediacy into communication. It is expected that a reply should be sent in a matter of days, if not hours. The delayed response, a useful tool in times of slower diplomatic communication, is difficult with e-mail communication. However, some room for deniability still exists, mainly related to technical features of e-mail. These features include undelivered messages and the deletion of messages by spam filters. Unlike diplomatic notes, e-mail may disappear and fail to reach the final destination for numerous technical reasons.

E-mail and Diplomatic Signaling

The Internet has caused another change in diplomatic communication. In the past, a clear distinction was made between various types of communication. A spectrum existed, on one side of which one found official written communication and, on the other side, informal, mainly

verbal, communication. Some mixed forms occurred, with such tools as 'non-papers'.[26] The spectrum of communication options has had an important effect on diplomatic activities. The choice of a particular form was part of diplomatic signaling. Certain ways of communication helped verify the intentions of other sides in negotiations, helped create coalitions, and aided in other diplomatic, tactical moves. Although highly formal communication through diplomatic letters and notes remains in use, e-mail is increasingly blurring the distinction between various types of communication.

E-mail and the Preservation of Institutional Memory

One of the problems with e-mail is that it is not centrally archived (if it is archived at all!). In most cases, each user manages his or her e-mail, deciding on what should be archived and what should be deleted. Compared to old procedures centered around the exchange of documents, an e-mail exchange carries the risk of losing the wealth of knowledge created within a ministry. Traditional ministry archives, established in the early days of organized diplomacy, were sources of institutional memory. Ministries kept all versions of a document until it reached its final form. Presently, only the latest version of a document is archived.

16.00—VIRTUAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS (VIRTUAL EMBASSY)

Story

A key practical issue is to involve a well-known Kazakh expert on oil pollution. Some years ago, when the expert was approached directly, the Kazakh government complained about bypassing official channels of communication. The expert is a state official; therefore, any request for his assistance should come through official diplomatic channels. None of the countries present at the meeting has a diplomatic mission in either Astani or Alma Ata, and time is not available to send a special envoy to Kazakhstan. Some countries propose sending an official request through the permanent mission in New York. Due to the time difference, and the

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[26] 'Non-papers' are written documents that cannot be attributed to any author. However, for most non-papers the authorship was well known to those involved in the process. 'Non-papers' were particularly useful in the context of the CSCE/OSCE.

time needed for permanent representatives to meet in New York, the whole
operation would require at least one day. The need to engage the Kazakh
expert has been one of the main issues during today's meeting.

Ana remembers that her country has an unusual device called a
'virtual embassy' established with Kazakhstan. A few years ago, a debate
occurred in Ana's ministry about the establishment of a virtual embassy.
Critics came from many circles: traditional diplomats could not
understand 'representation through the Internet'. While everything else
can be done through the Internet, representation is a core function
requiring face-to-face contact. They asked many sensible questions. Is it
simply a website of the embassy? How can transactions be done? It was
one of those strange proposals that, in spite of much opposition, was
adopted. The reason was simple: Ana's country could not establish a
'bricks' embassy. The virtual embassy was an inexpensive option and
the other side agreed. Last, but not of least importance, the Minister
used this opportunity to appoint an ICT specialist from his party as the
first virtual ambassador.

The virtual ambassador eventually went to visit Kazakhstan, and the
virtual embassy became, in some ways, a blended form of representation
combining official visits and online communication. Along with the
ambassador, the virtual embassy has one diplomat: Ana's colleague, Marc,
who spends 20% of his working time in the ministry as a virtual first
secretary to Kazakhstan.

Ana contacts Marc and he immediately uses the 'alert option' of the
virtual embassy. His counterpart based in the Kazakh capital, Astani,
receives his 'alert SMS' at home. He immediately contacts Marc who
explains the situation to him. The official procedure can start. Marc sends
a *note verbale* requesting assistance from the Kazakh expert. The response
note arrives from Astani half an hour later.

Ana is delighted. She can inform her colleagues at the meeting that
they have received a diplomatic 'OK' from Kazakhstan. What about his
visa? Ana contacts Marc again; he can use the consulate section of the
virtual embassy. Fortunately, during the discussion about establishing
the virtual embassy, the minister overruled the strong opposition of the
consular department, which was very concerned about the possibility
of submitting visa requests online. Fortunately, the virtual consulate did
not lead to an avalanche of applications.

Comments

WHAT IS A VIRTUAL EMBASSY?

When we call an embassy 'virtual', it means that this embassy does not have physical premises. A virtual embassy still has an ambassador—they cannot be replaced by computers. In a real embassy, the ambassador resides in the embassy of the receiving state. In a virtual embassy, the ambassador remains in the capital city of his or her own country and communicates with the other country through electronic means.

WHAT A VIRTUAL EMBASSY IS NOT

A virtual embassy is not the website of a diplomatic mission. Currently, close to 2,000 diplomatic mission websites exist. Most provide information on mission activities (such as their working hours and consular information) and on the countries they represent (basic country data and information on foreign policy). These websites rarely promote any real diplomatic exchange (interactivity).

VIRTUAL EMBASSY AND DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

The concept of a virtual embassy is linked to the concept of representation, a traditional and vital function of diplomacy. The most common form of representation through resident diplomatic missions has already been challenged by emerging practices. The first new practice was the appointment of non-resident ambassadors based in a third country or in the capital of the sending country. The second challenge to traditional diplomatic representations is the emergence in international relations of entities other than states, including sub-national entities (regions and local communities) and others (non-state actors, business companies, NGOs). Most of them try to acquire some sort of formal recognition and representation in international affairs. These developments will require some changes in the concept of diplomatic representation.

The use of virtual embassies does not change the concept of representation. It only alters the form of representation. In 2001, Diplo initiated a discussion on the virtual embassy.[27] At that time, this idea

[27] For more information about the discussion on the virtual embassy in 2001, please consult: www.diplomacy.edu/Knowledge/VE/default.asp.

sounded rather futuristic. It is interesting to note changes in perspective after five years. The Internet and ICT blend into daily activities and are hardly noticeable as special technology. They are part of daily routines. In this sense, some functions of the virtual embassy have been gradually implemented through e-mail, web, and other online tools. However, the key conceptual issues are as valid today as they were five years ago.

What are potential scenarios for the use of virtual embassies?

Virtual embassies have a number of possible uses. Two are to maintain basic, but infrequent diplomatic relationships and to provide non-resident representation.

a) Relations between two countries that have diplomatic relations, but no intensive cooperation

Such diplomatic relations are usually maintained through the Permanent Missions in New York. Important question: do we need a virtual embassy if the level of interaction is low? Is the level of interaction low because:

- no real need exists for more intensive ties (no economic or cultural interests); or
- an infrastructure for interaction does not exist.

b) In the case of non-resident ambassadors (a roving ambassador, 'Scandinavian' model of diplomatic representation)

In this case, a virtual embassy can cover diplomatic relations between the visits of non-resident ambassadors. This is the most likely scenario for the use of virtual embassies. Blended representation combines the best of two forms of representation: traditional (physical contact, developing personal rapport) and online (low cost, continuous communication).

Virtual Consular Relations

Consulate affairs are usually considered 'computerization' friendly, mainly because consular functions are clearly defined. They are repetitive and predictable activities that use standard procedures, decision-making criteria, and forms. Consular functions are similar to other government and administrative functions. Techniques and tools available for the computerization of consular activities have already been developed for many other e-government functions (e.g. issuing identification documents, requests for administrative support, notary functions).

With the growing political relevance of migration issues, it remains to be seen if and how technology will be used in this field. The future computerization of consular functions will be more a policy issue than a technological one.

17.00—DRAFTING THE FINAL DOCUMENT

Story

All elements of the deal are in place; now they must be codified in written format. The risk still exists that the various parties may hold different perceptions of the compromise reached. Fortunately, the chair from the host government kept an accurate record and began drafting the compromise formulations while they were being negotiated. Through corridor diplomacy during coffee breaks, he informally confirmed them with the majority of participants.

The draft text is projected for all to see in the computer room, and all participants receive a printed copy. The proposed title of the document is 'Final Communiqué'. However, the representative of the country that unsuccessfully lobbied to host the Committee proposes 'Agreed Minutes' or simply 'Report' as a title. Clearly, he would like to reduce the relevance of the document and open some room for future re-negotiations. This is refused. All participants read the text and engage in the usual debate on weak and strong formulations, the use of the conditional, etc. The number of square brackets is substantially reduced. One country has difficulty with the formulation on the 'polluter pays' principle, and finally accepts the text, attaching a statement expressing reservations. The text is ready.

Comments

DOCUMENT DRAFTING

Texts are the backbone of diplomatic activities. Ultimately, any diplomatic activity, from formal to informal, results in the adoption of a particular text, whether it is a legally binding treaty, a diplomatic note or a non-paper. The Latin proverb *verba volant scripta manent* probably applies more in diplomacy than in any other discipline.

Document drafting usually involves diplomats and officials from different countries. Drafting is particularly complex in a multilateral framework with the participation of many countries. ICT/Internet

provides numerous tools for document drafting, starting from the simple use of track-changes in Word and WIKI-based tools, to more sophisticated drafting platforms. These can be used for managing the overall drafting process and working on the text. The quantity of text input has significantly increased with two major procedural developments: giving the right to non-state actors to submit written contributions and facilitating the submission of contributions over the Internet. The last major UN summit— the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)—clearly demonstrates this trend. In the preparation for the WSIS Geneva summit, the Secretariat had around 700 written contributions, with a total of 3000 pages.[28] Apart from policy aspects, the major technical and organizational

Table 1. Excerpt from WSIS Compilation of Comments[29]

Existing text	Sources of Proposed text	Proposed Text
1. We recognize that it is now time to move from principles to action, by encouraging stakeholders to take the Plan of Action one step further, identifying those areas in which progress has been made in implementing the commitments under-taken in Geneva, and by defining those areas where further effort and resources are required.	Informal Coalition on Financing and Gender Caucus (joint submission)	[replace with] 1. We recognize that it is now time to move from principles to action, while considering the work already being done for implementing the Plan of Action and identifying the areas of such progress, all stakeholders must define those areas where further effort and resources are required, and jointly develop appropriate strategies and implementation mechanisms at global, national and local levels. In particular, we need to identify peoples and groups that are still marginalized in their access to and utilization of ICT.
	To go	1. ...those areas in which progress has been made, or is being made, in implementing...

[28] Documents are available on the WSIS website: www.itu.int/wsis/documents/index1.html.

[29] Compilation of Comments on Chapter One (Implementation Mechanism) and Chapter Four (The Way Ahead) of the Operational Part (Document WSIS-II/PC-2/DT-6 (Rev. 2). Online at: www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/pc2/working/dt6rev2.doc.

challenge was to process such a huge amount of text. ICT and the Internet were used intensively. First, all documents were made available on the Summit website which provides a permanent repository. Second, the Secretariat used a tabulated presentation of participants' inputs, created using tables in a word processor. Although tables are a simple computer application, they provided a highly efficient negotiation tool. Participants were able to survey individual inputs from various delegations.

WORK ON THE TEXT

LCD projectors connected to computers with word processing software have become a common facility in diplomatic conference rooms. How can their use be compared with traditional negotiations? In traditional negotiations, the chairman distributes successive versions of a text and uses printed copies as the basis for negotiations. With the advent of LCD projectors, the negotiated text is projected on a screen. The chairman is usually assisted by an operator who inputs changes in the main text as proposed by delegates. Participants in the negotiations can immediately see the amended version of the text. This tool is particularly effective with the 'track changes option' in Word for Windows, which can show deletions and insertions in the text. This method of drafting was relied on frequently during the WSIS process. It has many advantages compared to traditional negotiations, including a faster negotiation process, simpler control of changes and avoidance of mistakes, and the preservation of a log of proposals and amendments.

18:30—SIGNING THE FINAL AGREEMENT…

Story

Ana is close to success. Her country will host the Environmental Committee. Personally, she is very satisfied, because action will be taken immediately. The oil spill expert will arrive tomorrow. She can defend the 'diplomat's cause' to her environmentalist friends back home. Ana was particularly pleased that she managed to insert an article specifying online meetings as the main *modus operandi* of the Environmental Committee.

The memorandum of understanding announcing the establishment of the regional Environmental Committee is signed by all countries participating in the negotiations. After a small reception, Victor and Ana head to the airport. This was a great success in their careers. Ana departs.

Comments

DIPLOMATIC DIGITAL SIGNATURES

It is very likely that the signing of diplomatic agreements will remain a physical activity. This is usually a very ceremonial occasion and a public relations opportunity. However, one can envisage some sort of 'diplomatic digital signature' as a form of authentication mechanism. The concept of digital signatures has already been developed in the commercial sector and many transactions are conducted with their use.

ONLINE MEETINGS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Another potential use of technology in diplomacy is that of online meetings. Online meetings can replace certain expert and technical meetings conducted regularly in diplomatic centers worldwide. Since full participation in physical meetings requires human and financial resources often lacking in small or developing countries, ICT and the Internet can provide alternative facilities that enable their participation. More inclusive participation of developing countries can have the political effect of reducing the *de facto* inequality between member states.

Can such meetings be conducted completely or partially online? Technically, it is possible. A wide variety of teleconferencing and other interaction tools are available and affordable. The challenges are organizational and cultural. On the organizational side, online contributions should receive proper formal status. For example, the online submission of texts and resolutions should have the same legal status as those submitted through the processes of traditional meetings. Yet, it can be expected that the professional culture will resist, as online meetings can lead to a considerable rearrangement of traditional multilateral diplomacy. Online meetings can be particularly useful in the preparations for face-to-face meetings. A proper interplay between online and traditional meetings will be the most likely development in this field.

20:00—REPORT TO THE MINISTER AND FOLLOW-UP...

Story

After a long day, Ana is back in her office at the Ministry. She wishes to finish her report tonight, while events are still fresh in her memory, and have a long sleep tomorrow morning. Ana can use reporting software that helps her to report in a specific way.

First, the reporting has to be multi-layered, starting from an executive summary and moving deeper into more detail. In this way, everybody will have access to an appropriate level of information, from a busy minister who can dedicate only a few minutes to this report, to desk officers who need to study it in detail. Second, the reporting software requires her to collect all available documents and links. Finally, she will be able to convey her tacit knowledge, which is very often lost in formal reporting. The ICT department will also upload this new entry into its database of 'lessons learned'.

Ana also plans to send follow-up e-mails to the people who were involved in the day's negotiations. Although some of them may not be completely satisfied with the outcome of negotiations, the group has to maintain good working relations. It can be achieved only through communication. E-mail is a good first step.

Comments

Diplomatic Reporting

Diplomatic reporting is a standard and old diplomatic function. It can be traced back to Venice's diplomatic missions in the thirteenth century.[30] Diplomatic reporting has changed substantially over the last few years. Diplomats used to be one of the main sources of information for the sending state. Presently, they have to compete with powerful media.

Nabil Fahmu, the Egyptian Ambassador to the United States, commented on this development in 1999. 'When I came to Washington less than three years ago, I basically decided I would not compete with the media in sending information to Egypt. It was a futile attempt to get it there first. So I stopped reporting most current information. I assumed that people had the news back home because they watched CNN.'[31] As a consequence, he shifted approximately 80% of his communication to an open medium. 'The only thing I actually sent confidentially is opinion— my opinion, somebody else's opinion, criticism of my own government, criticism of the US government. That's all I sent confidentially.' In this way, Ambassador Fahmu solved the problem of the 'diplomatic information glut'. By reporting fewer facts, excluding those that could

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[30] Anderson, M.S., *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy: 1450–1919*, London, Longman Group, 1993.

[31] Netpolitik, p. 6.

be ascertained via modern media, and by providing more comments and reflections, he assured a necessary level of attention in his capital. One of the key challenges for diplomats is to grab the attention of official decision-makers.

DIPLOMATIC REPORTING AND E-TRANSCRIPTS

The role of diplomatic reporting, at least in multilateral diplomacy, may be changed with the introduction of real-time e-transcripts. This innovation was introduced in public meetings of the UN Working Group on Internet Governance in April 2005. All interventions were transcribed simultaneously by special stenographers and displayed on the big screen in the conference room. It was an interesting example of the procedural cross-fertilization in modern diplomacy. After learning about this technique at a meeting of the Internet Company of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)[32] meetings, Markus Kummer, the executive director of the WGIG, introduced e-transcripts in the WGIG working procedures.[33]

While delegates were speaking, transcriptions of their speeches appeared on the screen. Given the centrality of text in diplomatic activities, the e-transcription innovation had an important effect on the diplomatic *modus operandi*. A verbatim, written record made many delegates choose carefully the level and length of their verbal interventions. In addition, e-transcripts provide a verbatim report of international meetings available on the Internet to the general public.

This development considerably increases the transparency of diplomatic meetings and will inevitably have an effect on diplomatic reporting that summarises the findings of the event. Anyone can consult those e-transcripts.[34]

Closing Remarks

INTERNET AND DYNAMICS OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES

One of the main challenges for many diplomatic services is synchronizing the speed of information dissemination with the speed of decision-making.

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[32] ICANN (Internet Company of Assigned Names and Numbers) is in charge of governing the Internet core resources—names and numbers.

[33] Based on discussion with Markus Kummer.

[34] One can find an example of a transcript from the WGIG meeting at: www.wgig.org/ June-scriptmorning.html.

While the dissemination of information is immediate, the speed of decision-making processes has not substantially changed. This discrepancy in the speed of information dissemination and of diplomatic processes is more striking today than it was during the era of slow communications. This gap was particularly noticeable in a few recent diplomatic crises, including the UN negotiations prior to the Iraq war, which lasted for two months, and the recent UN negotiations on the Lebanese crisis. In our story, Ana Gabel managed to synchronize the speed of the two processes. The President of the US Institute of Peace, Richard Solomon, described this phenomenon in the following way:

> Information about breaking international crises that once took hours or days for government officials and media to disseminate is now being relayed real-time to the world not only via radio and television, but over the Internet as well. Ironically, though, for policy-makers, instant dissemination of information about events both far and near is proving to be as much a bane as a bounty. While the Internet has augmented and expedited the information-gathering phase of policy-making, the amount of time available to policy-makers to digest, analyse, and formulate potential courses of action has been proportionally reduced in relation to how much and how fast information is publicly available.[35]

Recognizing Knowledge as an Institutional Resource

The primary element in the success of ICT/Internet projects in diplomatic services is the recognition and appreciation of knowledge as an institutional resource. Such knowledge consists of the knowledge that employees bring with them to their work and the knowledge generated through the activities of an institution. Diplomatic services need to recognize that data, information, and knowledge are their vital resources.

Often, these are rhetorically acknowledged as a primary resource of diplomatic services, but when it comes to day-to-day and organizational issues, this is not the case. Paradoxically, an organization's internal accounting system assigns a higher declared value to a piece of furniture than to top expertise. This situation can lead to enormous institutional and political losses. Once data, information, and knowledge are recognized

[35] Richard H. Solomon, *The Internet and the Diffusion of Diplomacy* (US Foreign Policy Agenda—3030); canberra.usembassy.gov/hyper/2000/0329/epf319.htm.

as the key resources of diplomatic services, the need for greater knowledge management improvements will become obvious.

Creating a Knowledge Culture

One of the biggest challenges of knowledge management is the creation of a knowledge culture. It is human to resist change. At first, people thought that computers would replace them in the workplace. As each new level of technology is introduced, people move from their initial distrust and gradually accept, use, and rely on new systems. While computers have certainly not replaced people, they have changed work patterns considerably.

The core issue is how to make people share knowledge when knowledge itself is a source of power and ultimately a determinant of individual roles within an organizational hierarchy. Diplomacy is a profession in which knowledge is highly relevant to success. The challenge for any knowledge management initiative is to encourage people to share knowledge, yet not to affect their personal position in the organization. Unless individuals are willing to share their knowledge, knowledge management tools cannot be effective. This is the make-or-break point for the success of advanced ICT/Internet projects in any organization, including ministries of foreign affairs.

Horizon 2020[1]

ALDO MATTEUCCI
Former Deputy Secretary-General, EFTA

THIS CONFERENCE HAS DEALT WITH IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES confronting diplomats. Authors have sedulously addressed the diplomatic and management issues of the day. But what about the more distant future of diplomacy—say horizon 2020? How relevant will be today's wisdom? Will our grave thoughts lie discarded in a grave, or will these musings prove to be harbingers of developments to come?

As Greek oracles well knew, predictions are a risky business. They solved the problem by muttering prospective ambiguities—cheap and effective. I could do the same, or I could extrapolate blindly, or build all sorts of implausible scenarios. I would rather address the future in a free-wheeling manner, urging the reader to 'think outside the box', for one thing is sure—the future will be quite unlike today, ambitions of intelligently designing an 'American century' for the world's future notwithstanding.

For good or worse, by 2020 we'll know the answer to some issues of today. Time—like death—resolves and dissolves many a worry. We'll also know, possibly, that there is no answer to some of them. Here are a few examples:

- We'll know whether global warming and ocean acidification are for real or a case of scientists' hysteria.
- Resources will have become patently scarce, or technological ingenuity will have shown its ability to overcome any obstacle.
- China and India will have taken their rightful place in the world's concert of nations—as soloists or in the choir among the many.
- The world's demography will show winners and losers: some countries will have moved into ageing decline, others will flourish due to a young, motivated, and educated workforce.
- We will have progressed in dealing with medical scourges like AIDS and tropical diseases, or we'll be facing a forever losing battle against resistant viral and bacterial strains and mutant illnesses.
- Market forces will have lifted all boats with the tide, or worsened social tensions by creating ever-increasing disparities of wealth. Even before political reactions emerge against the ever-increasing rents of the few, the many will have voted with their feet—unstoppable migrations will have transformed old countries into new.
- Religion will have taken its place in the modern world—either as personal spirituality, or guiding social ideology.
- Economic and technological 'best practice' will have spread world-wide—thanks also to international organizations like WTO, IMF, and IBRD, leading to broad similiarities in economic legislation—or globalization will have been broken into block regionalisms.
- The communication revolution will have made everyone a stakeholder, or drowned meaning in throughput noise.

In a rather philosophical and poetic moment, a past US Secretary of Defense uttered these profound words: 'There are known knowns. There are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say there are things that we now know, we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we do not know we don't know. And each year we discover a few more of those unknown unknowns.' We'll now be guided by them and, quite humbly, we'll concentrate on a few known unknowns in the following.

<center>❦</center>

Will diplomacy still exist in 2020? Diplomacy with a small 'd'—the methods and skills needed to inform and convince decision-makers this

side and that of national borders—will certainly have flourished. Will diplomacy with a capital 'D'—that practiced by today's nation states—have remained, or morphed into something else? To answer this question, we must first usefully reflect on what the states—the diplomats' masters—are likely to evolve into.

Nation states will have radically changed. Robert Cooper[2] has pointed out that we are evolving towards a basically tri-polar typology of states: post-modern assemblages like the EU, nation states in the mode of the 20th century, and failing states in the hands of rogue forces.

Postmodern assemblage—the term is used to denote the fact that the borders are dictated more by evolving common values and the changing dynamism of its economic forces than by geographic, ethnic or other necessities or limits, hence its tendentially open-ended character. The survival of the component states has been secured by having once predatory neighbors struggling for mastery over each other sit together around the same negotiating table within an irreversible framework of shared sovereignty—an evolving mix of supranational and pluri-lateral rules. The countries within the assemblage will skilfully maintain a moving relative balance through diplomatic negotiations over 'policy preferences'. The result will be artful 'fusion' of different national flavors. The EU is the forerunner of such postmodern states. It will be inspiration, not a template for other such constructs.

The core idea is a convergence of diversities replacing hegemonic ambitions. It is also its limitation. This model is unlikely to find an avatar wherever there is a lone and naturally dominant country within a group. The other limitation is the assemblage's tendency to look inward. The negotiating process among the parties tends to turn it into a juggernaut that, once set on an (internally) negotiated course, is difficult to sway. Finally, such an assemblage will tend to express unbending belief in the virtue of negotiations even in the face of evidence that its 'vital interests' are threatened by third countries. Appeasement is the instrument of choice. When challenged by a more brutal reality, diplomats of such an entity are likely to hum wistfully Dr Higgins' aria: 'Why can't they be like us?' Diplomatic skills of an assemblage will reflect both these strengths and weaknesses.

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[2] Robert Cooper: *The breaking of nations. Order and chaos in the twenty-first century.* New York, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003.

Nation states in the 20th-century mould—i.e. born out of the struggle for supremacy in Europe—will be concerned with preserving their identity and territorial integrity against all comers. Such a Western-style nation state is unlikely to change its spots and seek accommodation with others, particularly if it perceives ways of consolidating a historically given geostrategic advantage. Empires have been built on the 'fear of aggression'—beginning with the Roman Empire. Such a Western-style nation state will try to be the strongest and consequently prone to overstretch. Built on an ideological national identity, it will have difficulty in finding accommodations with 'the other'—no matter what the other's intentions. In extreme cases, such a Western-style state might refuse to speak to a perceived 'axis of evil' altogether—requiring lesser countries to act in its stead and to do the inevitable, namely negotiate. No longer going between or above the fray, but acting at their peril as agents for the hegemon, such lesser countries will tend to act as (often unloving) foster parents.

The temptation of military adventure will remain great for the hegemonically oriented nation state. Good intentions will be no bar, rather a cover. Yet conditions have surreptitiously changed to its disadvantage. Total war, based on mass conscription armies, are a thing of the past, both for social and technological reasons. Modern armies may defeat an enemy country in the battlefield but are no longer in a position to occupy it. The mercenary armies of the 17th century were used to 'make a point' and cower the ruler into signing an unfavourable treaty. The post-modern army too is limited to 'making a point'—the 'shock and awe' approach—hoping to subdue the opponent. If the point is not taken—and it hardly ever will, given the people's unwillingness to accept foreign impositions—occupation might quickly degrade as insurgency takes hold. This road hardly has a decent exit.

It is fascinating to note that Cooper fails to envisage nation states able to be accommodating of other nations on a permanent basis. Emerging nation states for him are 'preoccupied with economic development and with internal security and cohesion'. Once this process is completed, the process of struggle for supremacy will begin. Yet South America—despite the occasional meddling or tilting of its northern neighbor—seems to be headed for permanent accommodation. Whether this template might not be conceivable in other regions remains to me an open question.

For a majority of today's nations, accommodation through multilateralism would seem the only path ahead. This evolution might

be said to be 'post-modernism lite'—without the trapping of explicitly shared sovereignty in the framework of a post-modern assemblage but based on a de facto sharing in the framework of multilateral negotiations on a multiplicity of 'policy preferences'. Too small to aspire to regional hegemony, too large and structured to fail—they might yield the stable 'middle class' of nations that ensures humdrum, though solid stability.

Cooper sees a last set of states—*failing states*. These are countries where the governing elite has abused the monopoly of power and thus lost its legitimacy and where 'minimum standards' of statehood and human rights are no longer heeded. Such states may be run by drug lords (Myanmar), or the ruling elite may have abandoned any responsibility for the common weal (Zimbabwe). They may or may not have become havens for rogue elements bent on transnational mayhem. Such countries are unlikely to be left to their own devices, because in a globalized world, we have all become in a fitful and incoherent way, each others' keepers— be it for moral or security reasons. The urge to intervene is great, be it with the word or the sword. Defensive imperialism—be it temporary or enduring, multilaterally backed or unilateral—may be the eventual result. This interventionist evolution would be in derogation of the Westphalian system of unfettered and unassailable national sovereignty, and thus controversial. The problem is the inherent double standard—one may not claim with impunity both a right to intervention and to exceptionalism or even moral superiority.

What about the *war on terror*? To the extent that it is the voice of a major group—be it religious, ethnic, or social—seeking recognition, it will have to be dealt with in the corresponding context. A political solution is inevitable, as the rise of Iran in the aftermath of recent Middle East upheavals shows. To the extent that terror is used (by either side) to push covert aims, success will depend on making the trope stick.

So where does all this leave diplomacy? The world to come is certainly no less complicated than the Cold War world. Just the opposite (I remember UN-ECE meetings where we would convene on a Monday and adjourn in mutual recriminating silence for a week—no diplomatic skills needed then, just an inordinate tolerance for boredom). Diplomatic skills will evolve in reaction to this changing structure of international relations

regarding pre-, post-, and modern states, becoming more diverse and embracing challenging complexity. Diplomacy will expand into uncharted substance.

On the one side much of the day-to-day negotiating will have become technical and 'more of the same'. In these areas the locus of the negotiation is likely to migrate from MFA to technical ministries, once these have acquired a minimum of diplomatic manners. Trade was the first to do so. There is no reason that other ministries cannot achieve this. A minimum of national policy coherence is needed. This laudable (if somewhat quixotic) goal does not necessarily imply a unique locus of negotiation. So expect diplomatic capabilities to diffuse and change, as many actors coming from widely different backgrounds get into the act. Expect diplomats to withdraw from these activities.

Relations among states on security and related vital interests will evolve markedly between now and 2020. Involvement—nation building—will become a core mandate. Whether this is done multilaterally under the auspices of the UN or a regional organization or by an individual state makes little difference to the task at hand. What counts is the capability to achieve the goal. Let's face it—these skills hardly exist today. The classical nation state practiced a 'hands-off' policy of reciprocal respect of sovereignty. Colonialism—whatever its stripe—has left a telltale odor. At the moment we have much 'do-goodism' drowning in a sea of perfection, or bullying, be it of the technocratic or autocratic variety. So diplomacy is confronted with a daunting challenge, for which there is no precedent. Nurturing and fostering legitimacy and empowerment abroad has never been really tried, despite the stream of jargon that the emerging definition of the task has triggered.

Expect much slow and painful learning by trial and error here. If all foreign policy is domestic policy, the converse is also true. To the owner of a hammer, all problems look like nails. 'Orientalism' is the intellectual term for this truism. Expect nations to want and export 'their' approach, and express non-plussed hurt when their good intentions are rebuffed. Misunderstandings will emerge between post-modern and nation states as much as between the two groups and failing states. But then, solving intractable problems has always been the core business of diplomacy.

Cooper has spoken of 'defensive imperialism'. That would seem to have been a recipe for disaster ever since Lord Auckland tried to subdue Afghanistan in 1837 or the Americans reached Baghdad four years ago.

For defensive imperialism aims not to (re)build a nation, but to freeze it in Bantustan-like impotence.

On the process side, much is changing. More interest and interested groups are getting into the diplomatic act—the plethora of stakeholders that orbits around the decision-makers in an attempt to bend their ears and minds. Celebrity diplomacy is the latest rage—a true bonfire of the vanities—as can be attested by the photo op where Bono has pushed Tony Blair into a bemused background. As the state articulates internal structures better to deal with its growing complexity, it gives these (often self-appointed) stakeholders a voice. As their positions mature, so will be their sense for the whole. The (r)evolution of the Green Parties from single-issue and radical opposition to willingness to bear responsibility for the whole is a case in point. Expect then the political decision-making process to be more diffuse, complex, and chaotic—and unpredictable. Information technologies that spread any news or rumour in real time will compound the problem. As stakeholder groups fight for control of the metaphors, one can expect the side that 'says it loud and early' to have the ground advantage. Competition for 'the truth' will increase. Public diplomacy—winning the hearts and minds—is the task ahead. Diplomacy has just become more complex and demanding, not withered away.

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> '*What's in a name? that which we call a rose*
> *By any other name would smell as sweet*'
>
> —*Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii. 43

Diplomacy is immortal—not its structures. The Prince of Lampedusa recognized this when he married off his son to the beautiful daughter of a town merchant. Power—particularly new power—manifests itself in people, and people cluster around structures and bend them to their purposes. Structures, just like mud walls around a city, are weak defences against powerful attacks. Expect structures to crumble, vanish, adjust, morph, and accommodate new power equilibria.

How does this insight square with the ambition of a very integral, holistic requirement of external policy management? Hitler, the very embodiment of integral and holistic policies, destroyed state structures. He did not need them. Checks and balances are the sign of a healthy

and vibrant democracy. And competition is a precondition for innovation. Even more, competition and articulated structures are essential for reality to percolate back up to power, especially where power is by necessity isolated from reality. Vertical structures are a sign of decline and neo-classic boredom.

Neither vertical nor chaotic management are viable solutions. Expect very unique local adaptations to the problem of balance between stakeholders in and out of government, and the need for information flow. Some countries will opt for a unified foreign ministry, reflecting their preference for budgetary economy. Others will keep separate structures, wishing to give real interests independent voices in the cabinet.

In what directions will external representation networks evolve? The likely trend is a differentiation along diplomatic, commercial, consular, and foreign aid functions in reaction to increasing complexity—possibly even leading to separation.

Consular functions are a case in point. As more individuals travel, they will be more exposed to risks—from the catastrophic to the self-inflicted (drugs, sex tourism, hasty marriage). At another level, immigrants are no longer expected to fend for themselves in a new and often deeply prejudiced environment and essentially to surrender their identity to nativist pressures. A tentative multiculturalism is emerging that engages the countries of origin and of choice. Diasporas will retain or regain many of their original rights—like the vote in national elections in their place of origin—as they exercise increasing influence there thanks to uncompromising ideology backed by newly acquired wealth.

Globalization has transformed the challenge of exports into a humdrum activity for many firms. Whole service industries have sprung up to assist newcomers. The *external commercial networks* of diplomatic missions are at a disadvantage compared to the private sector. To what extent 'national branding'—which the state can provide at great cost—will provide a real competitive advantage for home-based firms and thus help the national economy, remains to be seen. For the moment, it is an unavoidable fashion. Attracting *foreign direct investment* is high on just about any country's official agenda, thus making it likely to be a zero-sum game. But then, knowledge that gambling is less than a zero-sum game has never stopped gamblers from investing fortunes in their star.

Diplomacy may be defined as the art of winning influence abroad (and at home). As the number of opinion/decision-shapers and takers

increases, the task becomes more complex—even daunting. How best to reach those actors in a foreign country is an issue that demands an in-depth knowledge of local conditions and corresponding adaptations. The 'one tool fits all' approach—a *diplomatic representation* at the court of the (now democratic) ruler—is a thing of the past. The current difficulties of the 3000-plus American diplomats locked up within the Green Zone without more than a handful of Arabic-speaking colleagues are a case in point.

During the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, beleaguered diplomats within the Legation Quarter wrote to each other formal notes when desperately asking for urgent supplies. Rituals impart a perception of understanding with which better to deal with a puzzling reality. Reality is the supreme corrosive of rituals. Expect the last bastions of form to crumble as our mercantile age prises effectiveness above all else. And why not? All rivers carry water to the sea, but none is like the other. Who is to say that the fast river hurtling over cliffs is better than the slow meandering stream? Even a lake has its uses—like driving a downstream hydropower project. Who is to say that a rational river control system is more efficient than a multiplicity of channels that absorbs the impact of a sudden flood? What we might expect in 2020 is less a unified structural model than a multiplicity of adaptive systems, reflecting the specific configuration of each host country, and the shifting policy goals of the home countries.

The world is not divided manicheally into 'knowns' and 'unknowns'—rather into 'puzzles' and 'mysteries'. Puzzles arise from lack of information, mysteries from our failure to make sense of the information we have. So let me conclude with the following quote:

> Several years ago, Admiral Bobby R. Inman was asked by a congressional commission what changes he thought would strengthen America's intelligence system. Inman used to head the National Security Agency and was once the deputy director of the CIA. (...) His answer: revive the State Department, the one part of the U.S. foreign-policy establishment that isn't considered to be in the intelligence business at all. In a post-Cold War world of 'openly available information', Inman said, 'what you need are observers with language ability, with an understanding of the religions, cultures of

the countries they are observing.' Inman thought we needed fewer spies and more slightly batty geniuses.[3]

In order to prepare for the Horizon 2020, it seems to me, diplomats only have to do in novel ways what they've always done best: *comprendre et faire comprendre*—to understand and explain. If only diplomats are confident enough of their skills to practice them passionately and modestly, they may look back in fifteen years' time in bewilderment at how they have transformed the world as they have been transformed by it.

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[3] Malcolm Gladwell, 'Open secrets. Enron, intelligence, and the perils of too much information'. *The New Yorker*, 8 January 2007.

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DiPLO

THE WORLD OVER, FOREIGN MINISTRIES ARE ENGAGED IN ADAPTATION AND REFORM. THIS VOLUME IS A COLLECTION OF PAPERS PRESENTED AT A CONFERENCE HELD IN GENEVA ON 31 MAY–1 JUNE 2006, BY DIPLOFOUNDATION AND THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WHICH EXAMINED DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THESE REFORMS.

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'While specialized ministries enter the diplomatic stage "en masse", Foreign Ministries are looking at themselves, and asking, what is our cutting edge, our niche? This reader analyses the internal as well as external strengths and weaknesses of Foreign Affairs' Ministries. It concludes with the idea that diplomats are best equipped to deal with certain issues on the agenda put forth by globalization, provided that they are able and willing to adapt to the constantly changing world around them. This book is an informative volume for the young diplomat or the interested general reader on "what needs to be done".'

Paul Meerts: Diplomatic Consultant
The Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael

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