

Crossroads of Diplomacy: New Challenges, New Solutions

Marija Manojlovic and Celia Helen Thorheim

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Conference “Crossroads of Diplomacy”, 21-22 June 2007

Foreword

On 21-22 June the Clingendael Institute held the 1st The Hague Diplomacy conference, the first of a series of two-yearly conferences under the auspices of The Hague Journal of Diplomacy and co-sponsored by the city of The Hague. This report, written by two postgraduate rapporteurs, is based on the papers and discussions at the conference. No reference is made to the contributions of individuals, but the report gives a fair impression of most presentations and the debates that took place during a lively gathering with 40 scholars and practitioners from more than a dozen countries in Europe, North America and Asia. It also identifies areas of research where a lot of work remains to be done by academics and questions that are bound to occupy the minds of diplomats and policy-makers with an interests in the broader trends that impact on their daily professional activities.

The Hague Diplomacy Conferences are meant to give an impetus to the agendas of students of diplomacy. They bring together leading and junior scholars, as well as practitioners, from all over the world. In particular the conferences are a platform for the presentation of state-of-the art research on innovation in diplomatic practice and developments in theory. The Hague Conferences also provide opportunities for debates that are of immediate concern to ministries of foreign affairs, diplomatic services, and the rapidly widening circle of organizations, groups and individuals that have a stake in diplomacy. As co-editors of The Hague Journal of Diplomacy, we seek to ensure that the best research on diplomacy is showcased in HJD as the premier refereed journal for the study of diplomacy.

As conference hosts, we are very grateful to the two very able conference rapporteurs, Marija Manojlovic and Celia Thorheim, and we would like to thank all speakers and participants who have made the 1st The Hague Diplomacy Conference an enriching and inspiring gathering.

Jan Melissen and Paul Sharp (conference hosts)

Introduction*

Although global political and social systems are forever changing, the relevance and importance of diplomacy as a tool of international relations remains as pressing as ever. Ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) and their professionally trained diplomats remain highly significant actors in the conduct of international affairs, despite fundamental changes to the Westphalian state system. The institution of diplomacy has indeed shown remarkable resilience and an ability to adapt to change rather than withering away as some observers have suggested. Although it has changed shape to accommodate new actors, concerns and technology, the basic element of diplomacy remains the same, namely the resolution of international conflicts in a peaceful manner by means of communication, negotiation and information-gathering.

Aside from resolving critical conflicts, diplomacy as a way of conducting international relations is also highly relevant within the fields of international business and the non-profit third sector. Although diplomacy in its traditional sense is mainly associated with the foreign affairs of the sovereign state, it has now become equally relevant to perceive of diplomacy as a business that not

* This report of the 1st *The Hague Diplomacy Conference: Crossroads of Diplomacy* (21-22 June 2007) makes no references to individual contributions. Rather, it intends to extract the main points from various papers and oral presentations, as well as discussants' comments and general discussion. The two rapporteurs would like to thank all article writers, conference organizers and the editors of *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* for their comments on the first draft of this report.

only involves foreign ministries, their diplomats, embassies and consular offices. Applying diplomatic measures in these untraditional areas has come to imply that relations among companies, NGOs, institutions and states are being carried out based on negotiation, communication, courtesy and respect. Moreover, traditional diplomacy has adapted to changes in society such as higher levels of democratization, empowerment of the general public and more attention being paid to morals and values. Diplomacy thus now includes a new focus on public preferences, human rights, cultural differences, international law, transparency and accountability. This has undoubtedly helped to maintain diplomacy as a highly relevant and preferred method of conducting international relations among states and non-states alike.

Another aspect of diplomacy that appears to remain quite stable is how diplomatic corps in both small and large capitals tend to merge into collective entities. This indicates that there are perhaps some common rules and regulations that, when put together, constitute something of a diplomatic culture. The diplomatic corps of the UN in New York is an especially interesting case. As a practically universal organization comprised of delegates from almost all countries in the world, the UN is the only global forum for problem-solving and conflict resolution. With representatives from so many different cultures, religions and regions, one would expect nothing less than chaos and confusion in the halls and meeting rooms of the organization. However, although decision-making is slow and tedious, it is guided by highly developed norms of appropriate behaviour that are based on traditional principles of diplomacy. Common knowledge of these rules, as well as of the more informal procedures, enables the different delegates to predict the behaviour of others in spite of cultural differences. This explains how a cross-regional diplomatic culture manages to exist in an international system that is in a process of constant change.

Based on diplomacy's apparent ability to manage international change, could the contemporary rules and conventions guiding diplomacy provide the structural framework needed to help maintain international stability and peace outside the UN headquarters as well? If better coordinated among the relevant state and non-state actors, the extensive international networks of embassies, organizations, companies and MFAs could indeed make up the foundation of a system promoting peaceful interaction and cooperation around the world. Indeed, joining public and private resources in synergetic and symbiotic relationships would foster the overall problem-solving capacity and increase societal participation in the processes of degovernmentalization and privatization of global relations.

If one therefore asks the question of whether the status of diplomacy as a tool of foreign policy is changing, one can at best hope for an ambiguous answer. On the one hand, the main goals and processes of diplomacy remain stable; diplomacy is still about solving conflicts and reducing frictions in a peaceful manner. On the other hand, the environment surrounding diplomacy is changing, and as a consequence also diplomacy's functions. If academics

and professionals continue to regard diplomacy as a universal method of conducting peaceful relations instead of a policy tool that is strictly reserved for MFAs, diplomacy will continue to uphold its relevance and perhaps evolve into a more complete and coordinated system for peaceful conflict resolution.

This report reflects four main areas of discussion at the 1st The Hague Diplomacy Conference: trends in diplomatic representation; the challenges involved in the current rise of consular affairs; developments in sub-state diplomacy, in particular the diplomatic activities of regions or the component states of a federation; and the current debate on public diplomacy, as well as some brief reflections on diplomacy today from outside the European Union.

Representing Diplomacy and Diplomatic Representation

Representation has always been referred to as one of the central elements of diplomatic study and practice. However, it seems that the concept of representation is still difficult to articulate, primarily because of the multiplicity of meanings attached to it as well as uncertainties with regard to practices stemming from it. Not only are there complications in defining theoretical aspects of representation, but also those associated with practical issues, such as what is being represented and to whom. In its conception and execution, representation contains a certain symbolic dimension and serves as a symbol of differing approaches to understanding diplomacy as an activity. Namely, the narratives concerning the evolution and nature of diplomacy have used the concept of representation in various, sometimes conflicting, ways in trying to define past, contemporary and future roles of diplomacy in international relations. Depending on what meaning is attributed to diplomatic representation and how it is understood, different conclusions on the relative importance of diplomacy can be reached. Hence, the character, value and relevance of diplomatic representation lie at the heart of debates about the significance of diplomacy in a changing world order.

In order to determine the utility of diplomacy in the contemporary world, different sides argue that residential bilateral diplomacy is either becoming increasingly irrelevant or that it is still upholding its importance. Such debates have been conducted under the veil of much broader discussions concerning the changes facing the international system and their impact on the role of the

state and its agents. Until recently, debates over globalization and the concept of global governance have chiefly predicted the decline of the role of the state. We are increasingly witnessing new trends in this respect. The emphasis has shifted towards projecting an image of a more complex regulatory environment in which a diverse range of entities interact in a 'polycentric' world order. According to the new narratives, governments still play a major role and, as a consequence, concerns with the way in which states' agencies operate remain relevant.

Bearing in mind the complexity of the contemporary international environment, it is clear that the structures of diplomacy, besides playing an indispensable role in the articulation of states' international policy goals, also represent components of the evolving network of global governance. More importantly, transformations in the structures of diplomacy indicate the ways in which the state is responding to and managing change. Following this line of reasoning, we can take 'national diplomatic systems' (NDS), which are defined as the machinery that each state develops to pursue its international policy goals, and examine which changes they have gone through and how they are responding to pressures from their domestic and international environments. One way to take note of these changes, especially those associated with the modalities of representation, is to observe the evolution of patterns of interaction between the NDS and the global diplomatic network (GDN) of which they are a constituent element. Representative structures operate at the boundaries of these two systems and are reflective of changes in both environments.

Analysing how diplomatic representation is adapting to the changing environment of the international system can be approached through observing changes and transformations in two basic concerns of NDS: access and presence. Access is associated with the objectives and goals of representation — access to the centres of decision-making power and nodes of influence. Presence, on the other hand, refers to the modalities and operation of representation. The evolution of diplomatic representation has always involved and been marked by dialogue between these two concerns. Throughout history, access and presence have been linked and regarded as virtually synchronous — namely, access demanded presence in a physical sense. As the relationship between NDS and the GDN is becoming more and more complex, the link between access and presence, although not in any sense rendered meaningless, is increasingly being challenged. This is especially true within the highly institutionalized environment of the European Union. In the multifaceted milieu of relations among EU members, the importance of the role of ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs), particularly the role of bilateral representations within the EU, and missions to third countries and their relationship with the Commission delegations is being re-examined. In the light of the above-mentioned relationship between NDS and GDN, observing and examining the pressures for change within foreign ministries and their foreign services will hence help us to understand the link

between the two dimensions of representation and how it is being shaped and moulded in the contemporary world order.

As already pointed out, representation has different meanings. Nowadays, however, advocacy has become the main function of representation and the role of diplomats as advocates has become crucial. In any case, representation and its networks must be seen as the main linking mechanisms between the two constructions of NDS and GDN. Changes in the modes and functions of representation are indicators and are responsive to transformations in the environments of the two systems (NDS and GDN) — they constitute ‘dialogue’ between the two. Considering the changes that both environments have gone through, therefore, the main questions are: how is diplomacy represented today, what should be the main functions of diplomatic representation and how should it be conducted in order to meet the complex demands of the contemporary world order? However, it should be kept in mind that the changes in how diplomacy is presented and conducted have not been sudden. Moreover, it seems that they represent a ‘roundabout’ marked by the circulation of ideas, where continuity is an important element.

World-scale developments prompted by the forces of globalization — which include increased pressures for deterritorialization, decentralization of decision-making, the proliferation of actors and issues and the diffusion of political, economic and social governance — have not rendered the issue of representation irrelevant. On the contrary, it has become increasingly central. The need for representation on various levels of the polycentric and multilayered world order has become an imperative, and at the same time imposes challenges to diplomacy at the NDS, as well as the GDN levels. A multiplicity of arenas (global, regional and local networks) and actors capable of acting on the international scene (international organizations, NGOs and businesses) have thus brought about a necessity for defining who can be engaged in diplomacy, how diplomacy should be conducted, and where representation should take place. Consequently, identifying nodes of influence and the quest for access have also become the most important challenges and most demanding tasks, considering the shifting centres of gravity in the international system. In this respect two possible types of nodes of influence within the GDN can be discussed — geographical (for example, Washington, London and Geneva, etc.) and functional (such as international agencies).

The diversity and multiplicity of the functional nodes of influence represent a special problem for NDS in terms of coordination and representation. It requires MFAs to adapt to the changing environment, and to reinvent their role in the global system as well as in the national diplomatic system. At the same time, these developments have given rise to other sectoral departments and domestic ministries, which are, because of their functional focus, increasingly capable of acting on the international scene. The same holds true for NGOs and other functional agencies, as their influence on the international scene has significantly increased and become recognized by

other actors, mainly because of their flexibility and level of expertise in specific areas. It therefore comes as no surprise that one of today's major narratives puts emphasis on the role of MFAs as coordinators or integrators in the field of foreign policy-making and conduct. As a consequence of contemporary developments, to be a diplomat in the global environment also requires being a diplomat in the domestic environment. However, even though representation has become diffused through the inclusion of non-MFA departments, it should be pointed out that MFAs have rarely held the exclusive role of 'gatekeeper'— the only link between the domestic and external environments. One of the continuing features of an MFA's operating environment is the rivalry between it and other agencies with external competencies (particularly since the late nineteenth century). There is hence not much novelty in the fact that MFAs are being challenged by, and to a certain extent become obliged to cooperate with, other actors in the process of foreign policy formulation and international conduct. Nonetheless, it seems that, as a consequence of globalization, this feature has become more visible nowadays than before.

In addition, as the concept of the nation-state's sovereignty is changing and adapting to the realities of the new world order, the roles of representation and diplomats — being defined through sovereignty — are changing as well. The traditional image of diplomacy and diplomatic representation as mainly being linked to relations between governments is to a great extent becoming outdated. New stakeholders with new agendas have emerged on the international scene, which demands reconsideration of the fundamental rules and operational principles of diplomacy. The nature of representation is becoming increasingly diffuse as the NDS and the GDN demand responses from each other. The focus of representation has now widened to encompass a variety of networks, with the aim of reflecting new power centres, as well as demographic and economic changes. Earlier concentrated on bilateral representation and mission diplomacy, the focus of NDS is now turned more towards plurilateral, multilateral and mixed residential and mission representation. Consequently, NDS are going through a continuing process of redefinition of structures in terms of functional and geographical organization, and are becoming more and more fragmented. Establishing links and partnerships among civil society organizations, businesses and private actors on the one hand and NDS agencies on the other has become common practice. In addition, utilization of new information and communication (IC) technologies has enhanced communication and, as a result, domestic and international arenas have to a great extent become a single information network with a real-time distribution of messages via media and internet.

Where are all these changes leading, what is the world going to look like, and what are the roles of diplomacy and representation going to be within it? How should the world be organized so as to enable efficient communication

between the different groups of actors? There are three possible scenarios and consequent implications for the role of diplomacy in the international arena:

- 1) Organized pluralism (global solidarity): the boundaries between arenas of the international system would be clear and the role of diplomats would resemble that of civil servants;
- 2) Polycentrism: a world order marked by multiplicity of networks, actors and centres of decision-making powers; in this type of environment diplomats would follow their instincts and come up with solutions as the changes encounter them; and
- 3) Political dispensation: diplomats would play their part in the formulation of a new world order, mapping out a new system — what it is going to look like is still uncertain.

It is still early to say which of these scenarios will emerge. Some argue that characteristics of all three are already recognizable. Indeed, we are facing the emergence of new practices, actors, issues and arenas that are changing the existing environment of the international system. However, so far most responses to these changes have been provisional and context specific. Still, some regularities and patterns of behaviour are showing through, it remains to be seen which way they will point.

Out of the Dark and into the Sun: Consular Affairs

Four relatively recent changes in the world system are significantly affecting the status of consular affairs as part of the MFA's agenda. First, more people travel to more places for more reasons. Second, global media is constantly scrutinizing the performance of governments both at home and abroad, especially in times of crisis and when they are dealing with sensitive issues. Third, non-state actors on the international arena have surrounded the state, and relations are now conducted in a more multilateral and complex way than before. The increasing integration of the EU's member states on external affairs is the clearest example of this. Finally, as people have started to move around more, this has also increased the impact of cross-border crime such as smuggling, violence, illegal immigration and human trafficking.

All of these changes pose new challenges to the conduct of consular affairs, and have at the same time drawn new attention to this somewhat disregarded part of the diplomatic function. Both inward and outbound services have been affected: the former concerning the support provided to domestic constituents who are travelling abroad; and the latter referring to the issuing of documents and visas to foreign publics. While some MFAs seem reluctant to adapt to this new reality, avoiding doing so is likely to lead to costly, embarrassing or even detrimental situations in the future. However, MFAs should not only focus on this defensive motivation when adjusting their consular affairs. Providing efficient consular services to citizens and foreigners also has the added value of improving MFAs' reputations and

credibility. Thus, an offensive approach to the improvement of consular affairs can also be seen as a way of gaining public support and approval for the foreign policies conducted by the MFA.

The main purpose of the consular office has always been to assist and promote the interests of its domestic citizens on foreign territory. Although this mission has remained relatively unaltered since its origins in ancient Greek and Roman times, the changing environment surrounding the consular office has affected its perceived importance as a part of a territory's larger diplomatic mission. The consulate used to be the main representative body of one principality on the territory of another, and its affairs included the handling of economic, political and legal issues, mostly on behalf of elite segments of its domestic society. However, the emergence of the sovereign state in the seventeenth century limited the consulate's authority, and the handling of high-stake political and economic affairs between states became increasingly institutionalized and was transferred to more professionally trained diplomats and ambassadors. Furthermore, as travelling became less attached to trade and political purposes, the main target group of consular services gradually shifted from the affluent elites to the general public. Both of these developments contributed to the marginalization of consular affairs in comparison with the more high-stake performance of diplomatic missions.

As mentioned above, contemporary trends are now drawing more attention to the responsibilities of the consular office. Having the general public as its main clientele is no longer a reason to downplay the importance of delivering high-quality assistance to those who are in need. Democratic development has enabled publics to pressure governments in a more efficient manner, and the civil liberties of congregation and free press have been especially helpful in ensuring political accountability. It has thus become harder for the MFA to hide details of its affairs from the public eye. In addition, travelling abroad has become a mainstream activity and the quality of consular services is therefore often of more concern to the general public than the obscure affairs conducted by diplomats. A clear example of this could be seen in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster in South Asia in late 2004, when several European MFAs came under severe criticism for their lack of adequate response to the situation. The Europeans directly affected by the event were mainly regular tourists, and surviving family members received much support from the public, which was able to follow the situation hour by hour across the world. The conduct of consular affairs had thereby become society's window into the world of diplomacy and this had significant consequences for the general images of MFAs.

Consular offices are also regaining influence in areas normally considered part of high-level politics, particularly when it comes to issues related to security and border management. With people travelling more than ever before, it is becoming more important to control their movements, yet at the same time also more complicated to do so efficiently. Crimes such as child abduction and human trafficking are becoming more frequent, as are

incidents of violent attacks on civilians committed by foreigners. Rather than only approaching these issues from above, through summits and diplomatic negotiations, they can potentially be dealt with at the more pragmatic level of consular services. Not only are consular offices in charge of issuing visas to foreigners, they are also the most capable of keeping track of their own citizens and their behaviour abroad through their many representative offices around the world. As a natural development of these functions, many states are now looking into increasing international cooperation on consular services, with special focus on improving information exchange, so that in the future it will be possible to gain a more complete picture of global cross-border movements.

This leads to another development that has helped to bring consular affairs back into the spotlight, namely the increasing rate of European integration brought on by the EU. Although the external relations of EU member states have remained relatively autonomous of the communitarian policy-making of the Union, a more integrated position on foreign affairs has gradually been implemented through the establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy in 1992, and more recently the not-yet-ratified Constitutional Treaty. The underlying goal of these developments has been to turn the EU into an increasingly cohesive political actor on the international stage. Collectively, this would give the member states more leverage, but at the same time they have to surrender some of their sovereignty over what are considered to be vital issues for most states, one of which is consular affairs.

Coordination and harmonization of the EU member states' consular affairs have been approached incrementally since the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, when the concept of European citizenship was created. In practice, this means that an EU citizen is entitled to protection and assistance by the consular offices of other member states in countries in which their own state is not represented. The creation of a virtually border-free zone within the Union through the Schengen agreement also means that issuing visas to third-country citizens is no longer based on reciprocal agreements between two states, but rather on a common European approach to external countries. These developments pose great challenges to EU countries' consular offices, as well as to the conduct of their diplomatic relations in general. Not only is the number of assistance and protection cases that are dealt with by the offices likely to increase, they will also have to adopt new common rules and protocols for action.

The biggest challenge might still be to achieve a change in the mindset of officials dealing with these issues. Consular offices have to accept that they will be providing services abroad to citizens other than their own, which requires a great deal of trust and a sense of unity that is perhaps not yet widespread in the EU. The need for a common approach is also clear when it comes to problems such as the unbalanced distribution of immigrants in the EU. The richer countries are becoming apprehensive about large-scale migration flows, as the majority of new citizens in the EU tend to establish

themselves in countries with higher wages. Eastern European countries, however, might be more liberal when granting visas, since they know that foreign citizens will most likely only use their country as a stopover destination. Because of these kinds of difficulties there are frictions between officials who prefer a limited and pragmatic approach to cooperation, and those who envision a single EU consular service catering to all EU citizens all over the world. Potential advantages to the latter approach, if sufficiently harmonized, include higher quality and more accessible services, more coordinated visa policies, improved external border management and fewer incidents of inefficient and costly overlapping.

It is not only EU countries that have something to gain from increased cooperation and coordination of consular services. As citizens become more demanding and situations more complicated, MFAs have to recognize that they can no longer base their consular affairs on bilateral and *ad hoc* arrangements. Through cooperation with international institutions, non-governmental organizations, travel agencies, insurance companies, mass media and so on, MFAs will be better equipped to ensure high-quality services to both domestic and foreign citizens. More specifically, detrimental situations could be avoided if the number of contact points around the world was increased, if publics were better informed about their rights and responsibilities, if MFAs increased the visibility of their affairs in general and, finally, if consular offices were better prepared for emergency situations by having better networks in their receiving countries.

As mentioned above, such measures will not only benefit the public, but also the MFA. It is quite likely that the consular office will continue to be the public's window into diplomacy, especially now that diplomats and academics are finding ways to adapt to this reality. By continuing to find new and inventive solutions to the new challenges, the MFA can thus use this increasing visibility of consular affairs as a pragmatic form of public diplomacy.

Researching Sub-State Diplomacy: The Road Ahead

International activity by sub-state actors has recently attracted significant attention in the field of international relations, and raises questions about the *conventional* image of diplomacy that saw states as the main actors in this field. While central governments in the past had almost exclusive competences in the field of foreign policy-making and conduct, the situation today has changed considerably. As international and domestic environments have become more intricate, non-central authorities within states have felt the need to 'go abroad' and defend by themselves their political, economic and cultural interests on the international scene. Confronted with the emergence of new actors on the international scene, scholars therefore had to place them within the existing categorizations of actors and examine their influence on diplomatic practice.

In the face of the first waves of globalization and the proliferation of actors in the international arena, there was a tendency to categorize players into two groups: state and non-state actors. However, these categorizations usually reflected the long-lasting belief that states are the most important and the only relevant actors in the international arena. All other actors were seen either as not influential or not powerful enough to alter the supreme position of states, or as mere creations of state activity and interests. On the one hand, putting all non-state actors into one group is misleading in terms of their *nature*, the *factors* that influenced their emergence and the *instruments* and *strategies* employed by them, but is to a certain extent justifiable considering

that the ‘newcomers’ — such as social movements, non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations — do not use traditional diplomatic methods and channels reserved by the states. On the other hand, the international activity of non-central authorities within states cannot readily be dismissed as significantly different from that of states. Much like states, non-central authorities are institutional/territorial entities. They chiefly have to rely on state-centric networks and mechanisms of traditional diplomacy that tend to be closed to them, especially because international activity on the part of non-central authorities is regarded by states as an interference into their reserved domain. At the same time, even though sub-state entities to a great extent rely on the diplomatic methods and practices used by states, it has to be kept in mind that they are simultaneously changing those same practices by challenging the primacy of states in the process of foreign policy-making. Hence, what kind of actors are we talking about?

The simplest definition of ‘subnational entities’ is that they represent actors of a territorial nature, which have a more limited scope in means, radius and personnel, etc., and which are located ‘below’ the level of central government. The term ‘subnational entities’ therefore refers to a wide range of actors, perhaps various regions, municipalities and cities. Policies that they develop in the field of international relations can run parallel to those of the state, be complementary to it, or even, in some cases, conflict with the central government’s foreign policy course.

In the context of domestic structural factors and forces that give rise to sub-state entities in the realm of international relations, it should be kept in mind that there exists an enormous variety among countries in terms of the constitutional/judicial, political and economic position of these actors. Sub-state entities have different degrees of autonomy; a greater degree of autonomy enjoyed by the sub-state entity allows for better development of international activity. In addition, a greater level of self-government is usually accompanied by the constitutional framework that enables regions to control and manage some aspects of international affairs. An explanation of the great variety in domestic environment settings can be found in the history of a certain territory, its cultural and ethnic composition, its economic features, as well as other particular challenges with which it has been/is confronted. It is thus not easy to make broad generalizations and comparisons across countries.

Consequently, presentations on sub-state diplomacy during the conference mainly encompassed activity in the sphere of international relations of those actors usually referred to as ‘regions’, ‘component states of a federation’ or ‘federated entities’. The goal was to gain better understanding of this phenomenon.

One of the first scholars to attempt to find an appropriate term for this type of sub-state diplomacy was Panayotis Soldatos, who invented the term ‘paradiplomacy’ as an abbreviation for ‘parallel diplomacy’. The concept was adopted by many others, although there were also those who had objections

to the term, primarily because, as they argue, it implies that the activity of regions in the sphere of foreign policy-making and conduct runs parallel to that of the states, which is not necessarily the case. Later, the study of sub-state diplomacy continued through the writings of Ivo Duchacek, who stressed that the activities of sub-state entities on the international scene differ greatly in form, intensity and frequency. They range from technical and economically driven actions to politically inspired interventions. Duchacek differentiates between three categories of regions' foreign policy actions, based on their geopolitical dimensions: cross-boundary; trans-regional paradiplomacy (institutionalized contacts between non-central governments which are not geographical neighbours); and global paradiplomacy (direct contacts between non-central governments of different countries, between a non-central government of another country, or between a non-central government and a private actor). Nonetheless, in this respect it is also important to mention one more activity of non-central governments in the field of international relations, which is increasingly apparent and used by these actors — that is, their engagement in the work of multilateral organizations and their programmes. Considering that the regions' activity on the international scene is an irrefutable fact and as a phenomenon is becoming increasingly widespread, the vital question at this point is therefore what has contributed to these developments? It must be pointed out that generalizations are extremely difficult to make, but three main variables can be identified in this respect: economic globalization; the internationalization process; and regional integration and nationalism.

Factors giving Rise to Sub-State Diplomacy

- 1) One of the main consequences of globalization, increasing interdependence and especially the rise of international trade regimes is the erosion of states' ability and capacity to control national economies. A new international division of labour that is prompted by international reorganization at the economic level is increasingly being marked by competition between sub-government states and large metropolitan areas for the acquisition of shares in world markets. As transnational corporations play major economic roles in the global economy, sub-state governments are forced to make favourable conditions for these business enterprises in order to give them positive incentives to settle or remain in their area. Nonetheless, the needs for faster development and economic growth have urged sub-state governments to devise strategies to promote exports and attract foreign direct investments. Regions have begun to compete in order to acquire investments and the positioning of decision-making centres. However, there are positive and negative sides to this trend: the positive side is that it promotes innovation, efficiency and collective allegiance; one of the downsides, on the other hand, is that

competition between regional governments creates an environment that is conducive to conflicts within the country. In any case, regions increasingly claim that they are more capable and better equipped than the national capitals to manage economic issues and matters of job creation.

The phenomenon of regions acting in the economic sphere of international relations should not, however, be exaggerated. Not every region competes to attract foreign investments and even fewer are successful in this venture. It is not an easy task to fulfil the demands of investors and it requires stability in the political and economic regime, as well as an efficient and impartial judicial system. The list does not end here. Important factors also include access to a broad market, quality communication and transportation systems, consistent success of local businesses, real-estate costs and availability, the price of manpower regulation and many others. It is therefore no surprise that only a handful of regions are capable of success in undertakings like this. Regions such as Quebec, Catalonia and Flanders are trying to establish a development model that is based on partnership with their governments, their economic agencies and the private sector. In these cases, however, the neo-corporatist strategy is reinforced by a culture and a political project that is designed for region- and nation-building.

- 2) The second factor that has given rise to sub-state diplomacy is the process of internationalization of domestic policies and vice versa. Policy areas that usually fall under the jurisdiction of sub-state governments, such as environmental issues, public health, communication, social services, transportation items, disputes over land use planning and cultural issues are increasingly becoming matters of international concern. Sub-state authorities are worried that international negotiations conducted by their central governments will affect their fields of competence. Regions consequently strive to establish international positions for themselves, because failure to do so would give central governments a free hand to act on their behalf. One of the most prominent examples of regions setting up their own policy courses are European regions, which have been given greater political leverage within the institutional framework of the European Union.
- 3) Even though the international environment has become increasingly conducive to regions' activity, not many regions are capable of achieving success in the international arena and getting their preferences accepted on the level of central governments. However, the variable that seems to be differentiating the successful and most notable cases of paradiplomatic activity from the others is the existence of nationalism. The existence of minority nations with international agendas is quite a common phenomenon; namely, in order to strengthen and invigorate nation-

building policies, regional leaders will usually set up international strategies aimed at gaining support for their nationalist projects with the ultimate goal of gaining international recognition. That is one of the reasons why these nationalist movements develop a more forceful paradiplomatic strategy. However, international projections can also be a strategy for enhancing the leader's image and position on the domestic level. Another distinguishing characteristic of nationalism is the formulation of the nation's interests. This process is not an easy task and usually involves conflict with the central government. Activity by regions in the field of foreign policy-making and conduct is perceived by the central government as an intrusion into its exclusive field of competence. Losing monopoly in this field gives central governments a reason to worry about the nation's foreign image. On the other hand, a hostile attitude by the government towards regional leaders facilitates social mobilization against the central authorities and reinforces the creation of a distinct identity.

Normalization of Paradiplomatic Activity

Sub-state diplomacy is not only a consequence of the above-mentioned changes in the international and domestic environment, but is also a form of political agency that has an instrumental/utilitarian dimension as well as a symbolic political meaning. Over recent decades the paradiplomatic activity of regions has become a political reality that is difficult to contain. It seems that today it is undergoing a process of normalization that is marked by at least three symptomatic manifestations:

- 1) The international activism of regions is mainly a characteristic of the sub-state governments of federal countries such as Canada, Belgium, Germany, the United States or Spain, or quasi-federal systems such as Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Russia, India, Indonesia and many others.
- 2) Regardless of discourse, constitutional framework and employed practices, paradiplomatic activity is to a great extent adopting equivalent forms. This process of standardization has facilitated the creation of dense networks of transregional communication among different subnational authorities, as well as the translation of a wide range of particular initiatives to a variety of institutional interlocutors, both of which enhance the process of policy learning and diffusion across the world.
- 3) A variety of states in different regional contexts are consequently adapting to these trends and establishing different legal and institutional mechanisms in order to recognize these developments. As a result, the international activism of regions is becoming incorporated into the foreign

policy schemes and diplomatic mechanisms of central governments. International organizations have also developed means of including the activity of sub-state authorities within the framework of their programmes and decision-making processes. Still, the schemes developed by states are not fully uniform and differ greatly from country to country. The most important aspect of this tendency is whether states will be obliged to consider the treatment that they offer to foreign constituent entities, as well as the treatment that they feel should be offered by other states to their own constituent units. This is precisely the issue that will be explored in the following paragraphs.

The perception of diplomacy as an exclusive privilege of sovereign states is more a political and legal discourse than the actual consequence of empirical reality. The fact is that diplomacy as we know it today is rooted in the customary practices of communication among different political entities that have existed throughout history. These same practices have been going through transformation processes as they have been adapting to the demands of the changing environment. Diplomacy defined as the exclusive attribute of sovereign nation-states is therefore a result of historical transformations. In its origins, diplomatic law has always been customary and that still remains so. Following this line of reasoning, it is plausible to consider whether the increasing involvement of sub-state authorities in the field of international relations all over the world is going to acquire features of a new customary law.

Formation of a customary law is composed of two elements, one objective and one subjective: the existence of a practice carried out by the community of states; and a common conviction or belief that this practice is legally binding. The formation of a conviction/belief that a certain practice is a custom is a gradual process in which states can first consider a practice as legally irrelevant, then legally useful, later on legally emerging and finally legally binding. However, the creation of a custom greatly depends on the duration and uniformity of the practice and is usually not a result of deliberate law-making but of necessary adaptation to the functional and normative demands of the world system.

It is in this sense that we see the spread of sub-state governments' paradiplomatic activity as indicating the creation of a new international custom in the field of diplomatic law. As mentioned above, central governments were reluctant to accept international activism by their constituent units in the sphere of foreign policy. Despite that, in the most diverse regional contexts all over the world states have developed a variety of legal and institutional mechanisms to accommodate this reality into their foreign policy mechanisms. The explicit or implicit consent of sovereign states is what has contributed to the extension of paradiplomatic activity on the international scene. Making a new global norm or custom is not an easy process and to a great extent depends on the will of states. However, it is the

pervasive dynamic of the new global political economy and its transformative force that drives the process towards normalization of the regions' paradiplomatic activity, not the states' sovereignty or the courts' convoluted decisions.

The Road Ahead

The questions that remain to be studied are: where do we currently stand in the study of paradiplomacy, and where should we go from there? In the following paragraphs, many questions will be left unanswered. The aim is to provide direction for more thorough research in the future of this phenomenon, which is increasingly becoming an indispensable part of diplomatic activity on the international scene.

Early studies on paradiplomacy were to a great extent concerned with the distribution of powers and competencies between the central government and regional authorities and mainly provided information on the position of sub-state entities within the constitutional framework of a given state. As a result, we are today in possession of advanced knowledge of the framework within which sub-state entities can develop their foreign-policy positions and conduct their diplomatic activities. As far as the empirical literature is concerned, paradiplomacy can be categorized into three groups: descriptive and mainly oriented at investigating and reconstructing single cases; comparative; and international relations' perspectives focused on the changing world order and its impacts on the national diplomatic apparatus. Finally, there have been some important efforts aimed at theory-building. Some of those have identified paradiplomatic activity as representing part of a much more complex process of multi-layered international politics and diplomacy. Others have placed emphasis on the structural changes (external and internal factors) and how they give rise to the activity of sub-state governments in the international arena. However, a comprehensive theoretical framework that can help us to understand better the external activities of sub-state governments is still to be constructed. The possible way ahead would be to bring the theory and practice of paradiplomacy closer together and to confront both deductive and inductive research in a more explicit manner.

Now that sub-state diplomacy has been 'around' for a while, it would be interesting to explore how it is perceived by other actors and whether appreciation of paradiplomatic activity has changed over time — namely, that the focus of research should be broadened to include not only sub-state authorities and their central governments, but also other central governments or third parties that are 'receivers' of the paradiplomatic activity. Issues concerning the conditions under which 'third parties' are more or less willing to cooperate with subnational governments, as well as the ultimate goal of paradiplomacy (developing an international personality or more modest objectives), are just some of the possible directions of new research. If we go

deeper into the specifics, a distinction should be made between two dimensions that can be researched: the instrumental level and geopolitical level. The instrumental level is more focused on practical issues, actual processes and the practices of paradiplomacy; while the geopolitical level turns our attention more towards evaluative aspects of the paradiplomatic activity of the sub-state authorities, with the aim of placing it in a broader context.

Looking at the instrumental dimension of paradiplomacy, it would be interesting to research the practical problems that practitioners are facing on an everyday basis when coping with limited resources in terms of means and personnel, as well as problems associated with their specific structural position on the international scene. The real challenge in following this direction of research lies in identifying informal mechanisms used by the people dealing with this sort of work, considering that the informal practices might be more important or at least more effective than the formal ones. One more problem related to this issue is tension between discourse and practice — that is, the discrepancy between regions' proclaimed goals/objectives and actual achievements, and ways of evaluating possible success. On the other hand, research could also be directed towards examining whether 'receivers' of the paradiplomatic activity are actually paying any attention to the efforts made and whether they appreciate how paradiplomacy has changed over time.

On the evaluative level, there is a need to reconsider the foundations on which we have so far been constructing hypotheses and gathering and interpreting empirical data. Until recently the frame of reference was based upon a territorial (mainly state-oriented) perspective. States as the main units in the sovereign space, division between domestic and international affairs and spaces, and states as all-encompassing entities of society are just some of the conventional assumptions within the field of international relations. Contemporary forces of globalization suggest a relative decline in importance of 'territorial space' in the international system and we are increasingly facing a process of deterritorialization (that is, economics, politics, culture and ecology, etc., are becoming less associated with the territorial space). On the other hand, the entrance of other territorially based entities into the sphere of international relations, such as micro-regions, suggests the opposite process of reterritorialization. The question is hence whether a process of boundary shifting is taking place or new functions are being assigned to existing boundaries and finally whether the regions play an important role geopolitically. It is an irrefutable fact that economically strong regions are important in this respect. However, is having a strong economy enough reason to engage in paradiplomacy, or does a strong economy have to be accompanied by the distinct regional identity, language and culture?

Finally, are we exaggerating? Even though it is 'increasing', is sub-state diplomacy as a phenomenon rather marginal? Some would argue so, primarily because the issues with which the regions are dealing are those that fall into the portfolio of 'low politics' (economic affairs, development cooperation,

human rights, agriculture and sports, etc.), while the so-called 'high politics' issues are still dealt with by the central government. However, this line of reasoning is only valid if we do not take into account that boundaries between the issues are becoming more and more permeable. As the boundaries between what is domestic and what is international are blurring, so the role of traditional diplomacy is changing and becoming increasingly marked by the new actors operating within the sphere of international relations, some of which are sub-state governments. Nonetheless, it should certainly be pointed out that only a handful of regions are capable of acting successfully on the international scene, and that only a limited number of them are capable of formulating consistent regional interests and consequently a set of strategies in pursuance of them. The ultimate question is whether the regions' increased paradiplomatic activity is enough evidence that the international environment is undergoing fundamental changes?

What is New about Public Diplomacy?

Public diplomacy has traditionally been viewed as a communication function that is designed to garner support among people abroad for a nation's ideas, values and practices. It is often considered a resource of 'soft power', which maintains that the public's feelings are won by convincing them of the attractiveness of a state's culture and values. This practice is not a new element of MFAs' foreign policy strategy. During the Cold War, for instance, both the US and the Soviet Union tried to communicate with each other's publics in order to weaken the opposing government's stand. However, even though the potential benefits of public diplomacy have been recognized for a while and to a large extent remain the same, recent changes surrounding MFAs have brought about aspirations for a change in the way that public diplomacy is conducted.

Two main changes in the international system are affecting public diplomacy in a way that might render the current practices outdated and ineffective. First, people are not as easily susceptible to propaganda-style messages as before. Current information about global and local events can be accessed almost anywhere at any time, and people are also able to broadcast their own opinions and views to anyone who is willing to listen. It is therefore much harder to get the public's attention and it is also harder to convince them to accept your message since they can check its validity against other sources. At the same time, people have more influence on world affairs than ever before through the growing international system of non-state actors, whose power often lies in numbers rather than economic or political resources.

Second, international affairs are more complex than before. States are no longer the only actors that should be reckoned with on the international scene. Other entities, which are less tied to territory, are influencing the world order, and many of these are able to pose serious threats to peace and stability. In addition, tensions are rising across and between religions, cultures and regions, and conflicts tend to span over large areas that are not restricted by state borders.

In this context, public diplomacy, in its traditional sense, does seem a little far-fetched. How will a state be able to stand out and catch the attention of its target audience? And if it manages to get that far, how can it convince the public that it has a superior message, when in reality situations are so complex that they do not have simple solutions at all? One thing is certain: the way that public diplomacy has traditionally been executed will not suffice. Public diplomacy has typically had the format of one-way and asymmetric communication, implying that the state sends a message to a foreign audience that is designed to influence its attitudes in a way that is beneficial to the sending state, but with little gain for the targets themselves. Common ways of conveying such messages include broadcasting, educational programmes and informational movies, etc. Since there is little space in this approach for the engagement of foreign publics in genuine debate, the sole purpose is that the target audience is supposed to change its behaviour, but not the sending state. Since audiences are becoming increasingly informed and demanding, as well as diverse, the chance of them buying in to such a scheme is less probable than before.

States cannot simply choose to ignore public diplomacy altogether either, as this will make it much harder for the state to achieve its foreign policy goals. Given that foreign publics have power to affect the policies of their governments in a way that benefits the external sending country, civilians are just as likely to use this power to harm this country's interests. Alternatively, the foreign audience can circumvent its government and take independent measures to oppose another country's policies. Non-governmental embargoes and boycotts are good examples of such actions taken by the public. In other words, since the public has become more powerful, it now makes more sense than ever for a state to try to gain approval for its policy choices, not just from its own domestic audience but also from foreigners.

In order to do this efficiently, states should adjust how they approach public diplomacy. As more MFAs start to realize this, increased attention has indeed been given to the development of the so-called 'new' public diplomacy. Instead of simply sending a message and hoping that the audience will accept it, new strategies focus on a more symmetric and two-way method of communication. It is no longer just about promoting policy but about involving and consulting other players in the policy development process. Whereas the state before would formulate and execute its foreign policies first and then sell them to the audience afterwards, two-way communication now helps to ensure that the implemented policies are in line with the preferences

of foreign audiences. The basic idea is that both the state and the public will benefit from communication and the establishment of long-term networks and relationships. The question is thus how does a state go about setting up a strategy for the 'new' two-way public diplomacy?

Inspiration and solutions can perhaps be found in other fields. For instance, relatively recent developments within the public relations' discipline mirror the changes happening within public diplomacy. From being primarily centred on one-way propagandistic efforts, the focus has now shifted to relationship management. The idea is that any organization can benefit from maintaining mutual beneficial relationships with the key publics on whom its success or failure depends. Instead of measuring the quality of a relationship by how much one side is gaining, the value lies in building and maintaining long-term relationships where both sides gain. If this theory of relationship management is applied to the desired connection between the state and its foreign public, it would be possible to move away from the current one-way asymmetric approach and perhaps achieve more noticeable results from public diplomacy efforts. Furthermore, applying public relations theory to diplomacy will provide the field with concepts and strategies that are already used by other non-state actors.

What is sometimes lacking, however, is a practical way of achieving such a two-way relational strategy. One suggestion is to take advantage of the new and advanced innovations within communication technology. If a state is to gain the attention of a public that is bombarded daily with information from all directions, it needs to use the channels that reach them most efficiently. Measures must also be taken to ensure that the public has a way to respond to the state — that is, a forum for clear and constructive dialogue must be set up. For example, the Dutch MFA has experimented with online blogs and chat rooms, as well as computer games that provide information about the Netherlands. Documentaries and videos about life in the Netherlands are also being shown to key audiences around the world, in particular to people who might be interested in moving to the Netherlands. Efforts are also being made to avoid negative publicity in international media, while at the same time propping up positive events and citations. If properly coordinated and managed, these instruments might collectively help the state to get its message out to foreign publics. However, the response channel must not be forgotten, and proper measures should be taken so that information coming in to the MFA does not go to waste.

There is also the option of working together with private actors on this matter. International corporations, non-governmental organizations and PR and advertising agencies all have extensive experience in public relations, and many of them also use diplomatic methods actively to promote their causes and interests internationally. By cooperating with these actors, the state can achieve a more coordinated and complete strategy, and thereby have a better chance at making a successful transition to two-way public diplomacy. There are several possible degrees of interaction between the state and private actors

when it comes to sharing competences and services. On the one hand the state can bring private actors in to the MFA; on the other hand states can outsource the creation of a public diplomacy strategy to private firms. Between these, an MFA can use private venues such as the World Economic Forum, the Olympic Games and World Expos to promote its image and receive feedback. Potential problems related to the public-private merger are issues concerning mistrust, authority and loyalty — that is, who does the message really come from and is the right message being conveyed to the right audiences?

Finally, even though they are not the main targets of public diplomacy, an MFA should not overlook its domestic citizens when formulating a strategy of constructive two-way communication with foreign publics. As mentioned earlier, civil society has become less restricted by inter-state borders and has therefore formed extensive networks on the international arena. The MFA should therefore take advantage of these connections and base its approach on the work already done by its citizens — that is, by involving the domestic public in foreign policy-making. Because such opportunities are becoming more available to MFAs, the traditional vertical organizational structure between the MFA and the public is becoming less useful. Domestic outreach such as this is thought to be an essential part of any public diplomacy programme in an increasingly horizontally organized world.

The ideas and developments mentioned above show that there are indeed measures that a state can take to improve its public diplomacy strategies and to move from asymmetric to symmetric communication with its key audiences abroad. Furthermore, MFAs undoubtedly seem positive to the idea of mutual beneficial relationships that are based on dialogue and cooperation. In reality, however, few MFAs have done research related to the practical aspects of new public diplomacy and even fewer have implemented strategies actually to achieve the goal of two-way communication. In other words, the theory behind new public diplomacy remains largely normative in an instrumental sense. It seems that most states are not yet ready to adapt to the preferences of foreigners, even if this creates a win-win situation in the long run. A general assessment of international relations today shows that states still act first, then attempt to sell their policies afterwards. And in the cases where the MFA does in fact listen to the ‘advice’ given by foreign publics, it will most likely be on low-stake issues that do not threaten its vital interests.

Public diplomacy is thus a main activity of the MFA, but it can be questioned to what extent there is anything ‘new’ about it. Unless it adapts to the new reality of the international system, public diplomacy risks becoming outdated and irrelevant. Unfortunately, the new public diplomacy that is discussed here remains mostly on the drawing board, except for a few encouraging cases of actual implementation. There is no doubt, however, that the international system stands to benefit from increased information-sharing and dialogue, and there are indeed many examples of unfortunate policy choices that could have been avoided if the state had listened to its foreign

audiences. Academics and professionals alike should therefore continue to focus on this area of diplomacy, since any progress is likely to yield high benefits.

Diplomacy Today: Non-European Perspectives

Diplomatic Turn in US Foreign Policy?

‘We must use American diplomacy to help create balance of power in the world that favors freedom and the time for diplomacy has come’, said Condoleezza Rice in her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when she became US Secretary of State. Since then, some shifts in US foreign policy have been occurring, not only at the practical level, but also at the rhetorical level. Those shifts are not necessarily good or bad, but change is evident, and as many argue it has to do with Rice’s concept of ‘transformational diplomacy’. Lately we have been observing changes in US foreign policy, such as a shifting emphasis from headquarters towards the field (getting out into the field, paying more attention to countries with large populations, such as India and Indonesia, etc., and moving diplomats out of some of the large embassies in the EU). The purpose of these changes is not merely country representation, but also transforming these societies with the ultimate objective of spreading democracy — a pretty high concept foreign policy. But what has contributed to these changes?

One possible explanation is to observe foreign policy and diplomacy as quite distinct phenomena. Shifts in US foreign policy can hence be understood as, and correlated with, shifts in the origins and sources of the foreign policy itself — from the centre to the periphery, from headquarters to the field. The same may hold true for other countries. The consequences of

having diplomats in one person's field posts are likely to lead to feedback to the capital, suggesting certain adjustments and changes in strategies that could result in shifts in actions towards that country. Of course, these changes are to some degree facilitated by advances in technology, of which much was said during the conference. Not only will diplomacy therefore become compensation for foreign policy, but the origin of the foreign policy itself. In the case of the US, the origin of the policy will be missions to the countries, being those who have best insight into the local situation and who are able to suggest what the proper approach should be. The time when one policy was applied to huge numbers of countries — such as the policy of 'containment' — has passed. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of countries in the world has rapidly proliferated and their significance in the international arena has grown. Different societies demand the adaptation of approaches to each and every one of them.

It seems that foreign policy, influenced by these changes, has become more responsive. As diplomats start getting out in the field and encountering reality, they report it back to their capitals. This sort of operational approach is likely to become a way of explaining changes that are occurring in foreign policy — that is, diplomacy replacing foreign policy. However, a problem arises in connection with this approach, which may be defined within the framework of principal-agent theory — that is, a relationship between the policy-maker and the diplomat, namely that according to the principal-agent theory, the principal is always concerned about whether the agent is following orders. There is also one more difficulty in this regard, and that is the asymmetry of information that exists between the principal and the agent. Translated into the context of the relationship between the headquarters and diplomats in the field means that 'headquarters' know what they want while the 'field' might not know, but at the same time the 'field' knows what the local reality is. What usually happens is that the 'field,' meaning the diplomat, does not recommend any policy; it only advises what the consequences of particular policies would be. But it should be the other way around — diplomats should become the source of the policy.

This moral hazard problem experienced by the headquarters — that is, concern about the behaviour of the diplomats that act on its behalf — is also experienced from the other side. Someone who joins the foreign service has to bear in mind, all of the time, every single one of the evolved values that are historically derived and consistent with past tradition. However, the question that comes to the fore is: to what extent should the diplomat follow the rules and execute orders, and where is the limit? If a diplomat advises that the consequences of a certain policy would be disastrous and yet headquarters does not change its course of action, what should the diplomat do? Is there such a thing as duty of dissent? Finally, seeing a change in diplomacy as it gets the upper hand has not yet happened, but there are some indications of shifts in that respect. Missions are increasingly becoming engaged in creating policies, and this phenomenon is becoming more and more pervasive.

Study of Diplomacy in Asia

It seems that the study of diplomacy has been and still remains a Western phenomenon. Yet there is so much happening outside the Western world that deserves to be studied and researched. Nonetheless, the study of diplomacy has not moved forwards much in Latin America and Asia, etc.

In Asia, in countries such as China, Japan, Singapore and Thailand, diplomacy is increasingly acquiring a definition that is distinct from foreign policy. The boundaries of diplomacy have been expanding, as it has widened its coverage. In general, the environment has become more and more conducive to the use of diplomacy in terms of relaxation of the centralized ways of creating foreign policy. Asking for feedback and taking into consideration policy advice from the field is becoming a practice adopted by many. However, these trends should not be blown out of proportion — the balance of power between the MFAs and their missions still very much favours MFAs. Ambassadors still receive instructions and execute policies that they have not helped to draft. And this holds true not only in Asia, but also all over the world.

Norms of Diplomatic Engagement — Australia

Diplomatic norms are significant in providing a predictable framework for diplomatic engagement. Here it is not primarily, however, of the norms contained in the Vienna Convention, but also customary understandings that have defined patterns of diplomatic engagement between many different actors over a long period of time. It is precisely these norms that have been a focus of study by analysts interested in diplomacy.

Some norms are created in such a way that they advantage one actor over another and the question is what moral status these norms should be able to claim. In connection to this, one more issue deserves to be mentioned — is there a balance and should there be one between the norms and self-interested calculations when the two collide? An example can be found in the recent negotiations between Australia and East Timor over demarcation of the maritime boundary between the two countries and more implicitly over the allocation of revenues from maritime sources. Australia has refused to accept the competence of the International Court of Justice in settling this dispute. It seems difficult to see another reason for such a position, other than that Australia's legal case was rather weak. Australia hence denied East Timor the option of pursuing settlement of the dispute through legal channels. In this way Australia has tried to protect itself from certain norms of international law. On the other hand, the balance between norms and self-interest on East Timor's part was difficult, because the stakes were much higher for it. These negotiations would dictate a bulk of its state budget's

revenues in the foreseeable future, so it had to play any card that it had in order to maximize its returns from these negotiations. During the negotiations, East Timor therefore leaked the content of the confidential communication, which worked rather well in its favour, as it created sympathy within Australia's civil society for the cause of East Timor.

Looking at the above case, we have to raise the question of the responsibility of those training the diplomats. Is their responsibility to present future diplomats with the evolved set of norms and advise them to follow those under all circumstances, or is it that those training the diplomats have a much deeper responsibility to identify to some degree interests that may motivate different parties to adopt a particular position with regard to the negotiation? Should they merely offer a positive analysis or should they offer contingent advice about the relationship 'means to ends'? Should they offer strongly normative counsel to individuals about the appropriateness in some circumstances of ignoring evolved patterns of behaviour or interactions if it is in their interest to do so and that interest seems to be legitimate? It seems that those training the diplomats need to move beyond offering only positive analysis and think about the implications of different advice or recommendations that have been offered to their students.

Russian Perspective

One other issue that this conference touched upon is the gender problem in diplomacy. Not many women have diplomatic careers. In Russia at the moment only one ambassador is a woman. Not very long ago in some countries, such as the United Kingdom, women who worked for the diplomatic service had to resign after getting married. However, in recent decades the situation has started changing for the better, and not only in the field of diplomacy, but also in politics in general. We are witnessing more women represented and certain standards of representation, such as specific quotas, are being adopted around the world.

One both old and new phenomenon in Russian diplomacy is also the sub-state government's activism in the field of foreign policy. It is old in the sense that during the communist era, especially at the time when the United Nations were being established, Russian republics had competences in the field of foreign relations. Stalin was trying to get fifteen seats in the UN by promoting the activity of Soviet republics on the international scene and giving them the right to maintain independent relations with other countries. However, at the time, under the rule of the totalitarian regime, there is no question that they were not controlled by central government. Freedom of independent action was unimaginable for Soviet republics. Today, on the other hand, in trying to catch up with the rest of the developed world, Russia is to a great extent promoting the activity of its regions in the field of international relations, particularly in the sphere of economic relations.

Finally, some new developments with regard to public diplomacy are happening in Russia. Contrary to when the social, political and economic sphere of activity was defined through ideology and when propaganda was a common way of communicating messages, nowadays Russia is trying to incorporate public diplomacy into its corpus of diplomatic instruments.

Epilogue

Throughout history, diplomacy and its practices have been changing and adapting to the demands stemming from continuing transformations of the international system. This process has always been marked by shifts in ideas, norms of behaviour, and actual/informal practices that create new international customs and conventions. Therefore the need to discuss new trends of diplomatic behaviour and emerging norms does not come as a surprise, taking into consideration contemporary complexities of the international environment, in which a multiplicity of actors operate and which demand new solutions for new challenges.

The definition of diplomacy as the exclusive domain of sovereign nation-states is becoming less and less relevant. Nowadays, new actors on the international scene are increasingly using practices employed by states with the aim of furthering their interests in the international arena and putting new issues on the global agenda. Not only do the ‘newcomers’ emulate states’ behaviour, but they also develop new mechanisms and instruments of diplomatic conduct, thus influencing the entire corpus of recognized diplomatic practices. In return, faced with new challenges, states are inventing ways of adapting to and managing the change. Some of these efforts have been described in the previous paragraphs. How successful they are remains to be seen.

Scholars of diplomacy have observed and identified many of these new developments and are now examining their impacts on diplomacy and its practices. Some examples include: the changing nature of diplomatic representation; greater emphasis on the accountability of those engaged in the

field of foreign policy-making and conduct; the increased importance of consular affairs and its impact on the reputation of MFAs; international activism by sub-state governments; a focus on creating networks between MFAs and different domestic and international/public and private actors; engagement of governments in a dialogue with foreign civil societies and a consequent focus on the utilization of public diplomacy, etc. However, there is still much to do on the theoretical level. Where there were some theory-building efforts, they were mainly concentrated at the normative aspects of the changes – how new practices ought to be. In this regard very little has been written about practical implications.

Turning our attention to the practical level, we should consider how prevalent and recognized are these new trends? There is no doubt that new techniques and methods of diplomatic behaviour that are prompted by changes in the international environment are, more or less uniformly, being used all over the world in most disparate regional contexts. The same holds true for new actors in the international arena. However, as the main actors on the international scene, states still seem reluctant to recognize these developments formally. At the same time, pushed by the demands of the international environment, almost every state has to some degree incorporated new mechanisms and instruments into its foreign policy apparatus and started cooperating with the wide range of new actors. New solutions to new challenges are slowly emerging and becoming increasingly used on the international scene, creating new sets of informal international customs, although when these are to be formalized still remains uncertain. The pace of change has been rapid and even though, as many will argue, only half a century has passed and more time is needed for the creation of new norms and rules of conduct, the time for a new Vienna Convention has perhaps arrived.

Appendix: List of Participants 1st The Hague Diplomacy Conference
'Crossroads of Diplomacy', 21-22 June 2007

Wil	Bolewski (speaker)	Special Representative for Universities	German Foreign Office	Berlin	D
Noé	Cornago (speaker)	Associate Professor of International Relations	University of the Basque Country	Bilbao	SP
David	Criekemans (speaker)	Postdoctoral Researcher International Politics	University of Antwerp	Antwerpen	B
Mai'a	Davis Cross (chair)	Assistant Professor of Political Science	Political Science Department	Hamilton, NY	US
Pierre	Debaty	Head Brussels Office, Unit Professional Training	DG A-HR Strategy, European Parliament	Brussels	B
Michel	Delesalle	Policy Adviser	Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs	Brussels	B
Anthony	Deos (discussant)	Senior Account Executive	Roepke Public Relations	St. Louis Park, Minnesota	US
Hylke	Faber	Editor	Martinus Nijhoff Publishers	Leiden	NL
Ana Mar	Fernández Pasarín (speaker)	Assistant Professor	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Bellaterra-Barcelona	SP
Kathy R.	Fitzpatrick (speaker)	Associate Professor Director Graduate Studies in Public Relations and Advertising	DePaul University	Chicago	US
Bernhard	Garside (discussant)	Consul-general	British Consulate-General Amsterdam	Amsterdam	NL
Maaïke	Heijmans (speaker)	Research Fellow	Clingendael Institute of International Relations	The Hague	NL
John	Hemery (chair)	Director	Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies	Oxford	UK
Alan	Henrikson (speaker)	Associate Professor of Diplomatic History	The Fletcher School	Medford	US

Appendix: List of Participants 1st The Hague Diplomacy Conference
'Crossroads of Diplomacy', 21-22 June 2007

Brian	Hocking (Speaker)	Professor of International Relations	Loughborough University	Loughborough-Leicester	UK
Ellen	Huijgh (speaker)	PhD Student	Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme	The Hague	NL
Pauline	Kerr (chair)	Director of Studies	Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy The Australian National University	Canberra	AUS
Jovan	Kurbalija	Founding Director	DiploFoundation	Geneva	CH
Silvyia	Lechner	Researcher	University of Wales	Munich	D
Donna	Lee	Senior Lecturer	School of Social Sciences University of Birmingham	Birmingham	UK
Halvard	Leira (speaker)	Research Fellow	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs	Oslo	N
William	Maley (speaker)	Director	Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy Australian National University	Canberra	AUS
Marija	Manojlovic (rapporteur)	Postgraduate student	Leiden University	Leiden	NL
Jan	Melissen (chair, discussant, conference host)	Head, Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme	Clingendael Institute of International Relations	The Hague	NL
Stéphane	Paquin (speaker)	Professor	Département d'histoire et de sciences politiques	Sherbrooke	CAN
Geoffrey Allen	Pigman (speaker)	Visiting Research Fellow	Political Economy	Vermont	US
Karolina	Pomorska	PhD candidate	European Studies Program Department of Political Sciences University of Maastricht	Maastricht	NL

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Kishan S.	Rana (speaker)	Senior Fellow	DiploFoundation , Malta and Geneva	Delhi	India
Shaun	Riordan (chair)	Director	ZEIA SL	Madrid	SP
Dirk	Roctus	Vice-Chief of Cabinet	Cabinet of Flemish Minister Bourgeois	Brussels	B
Pieter	Ronsijn	Junior Researcher	Flemish Centre for International Policy	Antwerp	B
Pau Puig	Scotoni (discussant)	Consultant	c/o Bollnäss Folkhögskola	Bollnäs	SW
Paul	Sharp (chair, discussant, conference host)	Head of Political Science	University of Minnesota Duluth	Duluth	US
Celia	Thorheim (rapporteur)	PhD candidate	University of Leiden	Leiden	NL
Maarten	van Alstein	Teaching Assistant/PhD Candidate	Department of Political Science	Antwerp	B
H.P.	van der Woude (speaker)	Head of the Foreign Policy Communications Division	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	The Hague	NL
Anja	van Hoek		Martinus Nijhoff Publishers	Leiden	NL
Geoff	Wiseman (speaker)	Professor	School of International Relations, University of Southern California	Los Angeles, California	US
Mina	Yakop	Research Assistant	Ministry of Economic Affairs	The Hague	NL
Tatiana	Zonova (speaker)	Head of the Department for Diplomacy Studies	Moscow State University International Relations	Moscow	RUS

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