

Foreign Policy Assignment

What is Foreign Policy?

- It is a set of goals/interests that a country defines for itself, and which influence how that country interacts with other members of the international community.
- Every country has specific set of national interests that shape the behavior of this country in the international system and its interactions with other states.
- Foreign Policy – usually- exists in multiple forms; declared and undeclared goals/interests.

What Influences Foreign Policy?

- Systemic Level of Analysis (the global circumstances that may exist; which shape the behavior of nation states, ex. the global persistence on trade liberalization, global condemnation of international terrorism).
- Domestic Level of Analysis: determinants that exist within the country itself (type of governance, size of military, economic structure and economic strength, the presence of non-state actors), NGO (scope of activities, financial constraints, relative influence on States) or Corporation (scope, nature and profitability of operations).
- Individual Level of Analysis: believes that the decision making process is primarily concentrated within the hands of leaders (and public figures); the decision makers. Analysis of the sort tends to focus studies of their physiological behavior.

The preparation of a foreign policy is divided into several steps.

Step 1: Delegation Profile

i. General Background:

History:

- Date of independence/state establishment
- Former colonies/ relationship with colonial powers
- Internal struggles / civil wars
- Recent conflicts / wars / crises

Geographic Attributes → *GEOPOLITICS*:

- Location

- Natural resources
- Neighboring countries

Social Attributes:

- Population size
 - Demographic composition
 - Religions
 - Languages
 - Ethnicities
 - Literacy
 - Wealth distribution
 - Host/Source of refugees
 - Health and well-being indicators; including malnourishment, disease prevalence rates, hospital capacity
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- Population size
 - Demographic composition
 - Religions
 - Languages
 - Ethnicities
 - Literacy
 - Host/Source of refugees

Political:

- Ruling regime (head of state, political party, ethnic/religious belonging)
- Internal stability
- Electoral system
- Opposition groups
- Interest groups and NGO activities
- Armed militia/terrorist groups

Military:

- Army size, strength and equipment → Military budget
- Military defense pacts
- Previous military interventions
- Involvements in international disputes/crises

ii. Economic Profile:

Economy:

- Currency
- GDP
- Unemployment rate
- Poverty and Inequality rate
- Major industries and sectoral contributions
- Main exports (type and quantity)
- Main imports; dependence ratios
- Agricultural performance and commodities
- Trading partners
- Foreign aid (sources of foreign aid)

iii. International Relations:

- Sphere of influence: how influential is your country in the global political and economic arena?
- Relations with regional and international powers
- Significant International and Regional bilateral relations/treaties/pacts/agreements
- Membership in international or regional organizations (political, economic, social, military etc)
- Role within UN (financial contribution, sponsorship of programs/resolutions)
- Fundraising role in international organizations, such as the IMF and World Bank

This information can easily be obtained through various online sources.

These include:

The CIA Factbook:

Provides a good starting point for getting a “feel” of your delegation. Has both textual and statistical briefing of countries around the world.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

Nationmaster:

Has plenty of useful indicators and rankings to offer. Check it out for country-specific statistics ranging from foreign aid as percentage of GDP to share of world trade in radio broadcast receivers.

<http://www.nationmaster.com/>

IMPORTANT:

- Please **DO NOT** rely on Wikipedia as your only source of background information for your delegation. It should only serve as a starting point. The websites mentioned above provide far more timely and accurate data for research purposes
- You do not need to memorize the information making up your **delegation profile**. Just read it carefully to have a better feel of your country's agenda, and always keep a copy with you in the conference. Your profile information will be very useful in some conference situations
- The **delegation profile** is not all of the foreign policy!!!!
- Relying solely on the delegation profile will mean that you will not be able to engage in meaningful debate in the conference

Step 2: In-Depth Position Analysis

Here you use the background information obtained through your delegation profile to determine your country's position regarding the topic(s).