

7 Diplomacy diffused

States will remain the single most important international actors. But as the impact of new technology and globalisation grows, a wider variety of participants will have international influence. This may be fuelled by further erosions of public confidence in governments, international organisations and global business.

(The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2006))¹

Sovereign states have never had a monopoly of diplomacy. Even in nineteenth-century Europe, where formalized diplomatic practices were generally accepted and respected, governments had recourse to unofficial intermediaries and non-state institutions for the achievement of foreign policy objectives. But the two decades which have elapsed since the end of the Cold War have witnessed an unprecedented rise in the number of international actors whose role and influence extend beyond the traditional confines of the state. The collapse of once firmly established hierarchies has, as so often in periods of rapid political change, been accompanied by a broader dispersal of centres of power. Cultural, ethnic and religious movements have acquired a new global significance; civil society organizations (CSOs), be they charities, professional bodies or single- and multi-issue pressure groups, have assumed a higher profile on the world stage; and transnational banking and business corporations have tended increasingly to look towards states as facilitators rather than regulators of their otherwise independent actions. As a result there has been a further and dramatic diffusion of the way in which peoples and polities deal with each other. Government departments and agencies have grown accustomed to addressing their foreign counterparts directly, sometimes bypassing completely regular diplomatic channels, and businesses and CSOs are now in dialogue with them, among themselves and with a range of inter-governmental organizations (IGOs). Institutions have taken on global functions never envisaged or intended by their founders.

This diffusion of diplomacy may in part be attributed to advances in communications technology. Satellite and digital networking has encouraged and permitted instant dialogue among groups and individuals, unimpeded by either distance or frontiers. The relative ease with which international

commercial and financial transactions can be completed is perhaps the most obvious manifestation of the current phase of globalization. However, the trend towards a more diffused diplomacy long preceded the invention of the computer. Indeed, but for the Cold War and the rigidities of the bipolar system on which it was based there might have been more innovation in diplomacy. It is therefore perhaps all the more appropriate that as the Cold War drew to its close Western foreign ministries should have seized the initiative by making the fullest use of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to ease and encourage transition in the communist East.

Transformational diplomacy

The opening on 9 November 1989 of the wall separating East from West Berlin signalled the end of the Cold War in Europe. The wall's subsequent demolition and the demise of the German Democratic Republic were widely perceived as a triumph of popular will over a repressive political order. But the reunification of Germany west of the Oder was for the most part managed by long-established administrative and diplomatic procedures. Bilateral and multilateral negotiations among envoys, ministers and heads of government all figured large in readjusting the political geography of central Europe. Diplomatic innovation was more evident when it came to overcoming the economic, political and social differences resulting from the continent's ideological divide. Since the mid-1980s Western statesmen and diplomats had been seeking to foster 'creative ferment' in the lands of Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe. They held out the prospect of financial aid to the ailing command economies of the East as a reward for liberal reform. And while they endeavoured to avoid propping up existing communist regimes, they tried to encourage the adoption of such measures as would attenuate the potentially destabilizing impact of revolutionary change. To that end Western foreign ministries, along with other agencies, departments and regional organizations, were to become involved in administering and promoting technical assistance programmes directed primarily towards bodies and institutions below the formal level of government – those which might be better understood today as civil society. Their focus was ultimately upon easing the transition from communism to pluralist democracy and free market economics, and in these respects their object was essentially transformational.

One standard bearer in this exercise was the British government's Know How Fund (KHF). Conceived in the spring of 1989 with a view to facilitating the transfer of Western know-how to a reforming but still communist Poland, in subsequent years it was extended to other east-central and eastern European countries, including the constituent republics of what by 1992 had become the former Soviet Union. It was jointly managed in London by the diplomatic wing of the FCO and the Overseas Development Administration, with embassies and the British Council overseeing project-implementation. Key areas identified as qualifying for aid included accountancy, banking and

the privatization of state-controlled industries; employment issues, such as the setting up of social welfare networks, the retraining of those made redundant as the result of economic change and the stimulation of small businesses; management and English-language training; and 'political' projects such as assistance to parliaments and journalists. Other British government departments participated, including those responsible for agriculture, education, employment, the environment, local government, the police, and trade and industry. Accountancy and law firms, business consultancies, financial institutions, manufacturing and media companies, trade unions, universities and numerous other NGOs were recruited to the cause. In the process banking academies were established in Poland and Romania, stock exchanges were opened in Budapest and Skopje, Glaswegian police officers were sent to advise their Latvian counterparts, the Red October chocolate factory was privatized in St Petersburg, and an Indian restaurant began a take-away service in a city in Belarus once known as Brest-Litovsk. The birth of totalitarian states in the twentieth century had done much to encourage the growth of total diplomacy: their demise seemed only to reinforce the tendency.

Other Western governments and the European Community (subsequently the European Union (EU)) sponsored aid programmes similar to the KHF. In most instances they benefited from having substantially larger operating budgets than that provided by the British Treasury. Yet for the history of diplomacy the true significance of this commitment to knowledge and skills transfer lay not in the further broadening of the diplomatic agenda, but in the extended constituencies which foreign ministries and their representatives felt compelled to address. Career diplomats were drawn into identifying potential schemes for funding and seeking out and negotiating contracts with consultants, and new specialist advisers were added to embassy staffs to ensure project completion. Rarely, even in earlier periods of revolutionary change, had foreign ministries and embassies become so thoroughly immersed in the minutiae of restructuring economies and societies abroad. Moreover, mechanisms devised to cope with the problems of transition in what had once been the Soviet bloc provided models for responding to challenging situations elsewhere. The threats posed to international stability, internal security and human well-being by climate change, drugs-trafficking, political and religious fanaticism, and terrorism, required more than conventional inter-governmental diplomacy. As the British foreign secretary, Jack Straw, observed in 2004, policy objectives could only be achieved by 'backing diplomacy with practical action on the ground; and by engaging with the widest possible range of people and organizations, inside and outside government, and at all levels from the international to the local'.² Straw's statement followed in the wake of the attack on New York's World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent US-led military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, events which gave fresh impetus to the search for diplomatic answers to problems fuelled by failed and failing states. Part of the solution seemed to lie in foreign ministries developing long-term sustainable partnerships in key

countries at a non-governmental level. The FCO's Global Opportunities Fund, which was established in 2003 and rebranded in 2007 as the Strategic Programme Fund, thus supported aid programmes specifically targeted at promoting good governance and human rights, and at countering terrorism and radicalization.

Canada's Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) adopted similar mechanisms. Under the leadership of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and in conjunction with other governmental and non-governmental bodies, its work began in 2005 with a mission which included conflict prevention in states in transition. But it was Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, who gave broad philosophical coherence to such initiatives. In a speech delivered on 18 January 2006 at Georgetown University, she spoke of America's need for 'transformational diplomacy', or what she termed (in language Comintern could surely have endorsed) 'a diplomacy that not only reports about the world as it is, but seeks to change the world itself'. She envisaged co-operating with America's partners to build and sustain democratic well-governed states around the world, more particularly in Africa and Asia, by redeploying US diplomatic and media resources within regions and localities. This would involve: (1) moving America's diplomats out of foreign capitals to spread them more widely across countries and the further exploitation of 'presence posts', such as already existed in Egypt and Indonesia, where US diplomats lived and operated in an 'emerging community of change'; (2) the creation of 'virtual presence posts', where young foreign service officers would manage internet sites focused on key population centres and providing scope for digital exchanges; and (3) empowering diplomats to work more closely with the US military in the reconstruction and stabilization of former and potential zones of conflict.³ Twentieth-century diplomats had long since grown accustomed to the globalization of the domestic: their twenty-first-century successors may have to share responsibility for localizing the global.

Technological transformations

Virtual presence posts would have been virtually inconceivable without the internet. Recent advances in electronic communications technology have opened up new opportunities to foreign ministries and missions to transmit information more easily, to address and respond to public concerns more quickly, and to advertise and market their services more extensively. The eGram has replaced the telegram for formal diplomatic communications, and embassy and foreign ministry websites have supplemented, and in some instances superseded, press releases as a means of publicizing their activities and initiatives. It once took weeks, months even, to establish a new diplomatic mission, but in the words of one Canadian deputy foreign minister, by 1998 it took no more than 'a plane ticket, a lap top and a dial tone – and maybe a diplomatic passport'.⁴ Meanwhile, electronic mailing and messaging

among officials has facilitated a speedier exchange of news and views, rendering redundant the explanatory private letter or note that might once have accompanied or followed a dispatch, telegram or departmental minute. Diplomatic drafting has thereby become a more all-inclusive activity. And the ability to access databases, both internally and internationally, has removed the physical barriers inherent in storing information in departmental offices. Such developments have encouraged the emergence of new, more flexible and less hierarchical, administrative structures, with geographically based departments of foreign ministries being succeeded by functionally based groups and sections. Video-conferencing, which the invention of television first made feasible and which was in use in Germany in the late 1930s, has gained in popularity, partly because of the improvement in its quality brought about by digitalization. It allows for greater participation in policy discussion by members from different departments within a state, from the missions of that state, from IGOs, private organizations and global commercial and financial companies, none of whom need to be in the same country at the time.

These technologically driven opportunities have, in permitting freer international dialogue within and without government, further challenged claims of foreign ministries to primacy in policy implementation. The new technology also led in the 1990s, as did the advent of electric telegraphy in the 1850s, to a questioning of the relevance of current diplomatic methods. The American politician, Newt Gingrich, seemed to echo nineteenth-century British radicals when in October 1997 he opined:

to suggest that we're going to have traditional ambassadors in traditional embassies reporting to a traditional desk at the State Department, funnelling up information through a traditional assistant secretary who will meet with a traditional secretary strikes me as unimaginable.⁵

Rice's proposal, made almost nine years later, for virtual missions indicated a shift in this direction. It also implied that diplomatic reform had not everywhere kept pace with the digital revolution. And with reason: diplomacy has been, and is, about far more than the gathering and dissemination of information. Raw data needs to be analysed, collated and condensed if it is to be of any practical value, and that in turn depends upon the expertise, knowledge and understanding of diplomats at home and in posts abroad. Negotiation is still best practised at close quarters. Moreover, there remain problems relating to the security of communications, and to information and misinformation overload. Even before modern systems of electronic mailing came into general usage, Douglas Hurd, Britain's foreign secretary from 1989 till 1995, worked in what he called 'a constant snowstorm of information'.⁶ Instant news coverage by the media and its opinion-formers puts statesmen and diplomats under pressure to respond with instant comment and sometimes instant action.

In 1993 when inter-ethnic conflict in a disintegrating Yugoslavia was rarely out of the headlines and when throughout the Western world there were frequent calls in newspapers and on television for intervention to rescue Bosnian Muslims threatened by their Serb and Croat neighbours, Hurd had reluctantly to confront those he labelled 'the founder members of the something-must-be-done club'.⁷ Nearly a century earlier one of Hurd's predecessors, Lord Salisbury, had likewise had to tailor his diplomacy in response to public outrage over the violence inflicted by Turks and Kurds upon Armenian Christians in Anatolia. But newspaper reporting was slower in 1896 and there was time for Salisbury to consult colleagues and diplomats before responding with carefully crafted parliamentary statements. Explanatory dispatches could meanwhile be drafted, setting out government thinking and intentions, ostensibly for ambassadorial instruction but in practice for public consumption. In an information age, when images of death and destruction can be transmitted about the globe in a matter of minutes, popular perceptions of policy may depend on the impact of a single televised news item and the sound-bite diplomacy it permits. The news and press sections of foreign ministries and overseas missions have consequently grown in significance and size. Few diplomatic initiatives are pursued without their being consulted on likely public reactions and on how best the media might be managed.

Public diplomacy in transition

As previous chapters have indicated, foreign ministries have long sought to shape public opinion at home and abroad. Soon after the Congress of Vienna, Castlereagh, in his effort to suppress the transatlantic slave trade, urged anti-slavers in Britain to begin a press campaign to convert the French public to their cause. The public pillorying of non-compliant foreign governments remained a key component of this embryonic human rights diplomacy. Elsewhere statesmen sought through parliamentary and public pronouncements to further policy objectives. James Monroe proclaimed his 'doctrine' in the United States Congress, as did Woodrow Wilson his Fourteen Points; Adolf Hitler mastered a megaphone diplomacy by which he rallied the party faithful and waged psychological warfare against Germany's neighbours; and during the 1950s John Foster Dulles transformed the press conference into a medium of international communication. The emergence of professional diplomats as media personalities has, however, been a comparatively recent development. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century diplomats were, though wary of too close an association with propaganda work, accustomed to using the press to influence host governments or enhance their country's reputation. Yet during his thirteen years as British ambassador in Paris between 1905 and 1918 Francis Bertie made only one public speech, and was reluctant even in wartime to give any publicity to his opinions. Nowadays, it is almost commonplace for envoys to appear on radio and television, and foreign ministries have their own studios both for interviews and

for the instruction of diplomats in media techniques. Instant news demands instant comment, and to decline it in open societies is to risk being exposed to the invective of critics and opponents. As a former ambassador commented in 1974, the media had to 'be conciliated, not bought'.⁸

Untimely press commentaries and reports have always been a potential source of embarrassment to those engaged in negotiation. United States diplomats, like the representatives of other nations, have frequently had to mollify local political leaders upset by criticism in American newspapers, and have found their positions undercut when during the give and take of a departmental news briefing or presidential press conference official instructions have in effect been modified or flatly contradicted. The problem, aptly summarized in Charles Thayer's aphorism, is that since 'publicity is often a deterrent to the reconciliation of conflicts, the diplomat attempts to conceal what the journalist strives to reveal'.⁹ Moreover, for the ambassador and his staff there is always the prospect of their political masters disregarding their advice and information and taking decisions upon the basis of media reporting and analysis. French embassies were once said to await the publication of *Le Monde* before drafting their telegrams so that they at least knew what ministers had already read. And media competition may have led to greater emphasis being placed upon prediction than reporting in American missions overseas.

The latest communications revolution has, however, provided diplomats with far more sophisticated tools for influencing, utilizing and responding to public concerns. It has also equipped NGOs with the means both to assume higher public profiles and to consolidate and extend their roles as global actors. The resulting discourse is now better understood as public diplomacy and the phrase has become a fashionable one. It is used perhaps as much to describe something that is felt to be lacking or insufficiently attended to as it is to describe a new development. The first arises from the fact that while diplomacy has always had a broader function than just defending the security interests of a state or ruler, it has usually given that function priority and the structures and attitudes of state-based diplomacy supported that slant. To ask such a system to undertake the task of changing or at least influencing the opinions of foreign populations, mainly in the interests of making its principal a natural and favoured object of inward investment, may involve looking for a horse of a different colour. As Brian Hocking has observed, 'public diplomacy is now part of the fabric of world politics wherein NGOs and other non-state actors seek to project their message in the pursuit of policy goals'.¹⁰

The term itself was first coined in 1965 as an American alternative to propaganda and is now perhaps too loosely applied to a whole gamut of activities, ranging from news briefing to nation-branding. Much that it covers, such as the funding of radio and television broadcasting, is either not particularly new, or simply represents an extension and refinement of earlier cultural endeavours. Nonetheless, the recent focus by foreign ministries upon public diplomacy reflects their need to adapt to a world in which

transnational issues have seemed sometimes to supersede international ones. A positive national corporate image may for instance be all-important for attracting inward foreign investment and skilled migrant labour, as well as for promoting trade and tourism. It matters too when governments, their representatives and agencies, find themselves in negotiation with commercial companies and coalition-building with other non-governmental bodies. In practice the latest innovations in public diplomacy have demanded different skills and attitudes to those associated with what was once known in the US foreign service as 'information' work. Foreign ministries have sought to use the internet to promote more collaborative relationships with the public by creating and maintaining attractive and interactive websites. They have made an effort to connect with their own nationals through enhanced domestic outreach programmes. Likewise, as has been apparent in the development of transformational diplomacy, the emphasis has been upon shaping and nurturing relationships among societies rather than between sovereign governments. In reviewing the prospects for such work, Lord Carter of Coles wrote in 2005 of its 'aiming to inform and engage individuals and organisations overseas, in order to improve understanding and influence for the United Kingdom in a manner consistent with governmental medium and long term goals'.¹¹

Much, however, of what Britain's FCO defines as public diplomacy is still delegated to the British Council, the BBC World Service and, since the late 1990s, British Satellite News, whose daily output can be downloaded to television stations around the world. Moreover, the public aspects of Britain's commercial diplomacy are now very largely the responsibility of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), an agency which was originally established in 1999 as British Trade International, and which is jointly administered by the FCO and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills with the object of coordinating export and investment promotion with the private sector. Elsewhere, as in the case of France, culture and its projection overseas has remained central to a state-sponsored public diplomacy, aimed at bridging societal differences and reinforcing strategic initiatives. An accord of March 2007 between the governments of France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for the construction of a museum of the Louvre in Abu Dhabi was, in the words of one senior French official, both evidence of the 'globalization of art' and a 'redefinition of the French presence in the Gulf'.¹² Ever since 1972 France has been linked to oil-rich Abu Dhabi by a military convention, and the museum project and the opening in the emirate of a branch of the Sorbonne are just the latest examples of an expanding 'diplomatie d'influence' in a strategically important and politically sensitive region.¹³ These are also instances that typify the way in which governments have readily resorted to the use of sub-state and non-state institutions to achieve diplomatic ends.

States have meanwhile had to come to terms with a world in which NGOs and CSOs exercise an influence over which they have no direct control. The pressure is caused by the arrival of globally operating internet sites where matters, such as those concerning the environment, receive the kind of airing

and subsequent opinion-forming that once would have occurred almost completely within a particular society. Now that this has become a globalized factor, it can create an image, not necessarily accurate, which may demand public diplomacy to bring influence to bear before it goes sour on a particular country or to be a counterweight when it has. More precisely, the evolution of some NGOs into globally operating entities – in their purposes, their membership and their funding – also produces a flow of internet originated activity, much of which can have an effect on the broad image of a particular society.¹⁴ A rather different kind of platform on which public diplomacy as well as the more traditional kind may be required to speak is evident in the case of such bodies as the World Economic Forum (WEF). It was conceived in 1971 as an annual ‘summit’ between global business leaders and political leaders at Davos, in Switzerland, at which problems could be discussed, ideas could be generated and, not coincidentally, deals could be done. Founded as an organization made up of global firms, whose annual dues pay its costs, the WEF expanded to include regional summits as well as the annual Davos event and enlarged the range of participants invited to include the media, academics, cultural figures and other representatives of civil society.¹⁵

Non-governmental diplomacy

Participants in diplomacy have inevitably changed over time. The contemporary shifts only seem so remarkable because the primacy of states lasted a long time, shifted visibly only recently and has thus been the widely shared source of the common assumptions about what diplomacy is and who does it. Nonetheless the actors on the diplomatic stage are part of a much larger cast of characters than would have been performing in the nineteenth century and the play itself has taken on the loose-limbed character of modern drama, easing itself out of the conventions which once applied. Two sets of characters have been in existence for a long time but have moved from the wings onto centre stage: IGOs and transnational corporations (TNCs). The way in which some IGOs have begun to change their roles has to do with the effects of contemporary economic globalization. The point about IGOs is that they have been set up by states for purposes agreed by their members. As such they were and in many cases still are adjuncts to the state system of diplomacy. Where their functions had to do with international trade and finance, however, the onset of a global economy has led to change. The ability of individual states to affect the performance and consequences of the global economy has been shown to be defective. The result has been an explosion of global political activity which has not been confined to governments but has generated a global public constituency and garnered the attention of many private organizations. In the face of the growing sense of economic inequality in the world, perhaps caused or accentuated by the progress of globalization, the Bretton Woods IGOs have begun to act more as if they were *de facto* global economic managers with an authority derived from that role and less

as simply the executors of the wishes of their main state members. This has given them a more significant diplomatic position and increased the range of other characters with whom they must do business. It is not possible, for example, to embark on attempts to improve the development prospects of poorer states without a mixture of entities being involved: these might include a government or governments, the UN, the World Bank, TNCs and CSOs, and they must all negotiate with each other and most likely not with any single source of authority within any of the entities concerned but with particular elements in their structure as appropriate.

In the case of TNCs, the shift from the familiar existence of internationally operating companies with home bases in specific countries to globally operating businesses with no or very little base in a single country has yielded a corresponding change of behaviour. The degree of globalization in TNCs is wide. Toshiba still plainly retains a relationship with Japan, Shell is connected with both the UK and the Netherlands. Microsoft, whose president personally attracts visits from the leaders of important states, has complex and sometimes stormy relationships with the USA, the UK and the EU, but is regarded by the global public as the global company par excellence. Another broadly global corporation, News International, says of itself on its website that the 'activities of News Corporation are conducted principally in the United States, Continental Europe, the United Kingdom, Australia, Asia and the Pacific Basin'. The public interest in the local effects of the globalized economy has meant that issues of workers' rights, environmental good behaviour, showing social responsibility in the places to which investment has been directed, all carry diplomatic consequences. Companies must negotiate with host governments, significantly must deal with civil society organizations which seek to protect human and workers' rights, may well participate in the UN's Global Compact scheme, will have relationships with IGOs and NGOs concerned with development and, in a comparatively new evolution, talk to each other. This last is chiefly because in a highly technologically advanced globalized economy a counter-intuitive situation has arisen in which firms will co-operate over research and development only to return to competition in the marketing and sale of the resulting products.

One consequence of these developments is that global firms and governments are becoming more like each other. Geoffrey Pigman has observed that the governments of nation states who:

desire to promote the creation and retention of high value jobs, attract inward investment, maintain stable consumer prices and currency exchange rates, and promote exports of goods and services have come to look very like the management of a large firm seeking to compete in the global economy.¹⁶

Nor does the sense of resemblance end there. Large transnational firms tend to build up a formal way of representing themselves for diplomatic purposes.

Government relations offices have appeared in many TNC headquarters locations – few now have a single headquarters anywhere – and they function analogously to parts at any rate of a state foreign ministry. Permanent representative offices in capital cities and other important industrial centres will be found in places where TNCs have a steady flow of business to conduct. The ‘political department’ of ExxonMobil is a good example of this.¹⁷ This said, there is an inevitable asymmetry in the relations between global commerce and governments derived from the fact that global commerce is a deterritorialized activity and does not represent itself on a territorial basis, and governments do not send representatives to global corporations in any fixed way. Governments do, however, have many ways of organizing how they deal with global trade and investment and like that activity itself, these ways are not centralized. They are spread across trade ministries, finance ministries, tax offices, environment ministries and they occur at national, provincial and local levels. A good example of diplomatic activity of this kind was the unfolding formal relationship between Kia, a Korean automaker, and Slovakia, a former Eastern bloc country in competition with neighbours for Kia’s European investment.¹⁸

Both the importance and the limitations of the relationship between global firms and governments, either that of their host country or another, can be drawn from the experience of the United States. In the late 1990s, a combination of the emergence of a truly global economy following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the apparently unstoppable advance of the global economy and the pivotal position of the United States in that advance brought the US government and global firms into a close embrace. The result of this was a major government/business collaboration on trade liberalization agreements, the negotiation of most favoured nation status for China, the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a successor to GATT, and the conversion of former Soviet-dominated areas to market economies. Issues that would once have seemed purely domestic acquired global significance, for example the 1996 Farm Bill and the 1999 financial services sector reform. To set against that were failures to persuade other states to agree to a new round of liberalization via the WTO or to establish the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, this last being a failure that emphasized the importance of pressures that CSOs could bring to bear on global economic issues. Internally, fast-track negotiating authority for trade agreements was not renewed, and a Free Trade of the Americas plan failed. Global firms failed too in some areas, particularly by not taking stronger independent or co-operative action in the face of the global currency crises of 1994–97 which meant having to cope with the consequences expensively after the event rather than more cheaply and preventatively at an earlier stage.

The most serious weapon that TNCs have for diplomatic use is the threat that either they will withdraw activity and investment from a particular country or that they will refuse to come unless circumstances to their advantage are created locally. To withdraw after settling in a particular place would

be expensive and the threat, though real, might be unlikely to be acted on; but its use at earlier phases of negotiation has been very effective. It is not the only source of negotiating power. Sheer skill and daring – old and familiar accompaniments of diplomacy – have also played their part. In 1999 Sandy Weill, the chief executive officer of Citicorp, suddenly announced a merger between Citicorp and Travelers insurance, thereby creating the largest ever US financial institution and challenging existing legislation, which would have required a demerger within five years. The deal was in effect too big and too important for the United States to be allowed to fail and Citigroup, having prepared the ground and deftly calculated the political value of its leverage, now openly dared the US Congress not to pass the necessary legislative reform. The subsequent Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act showed that the tactic had succeeded and for the first time US institutions were able to play on the global field as equals of, for example, the European giant, Deutsche Bank.

Multilateral economic institutions and diplomacy

In the fifty years following the Second World War a trio of multilateral economic institutions (MEIs), the IMF, the World Bank, and GATT (and its successor, WTO), dominated the field now generally known as non-state economic entity (NSEE) activity. They involved the largest number of member-states; they retained the lion's share of NSEE-government diplomacy; and power within them was weighted in favour of the largest state contributors. Other, more specialized institutions have also emerged. Regional development banks such as the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, paralleled the focus of the World Bank for their respective regions but with power distributed more substantially towards the recipient governments. The specialized economic agencies of the United Nations, such as UNCTAD, UNESCO and the UN Development Program (UNDP), were focused on particular, usually development-related, economic objectives. These agencies developed their own politics, institutional character and sense of mission; and they extruded mechanisms of decision-making and created diplomatic channels. Moreover, because they operated more on the principle of members voting equally, they were perceived as having acquired a wider legitimacy. Another type of NSEE is represented by the WEF. Its annual meetings at Davos bring together business and political leaders, academics, journalists and the representatives of a variety of NGOs to discuss pressing matters of global concern. It is a knowledge-generating and consultative NSEE: in this case, though, entirely non-governmental in its procedures and funding.

These institutions require regularized working relationships with member country governments. The professional staffs of the MEIs in particular were often drawn from the foreign services of member states or else from finance

ministries or other appropriate agencies. But NSEEs from the outset took seriously the need to construct their own professional, and hence diplomatic, identities by, among other things, establishing rigid nationality quota systems for employment and setting higher employment standards than member governments in areas such as linguistic ability. In doing so they created a cosmopolitan staff which came to have a stronger sense of itself and its worth than of its former links with the government civil services from which many of its members had come.

Although NSEEs are fundamentally different from nation-states in their character, organization and purpose, the evolving complexities of inter-governmental diplomacy have affected NSEE representation to governments equally. Most NSEEs have small, relatively centralized professional staffs and tend to represent themselves as and where the need arises. In many organizations, the great majority of the professional staffs function as diplomats, either formally or informally, at least in information-gathering and communication. In terms of the institutional organization of representation, among the diverse range of NSEEs, the MEIs are the most likely to represent themselves to governments through permanent or ongoing missions. MEI missions to developing countries, who represent their usual constituency, develop the greatest similarity to the permanent diplomatic missions of governments. At a different level, the annual general meetings of the World Bank, IMF and regional development banks, WTO ministerial conferences, WEF Davos summits and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) World Council look similar to inter-governmental 'summits'.

The emergence of communications networks built around internet communications has made it much easier for all sorts of other non-state entities, ranging from global firms to NGOs, to interact with NSEEs directly, bypassing the state institutions that would previously have represented civil society interests at NSEEs. Intensive lobbying, publicity campaigns and protest activities have forced MEIs to reconsider policies and change actual diplomatic procedures – for example the location and timing of meetings, arranging for adequate security and so on. The protests against the WTO at its 1999 Seattle conference not only forced delays and changes to the proposed multilateral trade round but also brought about changes in the way that the WTO and other NSEEs publicize themselves and their activities. The WEF has reacted similarly.

MEI representation to governments has also changed as particular MEIs have been reformed. In the case of the GATT/WTO, diplomacy between nation-states over international trade issues has been institutionalized in a particular way by the political process that led to its creation and early development, particularly because the ad hoc GATT secretariat was perceived as weak relative to nation-state governments. However, a structural change in the global economy, induced by the GATT-led process of trade liberalization, has changed the perceived identities and interests of GATT member governments, particularly in the form of a shift among major developing

countries towards more pro-trade liberalization positions. This in turn has led to a transformation of the institution and its processes, due in large part also to the strengthened secretariat and a 'one country one vote' system of decision-making given to the WTO which brought about a real redistribution of political power.

So far, while the discussion of global issues by the representatives of economic global authorities has visibly begun to develop, similar representative capacity has not yet reliably emerged elsewhere. This is why the remarkable efforts to reinvent diplomacy which states are making has not so far evoked an effective response. One set of cogs is ready to engage, but some of their *Doppelgänger* are not yet there and it is not yet possible to slide into a new gear: hence the sense of irrelevance or flailing about, which can emanate from the machinery of global political exchange. The effect is familiar to historians of diplomacy: this is what it felt like to be the Pope trying to deal with a Protestant government and perhaps even more sharply with a Catholic one strongly jealous of its sovereignty or, later on, the emperor of China attempting to explain to European states what their proper role was.

Trade, finance and diplomacy

The diplomacy of trade may well be the oldest of diplomatic activities and it has never lost a primary role. How it is deployed naturally changes over time. Venetian trading diplomacy focused on its security from piracy, for example, and even from the depredations of governments. The nineteenth century, perhaps feeling secure under the protection of the British navy, focused on trade liberalization to the point where it can be regarded as the beginning of the process of economic globalization. In the contemporary world, the focus remains on its encouragement and expansion but the method emphasizes the regulation of trade through global institutions. The institutions established in the mid-twentieth century essentially in order to try to avoid any repetition of the Great Depression have taken on more complex and globalized roles. Perhaps the chief complicating factor has been the decision to include services as well as goods in the remit of the WTO when it succeeded the GATT in 1995. The list of trade issues which are pretty continuously under some kind of negotiation is a long one: permitted levels of tariffs and quotas, levels of subsidies and government subventions, health and safety standards, classifications of global merchandise, intellectual property protection, environmental and labour regulations affecting trade including child workers and unsafe working conditions.

The global institutions chiefly involved have their own staff. Within states the task of constantly monitoring the functioning of the global system and the compliance of other states with the regulations creates diplomatic activity across government departments. There are peaks of activity when specific rounds of potentially liberalizing negotiations are under way, such as the late-twentieth-century 'Uruguay Round' and the 'Doha Round' of the early 2000s,

the latter currently stalled. Individual states will have different spikes of activity when a particular event or issue brings the need to represent their trading interests both to the institutions and to other states. At a minimum, the work has to be co-ordinated across treasuries, trade departments, energy departments and foreign ministries. In the United States, the mix is particularly clear: the White House is served by the Office of the United States Trade Representative which deals with trade policy and the making of agreements, the Department of Commerce deals with the enforcement of international regulations and trade promotion, while agricultural trade matters are handled by the United States Department of Agriculture, whose staff attend all trade negotiations involving agriculture.

The spread of national officials with trade expertise goes beyond what happens in government departments. Embassies overseas and particularly consulates, whose focus has been sharply concentrated on trade and investment in recent years, include trade experts among their staff. Moreover, some richer states maintain permanent missions to the WTO headquarters at Geneva, giving them a day-to-day connection with the WTO Secretariat and relations with other members. The agenda is one of dealing with complaints from fellow members about non-compliance with the rules, making complaints when required, negotiating with the WTO about reporting requirements in respect of trade policy reviews and taking part in whatever trade liberalization project the WTO may be pursuing. In addition to the central role of the WTO, regional organizations, MERCOSUR, NAFTA, ASEAN, provide another layer of trade diplomacy. Regional organizations other than the EU tend to be staffed by secondment from member states' civil services who deal with routine administration. The main burden generally falls on the staff in foreign ministries and other national departments when detailed additional preparatory work is required before regular meetings, after which they are required to be present at often highly charged negotiations when the meetings take place.

As has been seen, the demands of public diplomacy include a strong element of trade and inward investment promotion. The same complex mixture of entities with an interest in the activity occurs with the added participation of the private sector, to whom the leading role on the public stage is often given. Displays, presentations at trade fairs, nation-branding through direct marketing techniques all demand public/private partnerships. These can be one-off affairs or in some countries have been organized into continuously running projects. In India, for example, the highly successful India Brand Equity Foundation is a co-operation between the Confederation of Indian Industries and the Ministry of Commerce.

Diplomatic involvement with investment flows has generally been less successful. It has been a traditionally difficult area since the expansion of investment into a global phenomenon began during the nineteenth century. Support by European states for their investors moving into non-European countries could lead to tense diplomatic stand-offs or even the threat of

armed conflict, for example between the United States and Germany over Venezuela in 1902. The efforts of first the GATT and then the WTO to introduce some regulation into investment flows have not been successful despite intense diplomatic activity. The Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) project of the GATT fell out of the Uruguay Round in the 1990s and the WTO later failed to have it reinstated in a modified form. After significant intervention via the internet by CSOs representing the interests of poorer countries and work forces, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) plan for a Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) was stopped in 1998.

Shifts in patterns of international and transnational investment have very often been accompanied by upheavals in currency markets and these in turn have required diplomatic intervention. Ever since gold and other metallic standards were abandoned by the governments of major powers after the First World War, central banks and other financial institutions have increasingly found themselves drawn into negotiation over exchange rates and monetary values. But this diplomacy has gathered in pace since the Bretton Woods system and the era of fixed parities failed to withstand the economic crises of the early 1970s. The need for rapid international co-operation among governments and central bankers grew in the face of the stresses of managing floating exchange rates. If the markets perceived any apparent confusion in the relations between central banks and governments or received unexpected economic news – accurate or inaccurate – peaks and troughs quickly developed in the currency markets. Correction could require serious and sustained diplomatic effort such as that which led to the 1985 monetary summit conference held at the Plaza Hotel in New York City to stop a persistent and unjustified rise in the value of the US dollar. After the Plaza Accord, co-ordinated action was negotiated between central banks and governments which was designed to control the desired depreciation of the dollar and the successful result was marked by the Louvre Accord of 1987, made at a Paris monetary summit.

The new environment of the 1970s led to annual meetings of finance ministers, subsequently institutionalized as the G7, eventually G8. Over time the complications involved in all this have been increased by the sharp increase in the volume of global currency trading. During 2007 over \$2 trillion was in motion each day. Such volumes and the sensitivity of the markets to the floods of information that the internet releases has meant that diplomacy between governments, bankers and transnational private actors has had to reflect the greater frequency of meetings, the heterogeneous nature of the participants and the urgent need to work very closely together. Few events have emphasized more clearly the importance of this development than the consequences of the banking and general global economic crisis which began in 2007 and came close to causing the collapse of the global financial system. Without the accumulated experience, in particular the 2006 revision of the 1988 Basel Capital Accord on credit risk, and the

emergent diplomatic practice of the preceding years, collapse would have been inevitable.

In recent years other avenues for negotiating the greatest possible security for the global financial system have evolved. In particular the establishment and development of the International Association of Securities Commissions has created a global central point at which separate national securities regulatory bodies, such as the Financial Services Authority in the UK and the Securities and Exchange Commission in the USA, combine to negotiate with each other and arrive at joint positions in relation to general economic global diplomatic activity. The exchanges themselves have also developed a global body, the World Federation of Exchanges. It is a private organization acting across the exchanges partly to keep a level playing field in the capital market where the exchanges themselves are competing for business, and partly to have dealings with governments and regulatory bodies and to lobby national legislatures. The negotiation of joint positions at such bodies across the non-state element in economic diplomacy and the subsequent representation of these positions with governments and private actors alike is an important form of diplomacy, if relatively unsung, which has pressed governments into being interlocutors and produced ongoing political consequences.

Development diplomacy

Development projects are undoubtedly among the most complex and often fraught tasks that modern diplomacy deals with. Geoffrey Pigman has noted that the diplomatic representation and communication functions needed to design, finance and bring to completion economic development projects involve very many actors, very many negotiations and mediations repeated many times.¹⁹ In addition to these inherent problems, economic development is a topic which has profound political significance for governments, both giver and receiver, also to IGOs, particularly the Bretton Woods organizations, and to an intense degree, CSOs. If the political consequences of development politics are serious in terms of general global security, their immediate representation in public opinion, to an equal degree in both needy countries and potential and actual contributor societies, owes a very great deal to the communications power of CSOs. There is a global public constituency interested in this topic, not least because it is or can be part of objections to globalization as bringing with it major unfairness in the distribution of global economic benefits. There is, too, a global pool of potential contributors to the involved CSOs for whom the manner of its public discussion affects the level of their fund-raising in a competitive way. In addition to these political conundrums, there is a particularly close connection between IGOs, the governments that created them and CSOs not only in the funding of development projects but also in their management and administration. The headiness of the mixture means that there must be constant diplomatic activity and also that the negotiating positions adopted may become shrill

and finessing solutions to problems may be sacrificed to the perceived benefits of making loud public accusations.

Apart from the incessant negotiations that go on within governments and their CSO partners, there are global fora which play important roles. The Paris Club, which brings together creditor nations at regular meetings in Paris, negotiates with debtor nations as to their ability to repay their sovereign debt and the timing of it. The Paris Club is linked to the IMF with which it discusses decisions to forgive, reschedule or reduce debt, so that they are taken in the context of the global financial system. Since the 1990s, the Paris Club has moved further by making special arrangements in respect of what have become known as Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs). Some broader global diplomacy takes place in an effort to smooth some of the spikes that develop in individual cases. The Clinton Global Initiative was established in 2005 and reported in 2009 that it had made 1,200 project commitments at a cost of \$46 billion.²⁰ The WEF also regularly brings governments and non-state actors together to brainstorm development problems. There is no doubt that in terms of its mixed participation, frequency, globalized constituency and perceived importance in global politics, the issue of development and its accompanying diplomacy is a major growth area in the use and usefulness of diplomatic activity.

Diffusion and global civil society

Civil society organizations, or rather less accurately described, NGOs, have been in existence for a long time. The second half of the twentieth century, however, saw an extraordinary rise in both the numbers and influence of CSOs. Rather like firms, their variety of size and geographical significance is enormous: they may be local to an intense degree, they may be regional and they may be global in scope. Unlike firms or governments, they have to raise funds by voluntary subscription and memberships or by official funding. But again like firms, their relationship with governments may be very close and closely controlled. There has been a great increase in the interweaving of state and non-state forms of governance, sometimes because CSOs can do things governments cannot do and sometimes because they can do things governments do not want to be seen to be doing. Equally many CSOs exist in order not to be part of the state machine and to influence its behaviour by operating from a hostile distance. The existence of a part-time *Médécins sans Frontières* (MSF) Liaison Officer to the UN since 1983 is a case in point. MSF has also felt the need to have an office in Paris whose task is to supply a steady flow of reliable political and contextual information about areas where the organization is involved, or might become so, based on research involving economic and regional expertise. In these cases, activities, and staff to run them, are required which are far removed from the original purposes of many private actors whose stock in trade was the provision of emergency aid to individual human beings caught in a disaster.

The relationship between the UN and UN agencies and private actors in the humanitarian field generally has changed in a quite clear way. The effect of the series of world conferences on economic and social issues which occurred during the 1990s made insiders of private actors who used to think of themselves as outsiders. Both in planning agendas and in forming delegations, private actors came to take leading roles, and the UN found ways of bypassing bureaucratic restrictions on the process. In effect, flowing from the accreditation of 1,400 private organizations for the Rio Conference on Environment and Development, a new layer of recognized participants in the global political order has been created. The most recent environmental negotiations have been essentially three track, with states, themselves often fielding mixed delegations, transnational organizations and associations of states. It is an inevitably muddled, if fascinating, area and it is clear that the tendency of negotiations to fail is partly to do with the complexity of the participation as well as to the differences in the nature of their constituencies. This last aspect can mean in both environmental and trade negotiations that transnational private organizations, who are now diplomatically present, can wield sufficient clout to stop settlements being achieved. This is because their constituencies are much less plural than the population of a nation-state and lead to a single-mindedness which will allow them to agree only to 100 per cent of their platform, and their global influence can persuade the least advantaged state participants to join them. The irony then follows that the chief potential beneficiaries of a compromise have themselves helped to prevent it from happening. A new world of diplomatic activity has thus been created for both old and new actors.

Co-operation between private organizations, IGOs and governments, where it develops, can have more than a whiff of 'poacher turned game keeper' about it. A kind of internal diplomacy is involved in keeping these relationships going. But it is where CSOs have acquired global significance that they have taken on a more familiar diplomatic role. There are four main areas of activity where this has happened: anti-poverty advocacy involving organizations such as Oxfam, World Vision and Save the Children; medical and humanitarian action involving organizations such as MSF and the International Committee of the Red Cross; the defence of human rights, involving organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International; and environmental issues, involving a particularly large number of organizations of which Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth are very prominent.

A pattern, albeit incomplete, of diplomatic development has appeared in the world of CSOs. Many, particularly environmental ones, have originated as pressure groups with a radical, outsider, agenda. For example, in one of their earlier activities, Greenpeace attempted in the 1980s to stop French nuclear testing in the Pacific by intervening with a vessel of their own which was destroyed very publicly in a New Zealand harbour by French security forces. This led to the collapse of relations between France and New Zealand and a general condemnation of the whole French nuclear objective. What it

resembled was a kind of anti-diplomacy, an almost Trotskyite rejection of the whole system of formal relationships between international actors – much as other revolutionary groups have done. Like many of them, provided they lasted long enough, the imperatives of real diplomatic engagement with others gradually changed their attitude and with varying degrees of comfort, they have joined the cast on the global stage and taken on speaking roles. This happened partly at least because anti-diplomacy did have some effect.

On environmental questions, the growing salience of climate change issues has created an atmosphere of an urgent global and national security crisis and increasingly governments have wanted to draw national CSOs into cooperating with them and even, as with the UK at the Rio conference, forming part of the national delegation – and as a consequence raising difficult questions of accreditation and confidentiality. In more strictly economic areas, the hitherto unimaginable and genuinely extraordinary spectacle of violent public riots at meetings of the Bretton Woods institutions and the G7, and even at the World Economic Forum at Davos, the anti-diplomacy involved has opened doors, to the extent that the World Social Forum which was set up to shame and rival Davos has had to ask whether since CSOs have been welcomed and included at Davos, it is any longer needed. Moreover, the effect of highly visible general public disquiet at the intractable problems inherent in global inequality has gained it an entry into the discussions and policies of the IMF, WTO and the World Bank.

Global environmental and humanitarian diplomacy

Global environmental negotiations tend to show a different pattern from other multilateral negotiations because they demonstrate a particularly constructive relationship between negotiators acting for government and inter-governmental organization negotiators and those representing NGOs. Negotiators generally acknowledge the advantages of engaging NGOs as representatives of significant players in such negotiations. If properly managed, NGO participation can help to achieve the most effective international response to a particular environmental danger and create a more transparent inter-governmental process. NGOs, meanwhile, are happy to consult with negotiators in an effort to steer negotiations towards their preferred outcome.

The constructive participation of NGOs as part of the negotiating process is a relatively new phenomenon, however, and large numbers of NGOs have only recently begun to participate in international environmental negotiations on a regular basis. Despite the fact that ozone depletion threatened life on earth, in the mid-1980s international negotiations intended to regulate ozone depleting substances attracted only a handful of NGOs, and not a single environmental NGO was present at the signing of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer in 1985. By contrast, NGOs typically outnumbered states at key negotiations in the 1990s and early 2000s dealing with climate change. Undoubtedly, advances in information technology,

which have reduced the costs associated with co-ordinating NGO activities across borders, partly account for this change. NGOs can now cheaply and easily respond to negotiating proposals and outcomes, and share information with governments, other NGOs and the public at large. In some countries, broad socio-political changes have increased the significance of NGOs. It is notable, for instance, that substantial portions of the citizenry in many countries now 'think globally' about environmental issues, and are willing to help fund environmental campaigns going well beyond their state or region.

In any event, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development clearly marked a turning point: the Conference registered record levels of NGO participation, and the Agenda 21 plan of action on sustainable development, which was agreed at the Conference, highlights the utility of NGO participation in international negotiations and domestic environmental policy-making. Approximately ten thousand NGOs attended the Conference, lobbying governments, hosting their own 'NGO Forum' and holding hundreds of side events. Partly as a consequence of these activities, Agenda 21 recognized that NGOs 'possess well-established and diverse experience, expertise and capacity in fields of particular importance to the implementation and review of environmentally sound and socially responsible sustainable development'. It recommended that NGOs 'be tapped, enabled and strengthened'.

Since the UN Conference on Environment and Development, inter-governmental organizations have generally adopted the Agenda 21 recommendation that NGOs be involved in 'policy design, decision-making, implementation and evaluation',²¹ and NGOs have played a significant role in an increasing number of multilateral environmental negotiations, including those concerning the Commission on Sustainable Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the Convention to Combat Desertification, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.

NGO influence depends mainly on the issue. However, the timing, who is present at the negotiation and the attitude of the media at the time, all affect the manner in which NGOs can influence international environmental negotiations in a number of ways. By using their personal relationships and experience of meetings, they can persuade negotiators of the merits of a particular proposal and help set the negotiating agenda. Making use of their transnational character, they can work with like-minded negotiators, and can indicate the probable domestic popularity of potential outcomes. By enhancing the transparency of the negotiations, nationally based NGOs can strengthen the arms of negotiators who agree with them, ensure that negotiators defend their country's stated positions where they have been involved in creating them, and increase the capacity of domestic groups to affect their country's positions. Finally, by taking a no-compromise approach to environmental integrity, environmental NGOs can also enhance their claim to

superior legitimacy and question the credibility of compromise proposals and negotiators. Business international NGOs, meanwhile, can remind negotiators of the legitimacy their voice will command in national ratification debates. Because business NGOs do not have a claim to superior legitimacy at the international level, they are far less prone than are environmental NGOs to use the media as a vehicle for their specific negotiating concerns. They instead focus on face-to-face interactions and keep the details of their climate campaigns relatively quiet. NGO participation in the international climate change negotiations and other environmental negotiations may enhance the acceptability of negotiated settlements in the eyes of the public at large. Environmental NGOs and business NGOs typically represent the main stakeholders in these negotiations. But despite their mutual desire for a 'better regime', they are not self-sacrificing altruists. They use their bargaining assets to promote specific interests, and to channel negotiations to outcomes that they find desirable. They represent particular entities and they use diplomacy to do so in the most effective way.

In addition to the emergence of significant global influence wielded by environmental CSOs, there are the no less publicly known humanitarian CSOs. One of the clearest ways in which CSOs have been drawn into diplomacy has occurred through their activities. The very wide spectrum of power, size and stability which has opened up in the community of states in the world has left some of the weakest and smallest unable to cope with the business of governance. State collapses have occurred for a variety of reasons, but in all cases if they were not caused by internal conflict it has led to its outbreak. In the post-Cold War situation, other states have not been either able or willing to respond effectively or at all to the onset of civil wars in dysfunctional states, nor has the UN. The result has been that the only means of bringing some relief to the suffering caused has been provided by CSOs. The situations that they have encountered have been different from those that they were used to. These tended to be related to natural disasters of one kind or another and, crucially, occurred when there was a working government in place to which assistance could be given and whose administrative structures provided a framework within which the assistance could be effective. In recent times, the more usual condition was that there was no government in place and that if aid and medical assistance was to be given, then the infrastructural context had also to be provided. This meant that CSOs found themselves performing many of the tasks of a government and with that came the inevitable need to deal with highly politicized situations involving war lords, the neighbours, IGOS, other humanitarian CSOs and many others. Unusual in their experience, too, was the realization that their staffs were not regarded by combatants as neutral and were regularly being taken hostage or murdered – a change pointedly illustrated by the murder of Red Cross officials in the Caucasus in the 1990s. These conditions have forced CSOs, somewhat unwillingly and often without any desire to acknowledge the facts, to become diplomatic agents, either in a very direct way by having negotiations with

governments and local war lords, or outside the formal system as when negotiating with IGOs – the UN mainly – other CSOs and private firms commissioned to provide specific services. On top of that has come the need to be constantly representing themselves to the media both as part of their own security policies and in order to be the object of increased charitable giving.

There is no doubt that private actors have taken on new roles in current humanitarian crises; they have acquired a different relationship both to the crises themselves and to all the other parties also involved. These are generally four: the remaining sources of authority in the state concerned, other states, public and other private organizations. States have no problem being represented at the scene, public organizations, particularly pieces of the UN, have also little problem with representing themselves. For private actors, however, there is a problem. Little in their traditional activities has prepared them for the need to represent themselves or to become involved in co-ordinative negotiations; but both are having to be done on a daily basis. MSF field directors and co-ordinators, for example, can find themselves functioning both medically and politically – particularly in respect of relations with the media. So crucial can this aspect become that staff can be seconded to almost purely political activities, as has happened in respect of the MSF Nairobi co-ordinator since 1992, with responsibilities for relationships with local actors both in the Horn of Africa and in Rwanda and Burundi. Sometimes the going gets really rough, as with the abduction of MSF staff in Chechnya, when a small group of four people was drafted from line management positions and acted for four months as a negotiating agency with local power brokers in order to secure their release.

The increasing involvement of private actors in human rights – over and beyond those whose business they are – is creating the need to generate another kind of diplomacy: creating public pressure on governments and sometimes companies. To bring effective pressure to bear involves not only local action, but, just as significantly, attempting to move major governments into action both separately and through the UN system. This may need to be done quietly, or noisily, in direct contact with legislative committees and foreign ministries, or by attempting to influence public opinion on a national and transnational basis. On a general basis, the International Committee of Voluntary Associations (ICVA) does this in Europe and on behalf of Third-World private actors, and InterAction operates similarly in Washington. In addition, private actors, usually in coalitions, have moved into the lobbying business. Sometimes this is done, particularly by smaller and perhaps ‘one-issue’ actors, by ensuring that events involving them on the ground are widely reported by the media. This kind of activity can be substantially increased by the creation of coalitions of CSOs acting together. The ban on land mines and the establishment of the International Criminal Court were both events influenced by pressure of this kind. Larger and more permanent actors have concluded semi-federal agreements whereby they retain

independence of action but co-operate for the purpose of winning power and influence, with consequential allocations of resources. This is particularly significant in respect of UN and EU funding and the division of labour involved smoothes the process of negotiation.

These processes are more traditionally diplomatic, as may be seen from the fact that Amnesty International was the first individual CSO to be given a formal status at the UN. Breaches of human rights, reports of torture of prisoners by a government for example, can lead to several possible responses. Negotiations to stop the practice may be opened directly with the government concerned; other sympathetic governments can be lobbied to bring pressure on the accused government; or a public campaign of exposure of the atrocities can be begun in order to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on legislators across the world so that their own governments will respond by taking measures against the torturing state. A good example of the heady mixture that CSO pressure on state governments can produce was seen in the conclusion of the Ottawa convention of December 1997 prohibiting the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. Five years earlier, Handicap International and five other CSOs had launched the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Its work, assisted by the very spectacular intervention of Diana, Princess of Wales, who during a visit to war-ravaged Angola in January 1997 not only appeared with victims of explosions but contrived to walk through a minefield twice to ensure the media understood the message, led to a treaty which has since been signed by 156 countries (though not by China, Russia or the United States).

Similarly, a CSO-led campaign to reduce poverty and indebtedness in Africa achieved a notable diplomatic success at the G8 meeting at the Gleneagles Hotel, Auchterarder, Scotland, in July 2005. The process had begun at the Genoa G8 meeting in 2001 when the musician Bono met Condoleezza Rice, who was then US national security adviser, and discovered mutual interest both in music and in the condition of Africa. The consequence of Bono's lobbying was that his personal CSO, DATA, began to develop ideas which linked poverty reduction with good governance in Africa. In 2002, Bono invited the then US Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill (formerly the head of Alcoa) to join him on what became dubbed the 'odd couple' tour of Africa and the experience had an effect on O'Neill's perception of the problem. Meanwhile in England, the singer and humanitarian activist Bob Geldof had persuaded the government to establish a special commission for Africa whose report, *Our Common Interest: An Argument*, proved to have an agenda-setting effect and was further backed by Geldof's CSO Make Poverty History. In the run-up to the 2005 British general election this produced a strong commitment to reducing poverty on the part of government leaders which almost took the form of a competition in potential generosity between the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown. This influenced the British decision to make Africa the most significant part of the G8 agenda. At the same time in the USA, a campaign of Hollywood

celebrities, led by the actor Brad Pitt, brought strong public investment in the idea that the G8 should take action in Africa and by the time the meeting took place, the media and the crowds outside the gates, as well as a global public constituency in general, all made it certain that the G8 would have to respond; and it did, with a set of a concrete and specific goals.

Hearts, minds and eminent persons

In a television broadcast in November 1995 Princess Diana famously declared that she imagined for herself the role of 'Ambassador of the Heart' for the interests of her nation. Such a statement might easily be dismissed as sentimental nonsense. Yet the outcomes of both the anti-landmines campaign and the Gleneagles G8 indicate what can be achieved by eminent persons and CSOs working in conjunction. Eminences are no longer invariably grey. And while some celebrities may be famous simply for being famous, their value to diplomacy may lie in their being undiplomatic. Their popular appeal and non-association with formal governmental structures can be vital when it comes to winning over hearts and minds and securing public support on matters of global concern. Moreover, governments all over the world have a tendency to decide that where foreign direct investment is concerned, it is easier to devote specific physical areas to a project and allow it to be administered separately from the rest of the country because of the many derogations from local regulations that are usually involved. Similarly the complications of global political problems have led to a tendency to want to let them be taken out of the hands of the existing modes of communication and negotiation and placed in the hands of an eminent person or persons. It is not a new idea: some of the oldest forms of diplomacy used a similar technique and that technique was more or less replicated when in 1983, the Reverend Jesse Jackson was sent to Syria to seek the release of a captured US Navy pilot. In doing so, he was certainly representing the United States, just not via the usual channels.

However, in the last few decades the practice of using eminent persons has returned in a new form. Former Presidents Clinton and Carter, Mary Robinson of Ireland, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Senator George Mitchell, entertainment celebrities such as Bob Geldof and Bono, have all in various ways been involved. What is new is that these figures generally do not represent any other entity. All the other new or newer arrivals on the diplomatic stage are there because they need to represent themselves. The eminent persons function diplomatically because their reputation in a particular field or their known commitment to a particular viewpoint gives them credibility as genuinely 'in the middle'. If they are brought in by another party or volunteer to act for them, their position is a bit more complicated, but they remain independent in the sense of not being a formal part of any entity. Although there is no analogy between an eminent person diplomat and a government, CSO or TNC, the capacity they have for

creating channels of communication where before there had been a blockage gives them a real diplomatic function. Perhaps the most well known of all their efforts was that of former US Senator George Mitchell in Northern Ireland, followed by the various visits that President Carter has made. In 2001, the use of eminent persons was institutionalized by the establishment of the group known as the 'Elders'. This originated in a meeting between the British businessman Richard Branson and the musician Peter Gabriel. They convinced Nelson Mandela, Graça Mandela and Desmond Tutu to convene a group of 'Elders' from whom assistance could be obtained in otherwise stalled situations. In October 2007 an 'Elders' mission went to Darfur. They subsequently became involved in the disputed Kenya election in December 2007 and made efforts to support democracy in Zimbabwe and Burma. It is interesting to note that the 'Elders' are passing beyond the ad hoc nature of eminent person diplomacy by establishing a privately funded organizational structure of their own.²²