Diplomacy in the Twenty-First century: Change and Evolution

by
Laurence-Camille Richard
Student number: 5606784

API 6999: Major Research Paper
Presented to: Professor Peter Jones

September 15, 2011

Table of contents

Introduction

Diplomacy has been a relatively neglected subject in contemporary academic research, sometimes being referred to as "one of the lesser tools" of foreign policy[1]. Similarly, for most members of the general public, diplomacy and the issues it deals with remain fairly remote subjects with limited relevance to daily life. In truth, however, the study of diplomatic activity, a continuous and essential feature of international affairs, is a necessary vehicle for understanding global interactions between a broad range of actors and to make better sense of the international system. Additionally, in this globalized age of heightened interdependence between states and where the domestic and the international interlock, diplomacy becomes even more important as the business of contemporary international affairs becomes everybody's business[2].

Despite this situation, the continued relevance of diplomacy has been assailed since the 1990s by both academics and practitioners. Arguments have been put forward that diplomats have become anachronistic, the vestiges of a past international system, and that their traditional functions are now being taken over by a plethora of non-diplomatic actors. Because the diplomatic profession relies so heavily on words and knowledge management, the context of revolutions in communications technology, the arrival of the 24/7 news networks, of the World Wide Web and of easy and speedy air travel, have been used to argue that diplomats have become redundant, at most reduced to innkeepers or travel agents for visiting officials and their delegations[3]. As a result, the diplomatic institutions of many

[1] Alan James, cited in Paul Sharp, "For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations", International Studies Review, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1999, p. 34.
[2] Carne Ross, *Independent Diplomat – Dispatches from an Unaccountable Elite*, United States, Cornell University Press, 2007, p. 25.
[3] Kishan Rana, *The 21st Century Ambassador – Plenipotentiary to Chief Executive*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 27.

countries face a crisis as citizens and their governments become wary of paying for a complex traditional diplomatic machine which they no longer quite believe adds a significant value[4].

This research paper seeks to contribute to this discussion by addressing two central questions which correspond to the two principal sections of this essay. First, what are the main factors of change for diplomacy in the contemporary era? Second, considering these determinants of change and the evolving environment of international relations, is diplomacy still relevant, and if so, what are the functions that remain essential for today's diplomatic actors? In examining those questions, this paper will concentrate on diplomacy as an institution. Nevertheless, a few comments on the machinery of diplomacy, that is to say on the specific infrastructure of diplomacy, will be offered in the concluding remarks and in the annex.

In this paper, diplomacy will be distinguished from foreign policy and international relations. As explained by Canadian analyst Daryl Copeland, foreign policy is the content of international relations, the substance of what governments officially do outside their borders, with the aim to have, as much as possible, a stable international system. Diplomacy, for its part, is the 'how' – one of the means (alongside defence and international development) of conducting, managing and implementing foreign policy[5]. Although there is not one universally accepted definition of diplomacy, for the purpose of this paper, it will be understood as a non-violent approach to the management of international relations, the aim of which is the pursuit of national interests and values, and the promotion of a country's economic and political place in the world[6]. Diplomats traditionally accomplish three main functions, namely: representation (serving as intermediaries between countries and promoting their sovereign's interests), negotiation, and communication (gathering and transmitting

[4] Richard Langhorne, "The Diplomacy of Non-State Actors", Diplomacy and Statecraft, Vol. 16, 2006, p. 333.
[5] Daryl Copeland, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: Rethinking international relations*, United States, Boulder : Lynne Rienner, 2009, p. 7.
[6] This definition is inspired by interviews conducted with four former Canadian diplomats (see bibliography).

information on the country of accreditation)[7]. Even though there are differences of style and substance between the diplomatic structures of different countries, national diplomatic systems are generally constituted in a similar manner, with a central bureaucratic agency – the foreign ministry – and an overseas network of bilateral and multilateral missions – the foreign service[8]. This paper will discuss changes in both constituent parts of diplomatic systems, as changes in any one of them effects changes in the other.

Although aiming to go beyond classical notions of diplomacy by considering a broad range of new actors that impact on diplomatic activity, the attention of this paper will be on the traditional actors of diplomacy, namely the officially accredited representatives of sovereign nation-states. Moreover, the discussion will focus on bilateral diplomacy and the role of resident diplomats, rather than on multilateral diplomacy within international or regional organisations, since this latter subject would in itself warrant a separate study. Finally, because of limited space, this essay will concentrate on diplomacy as practiced in developed liberal democracies, although it is recognized that the study of the diplomatic practices of developing economies would also be of great interest.

SECTION I: The changing context of diplomacy

The following section is not an exhaustive review of the factors influencing contemporary diplomatic practice, but rather an analysis of those elements of change deemed to be most important by the author of this paper in light of their wide scope and far-reaching impact in transforming the roles of traditional diplomatic structures. In addition, in order to be

[7] Jan Melissen "Introduction", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, p. xvii.
[8] Brian Hocking and Donna Lee, "Change and innovation in Diplomacy: The Canadian and UK Experience", Report of the Loughborough University and the University of Birmingham, POLSIS (Department of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Birmingham), March 2008, [http://www.polsis.bham.ac.uk/documents/research/change-innovation-diplomacy.pdf], p. 10.

able to grasp the changing nature of diplomacy in the twenty-first century, this section opens with a short presentation of the evolution of diplomatic practices.

1.1. From the beginnings to globalization

Although it arguably already existed during classical antiquity, diplomacy as a complex instrument for the management of international affairs is traditionally considered to have emerged in the seventeenth century. Its development was parallel to that of a new system of international relations founded on the premise of the sovereign equality of nation-states, which was codified with the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. As the new nation-states gradually asserted their territorial domination, the need arose for a more orderly conduct of relations between these polities, based on a commonly accepted system of procedures, protocol and law[9]. Diplomacy thus emerged from this new system of international relations, at the same time that it helped fashion it.

Classical diplomacy was bilateral, linked to the representation of nation-state governments to one another and to exchanges between them[10]. The classical diplomats were drawn from the aristocratic ranks of the societies they represented, and the substance of communications between states was treated as a hermetically sealed world to be left to this professional elite. Diplomacy thus consisted almost exclusively of privileged dialogue among official agents, far from the public gaze, and ambassadors routinely enjoyed direct personal access to heads of states[11]. They handled weighty issues of *haute politique*; questions of sovereignty, territory, war and peace.

---

[9] Raymond Cohen, "Reflections on the New Global Diplomacy: Statecraft 2500 BC to 2000 AD", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, p. 13.
[10] Geoffrey Allen Pigman, *Contemporary Diplomacy – Representation and Communication in a Globalized World*, United Kingdom, Polity Press, 2010, p. 18.
[11] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 20-21.

Yet, diplomatic processes and practices evolved steadily throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and became more complex as a response to the development of more complicated governing structures in human societies, and the consequently more complicated issues they undertook to negotiate with each other[12]. The nature of diplomacy also changed significantly during the first half of the twentieth century, with the rise of multilateral diplomacy within the framework of international institutions such as the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations[13].

Diplomatic practices continued their evolution during the decolonization period following the end of the Second World War, which resulted in a dramatic expansion of the number of formally recognized sovereign states in the international system. For the new nation-states, establishing representatives abroad and receiving foreign envoys at home, in other words adopting the classical diplomatic model, was a high priority, an expression of their international personality[14]. Thus, as the newly formed states embraced the traditional diplomatic culture of Western states, diplomatic styles did not change significantly during this period. In fact, they were codified for the first time in 1961 in a general agreement, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which helped new nation-states understand the previously essentially de facto rules operated by older states[15]. Nevertheless, the presence of new players promoting their particular agendas, and the dramatic differentiation which rapidly appeared between them in terms of their capacities and attributes, diversified and at the same time complicated the substance of diplomatic relations.

The Cold War marked a new chapter in the evolution of diplomacy. According to author Daryl Copeland, the 'balance of terror' between the Western and Soviet blocs established clear rules for diplomatic practice. Individual countries remained the main actors

[12] Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy – Its evolution, theory and administration*, Second edition, New York, Routledge, 2011, p. 1.
[13] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 52.
[14] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 20.
[15] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 2.

of international relations, formal alliances were forged and states shared a belief in the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in other's internal affairs, at least with regards to the two major powers[16]. Copeland further argues that there was a certain degree of familiarity in the international system, a sense of stability which he characterizes as a 'Cold War comfort', maintaining that "interstate diplomacy was mainly set-piece and predictable.[17]" It is true that the Cold War era produced a relatively stable framework of international relations that anchored the foreign policy and diplomacy of most countries, with the pre-determined relationships of bloc dynamics[18]. The imposed rigidities of the bipolar system also partly stifled innovations in diplomatic practices. But things were far from being entirely fixed and predictable. Indeed, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) of the newly formed countries of the South emerged as a challenge to the cultural, social and economic values of the West, and therefore also to the methods and mores of Western diplomacy[19]. Additionally, new developments such as technological advances, limited globalization and the appearance of new non-state actors were already taking place, although it was arguably only after the Cold War that the veil was lifted and that the degree to which things had changed became apparent.

The two decades following the end of the Cold War were marked by a dramatic acceleration of these new developments, particularly the quick progression of globalization, which remains the defining historical phenomenon of the contemporary era. The process of globalization is, of course, far from entirely new, as it is possible to track the first period of economic integration back to the beginnings of the twentieth century. However, the current phase of globalization, driven primarily by economic forces and new communication technologies, leads to a deeper interdependence between countries, not only in the economic

[16] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.,* p. 20-21.
[17] Ibid., p. 20.
[18] Rana, *op cit.,* p. 21.
[19] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.,* p. 186.

sphere but also in an expansive array of human activities. Academic Raymond Cohen notes that "globalization, the breakdown of national barriers to the world-wide spread of trade, investment, travel and information of all kinds, brings societies and civilizations into contact as never before.[20]"

Globalization and its many corollaries are having a significant impact on the conduct of international relations, and hence on diplomacy. One of the changes accompanying globalization is the current 'international disorder'; the new era of uncertainty for states and their diplomats which has followed the demise of the Soviet Union[21]. Long-buried but deeply rooted tribal, ethnic and religious differences are sprouting to the surface, leading to a multiplication of the number of international and, increasingly, of internal conflicts which are often less predictable, more complex and asymmetrical. Furthermore, globalization is weakening the governmental structures of fragile states, leading to an increase in the number of state failures. Additionally, since it is by nature heavily unequal, globalization is creating both winners and losers, beneficiaries and victims, thus increasing social instability[22]. The result of this international disorder is that the work of diplomats is becoming significantly more complex. Indeed, as explained by Daryl Copeland, "multiple threats to global order, which are at least as likely to stem from the activities of supranational or intranational collectivities as they are from the machinations of traditional nation-states, have rendered the peaceful administration of the international system increasingly difficult.[23]"

Another impact of globalization which is significant for diplomacy is the changing international agenda, a manifestation of the increased interdependence among nations which comes with global integration. As the fate of countries has become indivisible, issues on the international agenda have multiplied and become more complex, intertwined and technical

[20] Raymond Cohen, *op cit.*, p. 1.
[21] Samy Cohen, "Introduction : L'art de gérer les turbulences mondiales", in *Les Diplomates – Négocier dans un monde chaotique*, Paris, Éditions Autrement – Collection Mutations, 2002, p. 5.
[22] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, Chapter 1.
[23] Ibid., p. 1.

than ever before[24]. They include, but are not limited to, the promotion of trade and investment, the regulation of international financial systems, the fight against international terrorism and organized crime, the support for sustainable development, the prevention of conflict, and the cooperation on pressing environmental issues as well as on issues of human rights[25]. Individual governments have a very limited impact on all these issues, on which "the world works together, or hangs individually.[26]" For diplomacy, this new international agenda has resulted in more cooperation across countries, as well as in a hive of activity in many areas of an increasingly technical nature, leading the generalist diplomat into unfamiliar territory.

Globalization can also be associated with the advent of the digital age of new media and the rapid evolution of communication technologies which are compressing time and space and leading to a democratization of information. This, in turn, can be linked to a transformation of the traditional roles of individuals and groups who now have the opportunity to operate on the world stage independently of the apparatus of the state[27]. New non-state actors taking advantage of technological change (transnational firms, global civil society organizations, global terrorist networks, etc.) have thus now clearly become influential independent players in the international arena. As will be discussed in more detail in the following pages, this situation is transforming the activities of states' diplomatic representatives.

Scholar Jan Melissen argues that globalization's cumulative impact is that the ways in which states are dealing with one another have been more deeply transformed in the past four

[24] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 12.
[25] George Argyros, Marc Grossman and Felix Rohatyn, "The Embassy of the Future", Report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), October 15, 2007, [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/embassy_of_the_future.pdf], p. 1.
[26] Shaun Riordan, *The New Diplomacy*, United Kingdom, Polity Press, 2003, p. 54.
[27] Brian Hocking, "Catalytic Diplomacy: Beyond 'Newness' and 'Decline'", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, p. 24.

decades than in the 350 years since the Peace of Westphalia[28]. In a similar vein, American diplomat Henry Kissinger notes that "never before have the components of world order, their capacity to interact, and their goals all changed quite so rapidly, so deeply, or so globally.[29]" It is clearly undeniable that globalization is altering the nature of international relations, and therefore also the conduct of diplomatic activity. In fact, globalization can be considered as the overarching process which binds together all the other factors effecting changes in diplomatic practices. These will be further analyzed below.

1.2. The Information and Communication Technology Revolution

Scholar Geoffrey Pigman observes that, in only the last two centuries, "technology has developed from an age in which communication between governments could only take place at the speed at which a horse or camel could travel between the two capitals to a time of instantaneous telephonic and internet communication.[30]" As mentioned in the introduction, one of the central functions of diplomacy is communication. This task is so crucial to diplomatic activity that, over history, virtually any advance in communication technology has affected diplomatic practices, starting with the invention of the telegraph in the nineteenth century, which resulted in an acceleration of international relations and in the 'obliteration' of distances[31]. Thus, when the first dispatch sent by cable reached his desk in the 1840s, British Foreign Minister Lord Palmerston is famously reported to have exclaimed: "This is the end of diplomacy![32]"

---

[28] Melissen, *op cit.*, p. xiv.
[29] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994, p. 806.
[30] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 110.
[31] Cristina Archetti, "What Difference Do Communication Technologies Make to Diplomatic Practice? An Evolutionary Model of Change Based on the Experience of London Foreign Diplomats", Paper prepared for the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Convention, Washington, September 2-5, 2010, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID1729138_code1511861.pdf?abstractid=1642542&mirid=1], p. 2.
[32] Cited in Archetti, *op cit.*, p. 2.

Likewise, commentators have been quick to predict that the modern information and communication technology (ICT) revolution rendered diplomats redundant and irrelevant. Not only are contemporary technologies further eroding distances and borders by allowing for speedy and direct communications between politicians and government officials, but one of the defining element of the contemporary ICT revolution is that it is also leading to a democratization of information by allowing any individual to take part in instantaneous world-wide communications. Thus, although predictions regarding the extinction of diplomacy appear excessive, it is indubitable that modern technologies, including television, the continuous new networks, satellite communications, mobile telephony and the Internet, constitute what is probably the most obvious structural change to the environment in which diplomats from developed countries operate. Three specific repercussions on diplomatic practices seem particularly relevant and are detailed below.

A first consequence of technology is that it has dramatically transformed the function of information-gathering traditionally performed by diplomats. Before the late 1980s, diplomats where almost as much reporters as they were analysts[33]. One of their most important roles was to inform the home country of developments in the world, by combining assiduous reading of the local print media with a network of personal contacts. Already in the 1970s, however, this traditional function started to be challenged, as seen through comments such as that of Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau who famously quipped that he could obtain all of the international reporting he needed just by reading the *New York Times*[34]. Today, diplomats' reporting task has clearly receded, as most of the information reaching governments about developments throughout the world comes from the wire services, newspapers, news magazines, radio, television, and the Internet-based media. Facts are now easily transmitted, and "an official based in the Foreign Ministry with a modem and terminal

[33] Claude Laverdure, personal interview, June 2011.
[34] Cited in Daryl Copeland, "New Rabbits, Old Hats: International Policy and Canada's Foreign Service in an Era of Reduced Diplomatic Resources", International Journal, Vol. 60, No.3, Summer 2005, p. 743.

has real-time access to a wide range of source material, from government, the media, political parties, academics, and the commercial world.[35]" Moreover, the speed with which the electronic media reports on issues often leaves diplomats playing catch-up in trying to inform their governments[36]. As long as reporting of international events was limited to the print media, embassies could operate on the same time-scale as the press, and claim access to sources of information that gave their reporting greater weight and credibility. But with the speed of operation of today's media, embassies are very unlikely to be the first to report on a major event to their political masters. Some commentators have argued that this puts diplomatic reporting in a mere supporting role relatively to the media[37]. Such an assertion needs to be nuanced however, since much of the information which is vital for the effective conduct of foreign policy still remains out of reach of the media, particularly in authoritarian countries or in countries that do not have a long tradition of free press. Additionally, even in the most democratic countries, the media may be valuable, instant sources of information and even in the cases of journals such as *The Economist* or *Le Monde*, sources of in-depth reports, but they cannot offer the needed analysis of events centred on the perspective and interests of the home country which diplomatic envoys can provide[38]. Therefore, as will be further developed in the second section of this essay, the new media does not displace the information-gathering role of diplomats, but rather transforms it as diplomats are no longer so much concerned with informing their governments of world events, and instead concentrate on shaping the analysis of these events.

A second related impact of the new ICT is the changing speed of diplomatic activity and the increasing need for diplomats to respond to the pressure exerted by the media. Today, as technology speeds up communications, the reaction time for country leaders and their

[35] Riordan, *op cit.,* p. 63.
[36] Ibid., p. 4.
[37] See for instance Archetti, *op cit.,* p. 3.
[38] Rana, *op cit.,* p. 89.

diplomats has been significantly shortened. When a critical event happens in a foreign country, politicians from the home country require speedy reactions to present to the media, to fill the terrain otherwise left open for their critics and opponents[39]. The diplomat posted in the concerned foreign country can therefore expect a call from his foreign ministry almost immediately, asking for explanations and recommendations. As less time becomes available for thoughtful analysis and interpretation, diplomatic decisions are consequently often taken based on less information, rather than more, increasing the risk of inaccurate responses[40]. This situation also signifies that in many instances diplomats, overwhelmed with the flood of information, can mainly react to events rather than try to shape them[41]. In addition, many scholars and practitioners contend that, because of the so-called 'CNN-effect', foreign-policy decisions are now increasingly taken to appease the media rather than on the basis of considered analysis. A German diplomat posted in London noted that diplomats therefore have to "react to the world that is created by the media and the world in which [their] politicians live; not to the real world.[42]" This may not be entirely true, as there is no consistent evidence of the media seriously influencing foreign policy-making, except maybe when there is a policy vacuum to be filled. Most probably, where policy-makers and their diplomatic advisors are able to formulate and articulate a clear and reasonably coherent policy, the media are still likely to follow their lead[43]. Nonetheless, the pressure of the media and the need to take these new players into account in the conduct of foreign policy is indisputably an important factor of change for contemporary diplomatic practice.

A final factor of transformation linked to the new technologies, which has already been briefly mentioned, is the democratization of information and the resulting increase in the influence of public opinion on the conduct of foreign policy. The new ICT has improved the

[39] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 235.
[40] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 110.
[41] Archetti, *op cit.*, p. 11.
[42] Cited in Archetti, *op cit.*, p. 10.
[43] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 61.

reach of information to the general public, as opposed to only the higher, elite classes. The advent of the Internet, in particular, allows members of the public not only to access, but also to use and disseminate information. According to communications scholar Evan Potter, of globalization's many effects, one of the most profound for diplomatic practice is this ability of citizens to challenge official positions and actively engage in policy debates[44]. Indeed, this empowerment of citizens is transforming the relationship between diplomatic actors and their domestic and foreign publics[45]. For one thing, the improved public access to information has been accompanied by a general malaise that seems to affect the credibility of all public institutions, including diplomatic structures[46]. Public confidence in governments as a whole is waning over time, partly because political leaders are struggling with the complexity of things, partly because the information flow escapes their control, and partly because of the widespread media diffusion of past instances, such as the Watergate scandal, where officials have been caught deliberately lying to their constituencies. As a result, wary citizens in democratic countries continuously ask for more transparency and accountability from their leadership. This also applies to diplomats, whose activities are now open to daily scrutiny and criticism, and who are asked to show concrete results for money spent[47]. This particularly challenges the notion of confidentiality traditionally inherent to diplomatic practice and which is often necessary to advance negotiations and obtain privileged information. Additionally, public opinion is deemed to increasingly matter in the development of policies, with governments adjusting their policies so as to build and retain public support and legitimacy for their actions. This implies that states and their diplomats aspiring to have a global impact must develop tools to influence foreign publics alongside those that already exist for

[44] Evan Potter, "Canada and the New Public Diplomacy", International Journal, Vol. 58, No. 1, Winter 2002-2003, p.49.
[45] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 12.
[46] Peter Harder, former Canadian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, cited in Aubrey Morantz, "Does Canadian Foreign Policy Need a Foreign Service? Can the Second Oldest Profession Learn New Tricks?", Canadian Institute of International Affairs Occasional Paper, Vol.2, No.8, 2005, p. 1.
[47] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 16.

interacting with foreign officials[48]. The importance of foreign public opinion, however, should not be overestimated, since often the relation between popular will and a policy decision is far from being direct or linear. In most instances, diplomats hoping to influence the policies of foreign countries still need to reach out to decision-makers rather than to their publics.

The above discussion clearly shows that new information and communication technologies have transformed one of the traditional functions of diplomatic actors, that of information-gathering, and have had a deep impact on the way diplomacy is generally conducted. It is therefore not surprising that, according to former Canadian diplomat Daniel Livermore, the greatest challenge states and their representatives currently face is in adapting their objectives and the way they carry out their tasks to the new technologies that are available, and to tailor these to their interests and values[49]. New technologies may have transforming impacts for diplomacy, but they also open up new opportunities for foreign ministries and their envoys, who can and should learn to use them as force multipliers to achieve their diplomatic objectives.

1.3. Social and political changes

Former British diplomat Shaun Riordan notes that the impacts of new technologies have been compounded by, and have themselves reinforced, the transformation of the political and social framework in which diplomacy operates[50]. Two social and political evolutions are especially relevant for contemporary diplomacy, namely the involvement of new domestic actors in foreign policy, and the rising influence of non-state actors. With these changes, which are analyzed below, power over the conduct of foreign policy and thus over diplomacy

[48] Jamie Frederic Metzl, "Popular Diplomacy", Daedalus, Vol. 128, No. 2, Spring 1999, p. 181-182.
[49] Daniel Livermore, personal interview, May 31, 2011.
[50] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 66.

is both flowing laterally to new government players other than the foreign ministry and its foreign service, as well as outward to private entities.

1.3.1. New domestic actors

As briefly observed in the introduction, one of the most significant processes characterizing the twenty-first century is the breaking down of the social, political and economic boundaries between the domestic and the international, or in other words the internationalization of national policies[51]. This is linked to the growing interdependence between nations and to the new international agenda mentioned in the earlier discussion on globalization, as well as to the fact that issues once thought to be almost exclusively domestic, for instance patterns of energy consumption or even vaccination rates, have become topics of international concern and targets of concerted action. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult to name even one area of domestic policy that does not have an international aspect. American diplomat Strobe Talbott even argues that the very expression 'foreign policy' is becoming obsolete as "what happens there matters here – and vice versa.[52]" This situation is having a significant impact for diplomacy. Most importantly, the boundaries determining the operations of national diplomatic systems have become less clearly delineated, and traditional notions of the separation of the spheres of domestic politics and diplomacy have become increasingly untenable[53].

Traditionally, the foreign ministry was considered to be the sole institution in charge of conducting a nation-state's diplomacy. The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic

[51] Ernst Sucharipa, "21st Century Diplomacy", The Asrudian Center for International Politics, International Relations Theory, Economics and Philosophy, 2008, [http://asrudiancenter.wordpress.com/2008/09/23/21st-century-diplomacy/].
[52] Strobe Talbott, "Globalization and Diplomacy: A Practitioner's Perspective", Foreign policy, No. 108, Fall 1997, p.81.
[53] Hocking and Lee, *op cit.*, p. 11.

Relations, which codifies diplomatic practices, clearly stipulates that "all official business with the receiving State entrusted to the mission by the sending State shall be conducted with or through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the receiving State[54]". Arguably, foreign ministries and their representatives have never enjoyed a complete monopoly on the conduct of international relations. During the Second World War for instance, the needs of pursuing total war meant that diverse agencies and ministries were represented in diplomatic missions abroad[55]. However, this phenomenon has accelerated and taken larger proportions in contemporary times. Today the situation is such that almost all domestic ministries are involved, in one way or another, in the conduct of foreign policy. Thus, in most Western countries, the majority of domestic departments have their own international division and maintain agents and information sources abroad. Furthermore, in federal systems where political authority is divided between autonomous governing structures, different levels of government are also involved in foreign affairs. This situation is not only a result of the breakdown of the domestic/international divide, but also ensues from the increased complexity of international issues which are highly technical, requiring well-trained departmental and sectoral specialists to understand and address them. As a result, diplomats' working environment has become highly crowded. For instance, Canada's missions abroad in 2005 hosted fifteen government departments, six agencies and three provinces, and only 23% of the 1,600 Canadian government personnel abroad were foreign service officers from the federal foreign ministry[56].

In close relation to the above, another relatively new phenomenon impacting diplomacy is the growth of direct contacts between heads of states and other senior government officials, which has been labeled as transgovernmental networking. Since

[54] Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Article 41 (2), [http://untreaty.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf].
[55] Jeremy Black, *A History of Diplomacy*, London, United Kingdom, Reaktion Books, 2010, p. 232.
[56] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Diplomacy*, Canada, Ottawa, 2005, p. 29.

approximately the last twenty years, transgovernmental networks have become an important feature of global governance, growing in scale and scope. This has been facilitated by technological evolutions and the ease of modern air travel, which make it easier for the political masters to exchange with their opposite numbers, either directly or through the use of remote communication technologies. As a consequence, the pace of bilateral and multilateral encounters among heads of state and ministers today has multiplied. Summits, as well as working and unofficial visits have become much more frequent, and are often complemented with phone calls and direct messages[57]. Embassy logs show a steady procession of ministers visiting their foreign counterparts, from departments regulating environmental protection, agriculture, education, and all the other domains of the modern regulatory state[58]. In certain instances, networking officials bypass foreign ministries and their diplomats by contacting each other directly. This situation makes it more difficult for diplomatic envoys to capture a precise overview of what is happening in bilateral relationships, precisely at a time where, as will be seen below, this function acquires a new signification.

International relations scholar Anne-Marie Slaughter considers that networking officials are today's new diplomats, on the front lines of international policy issues. She writes that, in light of the current pace of ministerial travels and summits, the public "could be excused for thinking that diplomacy is conducted by everyone *but* the diplomats.[59]" Likewise, some commentators argue that diplomats have been reduced to providing visiting politicians with accommodation, entertainment and enlightenment, the analogy between diplomats and innkeepers being commonplace[60]. It is indisputable that diplomats have lost their centrality in the conduct of international relations, particularly in the domain of negotiation. Whereas the resident ambassador was traditionally the first-level negotiator for his country, this is no

[57] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 13.
[58] Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order*, United States, Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 36.
[59] Ibid., p. 39.
[60] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 262.

longer the case, as much of the negotiating work can be conducted directly between the principals involved in each relevant issue, who have the advantage of possessing a thorough understanding of the complexities of their particular technical field. It is, for instance, imaginable that the agriculture ministers of two countries directly agree to the terms of a new bilateral agreement by telephone, videoconferencing, or at a face-to-face meeting after a flight by one of them[61]. Nevertheless, as will be argued in the second section of this essay, although diplomats' direct involvement in transgovernmental negotiations may be less important, these would not be possible without their particular expertise and the essential groundwork that they perform. The envoy's role may have been transformed, but not lessened by the growth of transgovernmental networking.

As already mentioned above, if the centrality of foreign ministries and diplomats in the conduct of foreign affairs is being challenged from the sides by the involvement of line departments and the networking of government officials, it is also being undermined from below by the activities of sub-national entities. Exclusive responsibility for the management of foreign policy has historically either been ceded to or retained by central governments, although in some cases sub-national entities have been allowed to set up cultural and tourist offices abroad. In theory, this ought to make regional or provincial governments marginal to the world of diplomacy, but practice is different[62]. Increasingly, sub-national governments, and even the municipal governments of large metropolitan areas such as London, Tokyo, or New York, exchange representatives with other diplomatic actors and engage in direct diplomatic communications which go well beyond cultural affairs, ranging from trade and investment to the prevention of terrorism, the provision of social services, or environmental issues[63]. There are many examples of such sub-national involvement in foreign policy, including Wales in the United Kingdom, Catalonia in Spain, Bavaria in Germany and the

[61] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 111.
[62] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 75.
[63] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 47.

provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Alberta in Canada. These sub-national entities today routinely engage in many of the same core diplomatic functions of representation, negotiation and communication that characterize diplomacy between sovereign states[64]. They open offices in foreign capitals and other major world cities, send their leaders on ever more frequent visits and establish direct relations with central governments and with their opposite numbers.

These sub-national activities appear particularly consequential for diplomacy on three levels. First, national diplomatic actors increasingly need to consult sub-national entities before undertaking new diplomatic endeavours. This follows from the fact that nation-states are increasingly taking international commitments for which jurisdiction falls to the sub-national level. In such cases, even if negotiations between central diplomatic actors are successful, implementation is bound to fail if the views of sub-national governments are not previously taken into account. A second repercussion of sub-national activities is that, as they develop direct relations with foreign counterparts, whole areas of international business are now carried on outside the control, and often without the knowledge of diplomats and foreign ministries. This in turn leads to the third consequence, which is the increasing risk of disagreements and incoherence in the conduct of a country's foreign policy. As explained by Shaun Riordan, the basis of a traditional bilateral embassy was a unified central government line which the embassy represented to outside interlocutors[65]. This is not to say that differences or disagreements between the central and sub-national levels did not exist, but rather that these were usually dealt with internally, with the central government working to achieve policy coherence before presenting the country's overall position abroad. Today however, internal dissensions become more apparent to foreign partners, as sub-national entities often directly present their own positions to outside interlocutors. This situation was well illustrated by the December 2009 International Climate Change Conference in

[64] Ibid., p. 46.
[65] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 77.

Copenhagen, during which a number of Canadian provinces vocally expressed their disagreement with the federal government's climate change policy in front of the international community. The projection of distorted or incoherent messages resulting from such sub-national activities can be confusing for foreign governments and audiences, and can be detrimental to the achievement of a country's general objectives. Additionally, these sub-national activities make it much more difficult for national diplomatic actors to act as the representatives of the whole nation's interests, as it appears that there is not anymore one single coherent and responsible center of power in their home country.

The preceding analysis demonstrates that the breakdown of the distinction between foreign and domestic affairs has ruptured the hermetic seal around diplomacy. The involvement in international relations of domestic actors other than the foreign ministry and its foreign service, namely numerous government departments, transgovernmental networks of ministers and sub-national entities, has had the effect of diffusing the authority for much of the key foreign policy decision-making and implementation[66]. As a result, the overall role of foreign ministries and foreign services is evolving. The foreign ministry may traditionally have been regarded as the mediator between the whole government of the home state and foreign governments, taking the lead in regulating and coordinating the involvement of other institutions of government in diplomacy, a function which international relations professor Brian Hocking describes as that of the gatekeeper[67]. However, as roles and responsibilities are now relocated in the context of changing policy boundaries, foreign ministries can hardly contend to be the sole and exclusive interface between the domestic and the foreign. Moreover, to the extent that they attempt to hold on to their traditional gatekeeper role, foreign ministries and foreign services are likely to be increasingly bypassed in the real world

[66] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 155.
[67] Cited in Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 37.

of diplomatic practice[68]. In order to remain relevant, they therefore have to carve out a new role for themselves. Hocking appropriately suggests that foreign ministries should become 'boundary-spanners', acting not as mediators but as facilitators between all of the agencies and ministries, as well as other levels of government involved in diplomacy[69]. As boundary-spanners, the role of diplomatic actors should be to bring coherence and to ensure that everyone knows what others are doing, in order to achieve policy objectives as efficiently as possible.

1.3.2. New non-governmental actors

In addition to the proliferation of domestic actors involved in diplomacy, another set of players which diplomats have to take into account today are non-governmental or non-state actors. As argued by Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, 'non-state actor' is a new name for a not so very new phenomenon in international politics[70]. Indeed, private actors have played a role in international relations since arguably the end of the nineteenth century, but the last forty years have seen an extraordinary rise in both the number and influence of these actors. For questions of limited space, only two categories of non-governmental actors are considered in this section, namely civil society organizations and multinational corporations, although others, such as terrorist organizations, would also warrant further analysis.

The term civil society organization (CSO) incorporates the less specific but more common term of non-governmental organization (NGO) and refers to all social organizations outside of that undertaken by governmental, military and judicial bodies[71]. CSOs vary in size and geographical significance, from localized to enormous transnational organizations such as Greenpeace or Amnesty international. They also differ according to their source of funding

[68] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 209.
[69] Cited in Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 40.
[70] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 268.
[71] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 88.

and their relationship with their home government. There has been an exponential growth in the number of CSOs since the end of the Second World War, with now over 20,000 transnational non-governmental organization networks active on the world stage[72]. Their impact and role in the conduct of international affairs has also qualitatively changed over the years. This evolution is attributable to many of the factors of change previously described. One of them is the technology revolution, which has equipped CSOs with the means both to assume higher public profiles and to perform their role as global actors. The efficient use of new technologies now allows even the smaller CSOs to develop a level of effective coordination once only available to states and large organizations, to gather information, and to challenge on increasingly equal terms the assertions of governments[73]. The growth of CSOs' influence can also be connected to the rising influence of public opinion and interest groups on government policies, to the internationalization of domestic affairs, and to a general loosening of the grip of central governments on the conduct of international affairs. These combined factors have created space for civil society actors in developed countries to engage in representation and communication with foreign actors directly, rather than being required to have their interests represented by the diplomats of nation-state governments[74].

CSOs are thus no longer at the margins of the international system, but have rather become actors in their own right. Depending on the matter being discussed, the timing, and the attitude of the other participants involved, CSOs can be influential on a broad range of issues, including economic globalization, environmental matters, and humanitarian crises. CSOs generally enjoy strong public support for their activities and possess a legitimacy in the eyes of citizens generally unequalled by governments, a situation which confers them a certain political power[75]. In some cases, this allows them to play a constraining role on the

[72] Riordan, *op cit.,* p. 86.
[73] Ibid., p. 91.
[74] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 88.
[75] Hocking, *op cit.*, p. 33.

international activities of governments by influencing international public opinion and domestic reactions to policy decisions. In other cases, CSOs can play a role in setting the international agenda. They can also take advantage of their perceived legitimacy to influence the outcomes of international negotiations by strengthening the arms of countries who agree with them, and undermining the position of others. Furthermore, because of their specific resources and of their independence from governments (albeit to varying degrees), CSOs can sometimes undertake tasks that governments cannot or do not want to do, ranging from disaster relief to feeding the poor, and delivering social services like education or rural health care[76]. Finally, CSOs can have a particularly relevant role to play in situations of conflict resolution and in complex humanitarian emergencies. Indeed, Canadian political scientist Janice Gross Stein argues that, as there has been a disengagement of great powers from the provision of security and emergency assistance to distressed populations, CSOs, especially the humanitarian organizations, are now playing a growing role in international conflict resolution[77]. According to scholar Daniel Byman, CSOs have many advantages over state representatives in such contexts. They can often respond faster than governments who have to work through burdensome bureaucracies. Moreover, because they often remain in-country for longer periods of time, they can develop a far better understanding of the local security and political situation, as well as of the sensitivities of the local culture[78]. These combined advantages often allow relief CSOs to meet the immediate needs of distressed populations more rapidly and more efficiently than the officials of intervening governments ever could.

The extent of CSOs' general international involvement today has prompted some scholars to observe that many important areas of current international relations would be

[76] Pigman, *op cit.,* p. 91.
[77] Janice Gross Stein, "New Challenges to Conflict Resolution: Humanitarian Nongovernmental Organizations in Complex Emergencies," in *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War*, Daniel Druckman and Paul Stern (eds.), Washington, D.C., National Academy Press, 2000, p. 384.
[78] Daniel Byman, "Uncertain Partners: NGOs and the Military," Survival, vol. 43, no. 2, Summer 2001, p.100.

unthinkable without the active contribution of the CSO community[79]. The most often cited example showing the growing importance of CSOs in today's international system is that of the 1996-1997 global campaign to ban landmines, which is often referred to as the Ottawa Process. In 1996, the international diplomatic community was already engaged in discussions to impose stricter limitations on the use of antipersonnel landmines, principally through a revision of the already existing United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. However, a number of CSOs were concerned that the process was moving too slowly and that the official agenda, which fell short of a complete ban, was too limited. As a response, a coalition of more than 1,000 CSOs was formed, headed by a new non-governmental organization called the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). With the collaboration of sympathetic small and middle power states, this coalition managed to quickly advance its agenda and to persuade the international community to adopt a new convention to ban landmines in 1997, which to this date has been ratified by 154 countries[80]. Reflecting on the Ottawa Process, then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan affirmed that this proved that a "coalition of governments, NGOs, international institutions and civil society can set a global agenda and effect change.[81]" In addition, the Ottawa Process was said by some observers to herald the advent of a 'new diplomacy' characterized by the integral involvement of civil society, the focus on ethical and humanitarian ideals, and the importance of small and medium-sized countries as opposed to the domination of a few great powers[82]. Most importantly, some authors argued that the greater involvement of CSOs led to a democratization of diplomacy. Political scientist Maxwell Cameron, for instance, argued that the Ottawa process, which compelled policy-makers to provide public reasons for their

[79] Sucharipa, *op cit.*
[80] David Davenport, "The New Diplomacy," Policy Review, no. 116, December, 2002 & January 2003, [http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/8102].
[81] Cited in Michael Dolan and Chris Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process: The New Multilateralism," in Maxwell Cameron, Robert Lawson and Brian Tomlin (eds.), *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines*, Toronto, Oxford Press, 1998, p. 396.
[82] Ibid., pp. 398-399.

actions and exposed them to criticism from civil society , provided an instructive example of how to foster greater public participation in foreign policy-making and thereby make this policy area more democratic[83].

In truth, however, the impact of CSOs' involvement in international relations is more ambiguous than it may first seem. Indeed, the claim that their presence leads to a democratization of diplomacy needs to be nuanced by the recognition that CSOs in general suffer from an accountability and legitimacy deficit. Unlike government representatives, CSOs are really accountable to no particular constituency, and often have no internal democratic decision structures[84]. They are pressure groups who speak only for themselves, and their presence leaves open the very relevant question posed by political analyst David Rieff: "so who elected the NGOs?[85]" In addition, they are generally single-issue organizations defending limited interests, which would often be willing to sacrifice a wide range of other international values to pursue their own agenda[86]. With this in mind, it is very difficult to argue that such special-interest groups have the authority and right to speak on behalf of broader communities, and even more difficult to maintain that their activities are more democratic than those of elected national leaders and governmental institutions. In fact, it is possible to argue that the existing institutions of representative democracy already provide an adequate framework for democratic foreign policy-making. Still, even if their value does not lay in democratizing diplomacy, it is this writer's opinion that CSOs can nevertheless be said to have a positive influence on the conduct of international relations for the reasons explained below.

---

[83] Maxwell Cameron, "Democratization of Foreign Policy: The Ottawa Process as a Model," in Maxwell Cameron, Robert Lawson and Brian Tomlin (eds.), *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines*, Toronto, Oxford Press, 1998, p. 443.
[84] Hocking and Lee, *op cit.*, p. 21.
[85] Cited in Kenneth Anderson, "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines, the Role of International Non-governmental Organizations and the Idea of International Civil Society", European Journal of International Law, vol. 11, no. 1, 2000, p. 119.
[86] Davenport, *op cit.*

CSOs represent a new layer of recognized participants in the international system, who can give voice to less well-known or understood perspectives on international relations. In addition, because CSOs often enjoy a higher degree of public trust, governmental actors can enlist their help in building public support for important foreign policy initiatives and in implementing policies, especially in areas such as human rights and development cooperation. Furthermore, CSOs' usually limited focus allows them to develop a knowledge and expertise in specific areas which governments addressing numerous policy issues are unable to match[87]. Because of their perceived impartiality, they also at times have access to individuals and groups who, for whatever reasons, will not talk to government officials, or with whom these officials do not wish to associate. Because of these advantages, governmental representatives can gain much from using CSOs as sources of information, with the aim of developing and managing foreign policies in the most appropriate way.

Since their activities can either bring additional support to, or on the contrary defy a country's official stand on the international stage, or in some cases even create situations of embarrassment for states, CSOs' presence definitely cannot be ignored by diplomatic actors[88]. In fact, from the above it is clear that governments and their diplomatic representatives can benefit from establishing ongoing relationships with these new influential actors. CSOs, in turn, can themselves gain from such close collaboration as they still remain dependent on governments to a certain degree for the public recognition, support and financial backing which is necessary to achieve their objectives, and also require access to government bodies for purposes of gaining political information and influence over the shaping of policies[89]. Whereas closer ties between governments and CSOs are desirable, however, observers also note that this entails a dual danger. On the one hand, CSOs are often reluctant to work in a close relationship with governments, as they fear that this could lead to the cooptation of their

[87] Hocking and Lee, *op cit.*, p. 21.
[88] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 12.
[89] Hocking, *op cit.*, p. 33.

policies by governments and call into question their impartiality, which often is their most important advantage. On the other hand, some observers fear that governments collaborating with civil society organizations may become 'hostages' to the narrow interests of these groups[90]. Critics fear the creation of a new 'private order' where governments would be more attuned to the concerns of unaccountable special interest groups rather than to those of their own citizens[91]. To guard against such scenarios, governments and their representatives need to adopt clear guidelines on when and how to collaborate with CSOs. Governments also need to remain open and transparent in all their dealings with these actors, thereby allowing citizens to question their actions when they judge that they respond to interest-group pressure rather than to the public interest.

Alongside CSOs, another group of influential non-governmental actors are transnational corporations (TNCs). TNCs are both the primary agents and a natural product of economic globalization, which has brought with it trade and financial liberalization, and the worldwide integration of production[92]. Today's firms differ greatly in terms of size and degree of transnational activity. Some do little or no business across state borders, but an increasing number of even smaller firms are transnational in some way. Whereas some international firms have a particularly close relationship with one or two countries, many TNCs have become stateless, without a strong corporate affiliation to a country of origin. As explained by Daryl Copeland, the location of their activities is incidental to their priorities and objectives: they raise capital in international financial centers, do their design work in places where creative expertise is abundant, assemble products where labor market conditions suit them, market where the demand is strong, and so forth[93]. The world's most important TNCs control information, markets, investments and financial flows, and their numerous cross-

[90] Cameron, *op cit.*, p. 428.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Juergen Kleiner, *Diplomatic Practice – Between Tradition and Innovation*, Singapore and Hackensack, NJ, World Scientific Publishing, 2010, p. 17.
[93] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 41.

border transactions often elude the control of states. Furthermore, some TNCs appear to be even more economically powerful than certain nation-states: at the outset of the 21st century, 51 of the 100 largest economies in the world were corporations, and sales by the 200 largest firms exceeded the combined economies of 182 countries[94].

The first thing that usually comes to mind when considering the influence of TNCs on the international system is their impact on the global negotiating agenda. Their economic strength, combined with sophisticated international networks, renders TNCs particularly influential in global governance, not only on economic issues such as trade liberalization, but also increasingly on questions such as international environmental standards and norms[95]. However, most interestingly for the present study on diplomacy, TNCs can have a significant impact on nation-state's domestic and foreign policies. Contemporary global firms need to cultivate good relations with the governments of countries where they operate, since this influences their ability to do business globally. In countries where they are registered, where they produce or sell significant quantities of their goods or services, companies need to negotiate with governments and try to influence policies in ways favourable to their own interests[96]. Firms thus try to intervene in such areas as business, financial, labour and environmental regulations.

Traditionally, even the larger multinationals extensively relied on embassies and official diplomats from their 'host' country to represent their interests to foreign governments. Today however, because of the scope of the representative activities to be carried out and of the deterritorialization of firms' operations, TNCs increasingly operate their own government relations offices abroad and develop their own networks of professional negotiators. Shaun Riordan even argues that many companies have better access, both to information and

[94] Ibid., p. 29.
[95] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 7.
[96] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 71.

decision-makers, than most embassies[97]. Practitioners however tend to disagree with this assertion, maintaining that firms still turn to embassies for assistance and for gaining access to the higher levels of decision-making[98]. In any event, it is clear that firms are now at least partly undertaking their own 'paradiplomatic' activities[99], which have the potential of significantly influencing the conduct of official diplomacy. For instance, global businesses, such as the American-based Microsoft and the Japanese multinational Sony, have increasingly found themselves intervening in a variety of crises around the world, either to protect their investments or buttress the integration of emerging and transitioning economies into the global economy[100]. In so doing, these firms are in effect trying, often in competition with other interest groups, to influence and shape American and Japanese foreign policies towards the countries concerned. In such a situation, it becomes primordial for a state's diplomatic actors to closely monitor firms' activities and, where possible, to work in collaboration with these new paradiplomatic actors.

This state-firm cooperation becomes today more likely as governments' and firms' objectives gradually converge. On the one hand, as already mentioned, large transnational firms tend to build up formal ways of representing themselves for diplomatic purposes, similar to those of governments. On the other hand, as argued by Pigman, governments have come to look very much like the management of a large firm seeking to compete in the global economy by trying to retain high value-added jobs, attract investment, maintain currency exchange rates, promote exports, etc[101]. Pigman further contends that official diplomatic actors may best benefit from this converging of interest by adapting their role from that of regulators to that of promoters. Diplomats as promoters seek to use diplomatic techniques and negotiation in relationship with firms in such a way as to benefit their citizens and the

[97] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 8.
[98] Michael Molloy, personal interview, June 1, 2011.
[99] Melissen, *op cit.*
[100] Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 337.
[101] Pigman, *op cit.*, Chapter 5.

finances of their countries to the greatest possible extent[102]. Already this can be seen in the penetration of marketing techniques into diplomatic practices, in the 'branding' experiments of some countries (such as the early efforts of Tony Blair's British government to promote the image of 'Cool Britannia'[103]), or in the fact that today's ambassadors devote an increasingly significant amount of their time to commercial relations[104]. Nevertheless, whereas Pigman is right in arguing that political leaders and their diplomats cannot afford to ignore the opportunities that result from diplomatic engagement with global firms, it would not be advisable for the cooperation between firms and governments to reach a point where diplomatic actors would completely mimic private enterprises and their methods. Unlike TNCs which pursue private goals, governments and their representatives work for the general benefit of their citizens. An embassy thus can help promoting trade in general but cannot sell particular goods. Businessmen and diplomats play and stress separate roles, and the particular nature of diplomats as government actors should not be forgotten[105].

From the above discussion on civil society organizations and transnational corporations, we can detect a key change to the environment of diplomatic practice, namely that, just as it is being challenged from within by new domestic players, the monopoly of official diplomatic actors over foreign affairs is also being undermined from the outside by new influential non-state actors. Some authors have characterized this situation as a disintermediation of international relations, meaning that more and more actors no longer depend on states to represent them or their interests abroad, and already conduct their own 'foreign policy'[106]. This situation has led certain academic observers to conclude that there is

---

[102] Ibid., p. 79.
[103] Alan K. Henrikson, "The Future of Diplomacy? Five Projective Visions", The Hague, Clingendael Institute, Clingendael Discussion Paper in Diplomacy 96, January 2005, [http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2005/20050100_cli_paper_dip_issue96.pdf], p. 5.
[104] For instance, Claude Laverdure reported that, during his years serving as Canada's Ambassador to France (2003-2007), the two-thirds of his time were dedicated to commercial and economic relations. Personal interview, June 1, 2011.
[105] Kleiner, *op cit.*, p. 27.
[106] Henrikson, *op cit.*, p. 16.

a loss of relevancy for traditional foreign policy actors, who can be expected to be increasingly bypassed in the future by non-governmental actors. In practice, however, the opposite seems to be true. As TNCs with interests to promote and CSOs advocating a particular direction in or protesting against a government's foreign policy all increasingly seek to advance their objectives by lobbying the government's organs, it creates more work, not less, for diplomatic actors. Additionally, CSOs and TNCs, because of their limited focus on single issues and private interests will never be able to displace diplomats working on behalf of their whole nation.

It nevertheless remains that contemporary diplomatic actors cannot ignore the presence of these new players, but rather need to figure out how to incorporate them in the international system in a way that takes account of their diversity and scope, their strengths and weaknesses. Traditional diplomatic practices need to be complemented with explicit awareness of this further layer of diplomatic interaction and relationship[107]. Collaboration with non-governmental actors can be most beneficial for governments, as these new players complete their understanding of how foreign societies work, and as they develop policy assets unaffordable to governments. However, as explained by scholar Geoffrey Wiseman, "the evolution of more effective, systematic working relationships with non-state actors will require states to adopt new concepts, skills, instruments and outlooks.[108]" One of these new concepts, which will be developed in the next section, may be that of the diplomat as integrator and steward of all the interests at play in the conduct of foreign policy.

SECTION II: The end of diplomacy?

The preceding analysis clearly highlighted that, over approximately the last thirty years, new international dynamics, problems, technologies and political and social structures

[107] Geoffrey Wiseman, "'Polylateralism' and New Modes of Global Dialogue", in Christer Jönsson and Richard Langhorne (eds.), *Diplomacy Vol. III*, London, Sage, 2004, p. 37.
[108] Ibid., p, 42.

have altered some of the assumptions on which traditional diplomacy was based, as well as some of the tasks accomplished by diplomatic actors. Nevertheless, even considering all the current factors of change and the evolving environment of international relations, it has already been hinted that traditional diplomatic actors are likely to remain extremely relevant in the twenty-first century. In order to further develop this argument, the following section will first discuss the broad dynamics between globalization, the continued or declining influence of the nation-state, and the relevance of diplomacy. This will be followed by an analysis of the specific roles which traditional diplomatic actors can and should play in the twenty-first century.

2.1. Globalization, the nation-state and diplomacy

The ongoing debate on the continued relevance of diplomacy in a globalized world is closely related to the broader discussion on the repercussions of globalization on the fate of the nation-state. As explained in the first section of this paper, modern diplomacy developed alongside the emergence of the nation-state and the idea of state sovereignty. Diplomacy appeared because the new independent and proximate political units of the seventeenth century wished to communicate among themselves[109]. Without the presence of these political entities, therefore, diplomacy would be unnecessary. This signifies that, "the history of diplomacy cannot be divorced from that of the state, its institutions, responsibilities and political and social dogmas.[110]"

The Westphalian nation-state system is based on the premise that the state has ultimate power over all processes happening within its borders. In recent years however, globalization, by making borders more permeable and rendering territory less important, has brought some

[109] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 264.
[110] Ibid., p. 266.

observers to question the pertinence of this principle[111]. They argue that "the process of globalization has thrown into question the ability of the nation-state to manage social, political and economic affairs within a certain territory.[112]" Indeed, they note that globalizing forces have led to the emergence of a wide range of human activities which owe little or nothing to geographical location and government regulation. Additionally, in the international arena, it is said that the conduct of world affairs are slipping from the governments' hands[113]. Many thus argue that today's nation-states are unable to address the global problems of the day. They note that contemporary global governance operates at levels other than the governmental one, with traditional functions of the nation-state being transferred up to supra-national bodies such as international organizations, and even laterally to non-state actors[114].

As a result of these processes, Westphalian states are said to be declining, as they are no longer the central constitutive elements of the international system, but only one type of actors among many others[115]. The erosion of the role of the state as the primary actor in world politics in turn is said to render both the institution of diplomacy and, consequently its traditional agents, either redundant or greatly diminished in their significance[116]. As international relations become no more intergovernmental but rather 'multi-centered'[117], diplomats are portrayed as the anachronistic relics of a superseded world order. As suggested by political scientist Paul Sharp, it could be imagined that in this situation, official diplomats may be replaced by a sort of profession defined in terms of the functional skills of representation, communication and negotiation, contracted on a commercial basis by the

---

[111] Kleiner, *op cit.,* p. 17.
[112] Jovan Kurbalija, "Diplomacy in the Age of Information Technology", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, p. 173.
[113] Carne Ross, "It's time to scrap ambassadors and their embassies", Europe's World (Europe's ideas community), Spring 2009, [http://www.europesworld.org/NewEnglish/Home/Article/tabid/191/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/21346/language/en-US/Itstimetoscrapambassadorsandtheirembassies.aspx].
[114] Riordan, *op cit.,* p. 95.
[115] Samy Cohen, *op cit.,* p. 11.
[116] Hocking and Lee, *op cit.,* p. 6.
[117] Samy Cohen, *op cit.,* p. 11.

many entities active in the international system, but lacking the symbolic and political significance of servants of the state[118].

It is undeniable that the nature of the contemporary nation-state is evolving. It is impossible to continue to think of states in terms of unitary actors, with impermeable borders and a clearly established national interest. As argued by Anne-Marie Slaughter, this was in fact always a fiction, which nonetheless worked well enough in the past for purposes of description and prediction of outcomes in the international system[119]. But today this is a fiction that is no longer good enough to make sense of the world order. This unitary-state fiction is being challenged from within, as diverse and conflicting interests are being defended by all kinds of actors inside the state, including departmental officials, sub-national governments, civil society organizations and private actors. Moreover, "states, the venerable managers of the system, now incontrovertibly share the global stage with public and private entities, with whom they must also share the machinery of global politics.[120]" Today's nation-state is clearly marked by a diffusion of power and authority, and international relations no longer operate on a single, governmental level, but have rather become multi-level.

Yet, it seems highly premature to announce the demise of the nation-state. Its importance may be declining in relative terms as new actors enter the stage, but not in absolute terms. Indeed, new non-state entities still orient their activities towards the state, which is proving resilient to contemporary pressures. In fact, the activities of non-state actors seem to lead to an extension, rather than a reduction, of state activity. Civil society organizations and the world's publics continuously ask for more state intervention in the fields of economy, justice, development, human rights, environment, etc. States are asked to regulate and work for social justice and to supply international public goods, which no one

[118] Paul Sharp, "Who Needs Diplomats? The Problems of Diplomatic Representation", International Journal, Vol. 52, No. 4, Fall 1997, p. 630-631.
[119] Slaughter, *op cit.*, p. 32.
[120] Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 333.

else has the legitimacy, capability or authority to provide[121]. States are also requested to provide for security in an increasingly unstable world. The fight against terrorism, for instance, has shown that people still primarily turn to their governments for protection[122]. States thus remain the most important actors in the international system. They are the only ones with law-making and law-enforcement powers, the main source of organized power in the world which can claim legitimacy and accountability. However, it is true that they often cannot act in complete isolation, and must collaborate with new players. Nation-states have thus lost their ability to defend *alone* the interests of their citizens, but they are still very much relevant. In this context, Anne-Marie Slaughter rightfully suggests reviewing our conception of state sovereignty as the capacity to engage, to create and lead cooperative regimes in the interests of all players involved[123]. This evolving definition of sovereignty represents a maturing of the nation-state, but not its demise.

What does this evolution mean for diplomacy? Just as the importance of the state is declining in relative terms, so arguably is that of traditional diplomacy. The previous section of this paper has clearly demonstrated that diplomacy has lost its monopoly on the management of intergovernmental communications across borders. Diplomats are no longer the only actors conducting negotiations, concluding agreements, or representing their principals' interests. 'Paradiplomatic' contacts across national boundaries and between non-traditional actors flourish as never before, making conventional diplomacy *seem* less important[124]. In truth however, traditional diplomacy has not lost its relevance. Quite the contrary, the need for good diplomacy is greater than ever before. This mainly flows from globalization's accompanying processes, which have increased the importance of good and effective relations between states and added new chapters to diplomacy.

---

[121] Kleiner, *op cit.,* p. 17.
[122] Ibid., p. 20.
[123] Slaughter, *op cit.,* p. 269.
[124] Raymond Cohen, *op cit.,* p. 2.

Globalization has dramatically increased the number of contact points between states. Not only has the number of states in the international system multiplied in the past forty years, but countries have also become more linked together through international trade, tourism, migration, development assistance, cultural exchanges, etc[125]. This leads to an expansion of the diplomatic agenda, which was traditionally limited to political and economic relations between states[126]. Moreover, as it has already been argued, countries have become more interdependent, their fate now indivisible[127]. This signifies that global problems require concerted solutions. At the same time, these problems seem to have multiplied in the contemporary 'international disorder'. Threats have become unconventional and asymmetrical, while the risks for conflicts now come in multifarious forms[128]. As a consequence, there is a necessity for more organized dialogue between nations, which need to represent their interests to and negotiate with each other as never before.

Popular belief holds that such dialogue becomes more straightforward as globalization is said to flatten differences between nations and peoples. In truth however, differences and the awareness of differences seem rather to be increased by the proliferation of actors, the multiplication of contacts between them, and the role of the media in highlighting the dissemblance between groups. Thus, globalization does not eliminate, but rather reinforces the continuous need for diplomatic actors who can mediate between cultural divides[129].

The above suggests that globalization places a high premium on the work of official diplomatic actors, and leads to an expansion of their scope for action. Diplomacy, through dialogue, engagement and the orchestration of concerted action to address global problems, can make a durable contribution towards achieving more stability in the international

[125] Kleiner, *op cit.*, p. 12.
[126] Kurbalija, *op cit.*, p. 177.
[127] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, Chapter 1.
[128] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 3.
[129] Claude Laverdure, personal interview, June 1, 2011.

system[130]. More than ever, countries need to make sense of the world, make sure the world makes sense of them, and try to shape events to their advantage. Thus, as appropriately summarized by Canadian writer Andrew Cohen, "it is not in spite of but because of changes in international political economy that the need for the nuanced judgment and good intelligence diplomats provide is in greater demand than ever.[131]" Diplomats are arguably not the only actors today towards whom decision-makers can turn for timely advice on world developments. As seen above, governments can also turn to their departmental specialists, sub-national representatives, and even enlist the help of 'paradiplomatic' non-governmental entities such as CSOs and TNCs. However, official diplomats' value-added lies in the fact that, contrary to these numerous actors who defend limited or narrow interests, they are the best placed to adopt an integrated whole-of-government approach and a holistic perspective of their country's national values and interests, as will be further discussed below. Additionally, their status of agents of the states confers upon them a legitimacy which private actors cannot enjoy, and renders them accountable to their domestic constituencies. Thus, official diplomats still have a unique role to play in contemporary democratic societies.

2.2. The evolving functions of diplomats

If diplomacy still very much matters in the contemporary globalized world, it has also been established above that the past forty years have seen considerable changes in the conduct of international relations and diplomatic practices. Today's diplomats have to deal both with the highly complex and multi-layered networks within states, and with the more unstable and confrontational relationships without[132]. They have to deal with, and where possible, collaborate with, a variety of non-governmental players, including civil society organizations

[130] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 258.
[131] Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept – How we lost our place in the world*, Canada, McClelland & Stewart, 2003, p. 180.
[132] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 106.

and transnational corporations. Because of the breakdown of the divide between the domestic and the international, and as a result of the growth of the influence of popular opinion, they must also increasingly engage with domestic and foreign publics. As the number of actors involved in the system has proliferated, the quantity of diplomatic representation, negotiation and communication has increased significantly. The present section will look at the contemporary nature of these three traditional diplomatic functions, and also study two newer roles for the twenty-first century diplomat, namely those of public diplomat and integrator. It is important to specify that what will be presented in this section is a rather idealized view of what diplomats ought to be doing in order to be most effective in the transformed twenty-first century international environment, and of how they ought to be doing it. It is to be recognized, however, that this idealized model does not always correspond to the reality of diplomatic practice. Diplomats, as individuals, are influenced in their daily work by their personality, culture, social background, education, political ideology, etc. In addition to these personal biases, just as in any profession, there are good and bad diplomats; those who truly dedicate themselves to their work, and those who, in contrast, seek personal gain over the advancement of their nation's interests. This reality should always be kept in mind throughout the following discussion.

2.2.1. Representation

Diplomacy has always been about the representation, production and reproduction of identities, values, and national interests[133]. A number of observers contend that with new technologies, easy travel and transgovernmental networks, the traditional representational function of diplomats has fallen to other actors. Shaun Riordan, for instance, writes that "in so far as a purely representational role any longer means anything, it is better carried out by

[133] Sharp, 1999, *op cit.*, p. 51.

visiting ministers" and officials[134]. He thus argues that with the host of international summits, conferences and bilateral visits, ministers often know their foreign counterparts far better than any diplomat ever could. According to him, it is therefore more efficient for diplomatic representation to be conducted directly between the principals involved in each relevant issue, which can be easily done through communication over the cyberspace, phone calls or periodic visits. Other authors further maintain that this type of more direct, less delegated diplomacy is more efficient and effective, because it reduces the scope for misunderstandings to emerge as leaders and ministers communicate to their diplomatic representatives, who in turn communicate to their counterparts, who then communicate to their own leaders in a variant of the traditional children's game of 'telephone'[135]. Pushing this logic further, some authors even question the need to maintain resident diplomatic representatives.

In practice however, the representational role of diplomats has not changed significantly over time, and is still as important as ever. It is true that summits, ministerial delegations and special missions are useful means of reinforcing existing relationships, discussing specific issues, and representing particular transient interests. Nonetheless, according to practitioners, it is false, and even naïve to believe that such meetings could take place without the work of diplomats[136]. Ideally, diplomats are there to prepare contextual briefing material, coordinate the communications between their leaders, and advise them on the issues which will be discussed and the angles that should be adopted. Diplomats who embrace this role remain the careful orchestrators of visits and meetings. Additionally, diplomatic representatives can play a primordial role in keeping the lines open and maintaining networks of personal connections in the intervals between international conferences, thus enabling future contacts between their principals. They are in this way the

[134] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 110.
[135] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 111.
[136] Daniel Livermore, personal interview, May 31, 2011, and Claude Laverdure, personal interview, June 1, 2011.

'workhorses' of international interactions, with ministers and officials setting the course, but needing the engineering and the continuity in representation which established diplomacy can provide[137]. Moreover, whereas leaders and ministers come and go, diplomatic institutions, as the source of institutional memory for their country, are the best placed to be aware of and to represent the long-term objectives of their state. Therefore, in truth, there is still no satisfactory alternative to the resident mission for sustained and meaningful representation[138].

If diplomats' representational role has changed, however, it may be with regard to the promotion of the home country's national interests, which normally should be the envoy's principal concern. The ideal ambassador always stands as the national interest's leading protagonist, protector and promoter in his country of accreditation[139]. Today, this task is still as fundamental as ever, but has changed in complexity. Interests are not only strategic and political; they extend to every work area and are economic, commercial, cultural, technological, judiciary, and even moral[140]. In each of these areas, diplomats have to deal with the difficulty of determining what constitutes the national interest, which varies with time and circumstances. In addition, they have to juggle with the often serious contentions which exist between contradictory national interests. This has always been true to a certain extent, but becomes even more problematic with the involvement, already studied, of a host of domestic departments and sub-national governments in the conduct of foreign policy. To perform adequately in this context, diplomats must increasingly be able to develop an in-depth understanding, not only of international relations, but also of the internal dynamics of their home country, which adds additional layers to their work.

---

[137] Ditchley Foundation, "The Functions and purposes of modern diplomacy", Director's note on the conference held on 4-6 March 2010, [http://www.ditchley.co.uk/page/364/modern-diplomacy.htm].
[138] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 260.
[139] George F. Kennan, "Diplomacy without diplomats?", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 5, September/October 1997, p. 207.
[140] François Sheer, "Au temps du monde fini", in *Les Diplomates – Négocier dans un monde chaotique*, Paris, Éditions Autrement – Collection Mutations, 2002, p. 32.

2.2.2. Negotiation

Another of the three fundamental functions of professional envoys is that of diplomatic negotiation, which can be considered as the medium for states wishing to cooperate on the basis of common interests, or to reach non-violent solutions to conflicts[141]. In the contemporary interdependent world, with the increased number of issues on the international agenda which necessitate collective actions, the need for interstate negotiations is growing tremendously. Nevertheless, if negotiation is considered only in a narrow sense as the activity leading to a precise agreement in a ratifiable form, then it has receded in importance for professional diplomats[142]. As issues become more numerous and technical in character, such direct negotiations are increasingly conducted by visiting line department officials. For certain observers, this means that the generalist diplomat's negotiating function becomes at most secondary. Riordan for example welcomes the involvement of area specialists, arguing that "it is better that expert talk unto expert, without the mediation of the 'gentleman amateur'", who, he argues, is out of his depth.[143]

Despite their growing importance, however, issue specialists are alone insufficient when considering negotiation in a more general sense, that is to say presenting the home perspective to foreign partners, persuading them, and building congruence with them[144]. For these activities, it is not enough to know how to connect with interlocutors from a technical standpoint; you must also have an intimate knowledge of the culture and values of those you are trying to influence, which area specialists often lack[145]. In comparison, these attributes normally constitute the core of the diplomatic profession. Thus, in an ideal model, diplomats should be essential in realizing the groundwork of pre-negotiation which is indispensable for

[141] Paul W. Meerts, "The Changing Nature of Diplomatic Negotiation", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, p. 79.
[142] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 76-77.
[143] Riordan, *op cit.*, p. 58.
[144] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 76.
[145] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 173.

any discussion to take place between specialists or politicians. They should develop networks of official and unofficial communication that can prove vital on occasions when sensitive and difficult issues need to be negotiated, arrange meetings, explain the current political and economic circumstances to negotiators, and advise them on with whom and how best to tackle particular problems[146]. Without such preparatory work, direct negotiations between principals can be fraught with peril and uncertainty, and are less likely to lead to a positive outcome. Diplomats should also play a vital role during inter-negotiation phases, conveying messages on behalf of the home team and unblocking local obstacles; and in the aftermath of negotiations, as they are left with the task of settling or tidying up the details of any agreement reached. Furthermore, in the case of the negotiating session having led to confusion, contretemps or misunderstanding between the parties, diplomats should have a role in restoring cordial relations[147]. Thus, as specialist come and go, much of the field and follow-up work should still be left to professional envoys.

In addition to the above, it should be recalled that the ideal diplomats are negotiation specialists, whose particular expertise is necessary to supplement the work of area specialists. Climate experts meeting to discuss new environmental regulatory measures, for instance, may be extremely knowledgeable about their field, but may not necessarily see all of the political and economic considerations also at stake. It should be the role of the professional diplomat to take this 'big picture' into account. The diplomat should be aware of all the negotiations simultaneously taking place between his home and host countries, be able to synthesize them, and to identify the room for manoeuvre, the opportunities for linkages, bargaining and trade-offs that are possible across the full panorama of issues, be they political, economic or technical[148]. The negotiation specialist ideally also knows the history of negotiations between

[146] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 263.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 5.

countries, the various interests which could come to clash with those being negotiated, and which negotiations are to be prioritized.

Moreover, much of the value-added of the diplomat should come from his global and intimate knowledge of the interlocutor, of his culture and language. As explained by former Canadian diplomat Michael Molloy, there is simply no comparison possible between what the resident diplomat living in a host country can come to know about it compared to experts who breeze in from the outside[149]. The ability to understand and explain behaviours, to work around the complexities of cross-cultural relations is still a primordial task of diplomatic actors. As already mentioned, some might believe that with globalization, the ubiquity of the English language, the spread of Western tastes and the growth of international contacts, cross-cultural dissonances should be less important in interstate negotiations. But, on the contrary, precisely because much negotiation is conducted between domestic specialists with a largely local outlook, the cross-cultural factor is very much resilient[150]. Professor Raymond Cohen gives the example of two very different negotiating styles, those of Asian and Western countries. He explains that in Asia, open confrontation during negotiation is deplored and can lead to an interruption of discussions, whereas Western cultures, in contrast, thrive on the adversarial approach. Negotiations by area experts who are not aware of these cultural differences can create frictions and misunderstandings, and ultimately undermine the purpose of discussions. Furthermore, even if experts reach an apparent agreement, its implementation may be dogged by disputes over the meaning and scope of contract arising from different cultural interpretations[151]. Thus, cross-cultural insight, which has always been a valued attribute of the skilled diplomat, is still needed as much as ever. This is a constant, structural feature of diplomacy which contemporary changes have not affected[152]. Cohen maintains

[149] Michael Molloy, personal interview, June 1, 2011.
[150] Raymond Cohen, *op cit.*, p. 15.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid., p. 16.

there is an 'old-new' role for diplomacy: "to work on the boundary between cultures as an interpretive and conjunctive mechanism; to act as an agent of comprehension, removing obstacles to the unimpeded and mutually beneficial transaction of international business.[153]"

Again, it should be recalled that the above is an idealized presentation of diplomats' negotiation role. In practice, diplomatic negotiations may be tainted and influenced by personal feuds, petty rivalries and animosities between diplomats themselves[154]. Moreover, for ideological or personal reasons, diplomats may well eventually come to obstruct discussions instead of defending their nation's official negotiating position. Nevertheless, in an ideal model, professional and competent diplomats should be able to put aside such personal biases and to perform their negotiating function to the best of their ability, in order to advance their home country's general interests.

2.2.3. Communication

The function of diplomatic communication analyzed here refers to the gathering of information on the envoy's host country and its transmitting to his home government. This traditional role of diplomats has already been described in more detail in the first section of this paper. It has also been demonstrated that the evolution of diplomats' communication role is closely related to the new information and communication technologies, which are frequently said to have supplanted diplomats' information-gathering task. Modern technologies have indeed reduced the need for on-the-spot diplomatic reporting, since a well-equipped foreign ministry in the country's capital with access to all the appropriate media is likely to have an effective and cheap access to much of the relevant information on the events taking place in the world. Technologies, however, do not render diplomat's communication role redundant, but rather transform its nature. There are three explanations for this.

---

[153] Ibid.
[154] Ross, 2007, *op cit.*, Chapter 3.

First, it would be naïve to argue that all the pertinent facts on international developments can be obtained from the public media. As already mentioned, the availability of information on events happening in one country strongly depends on the degree of freedom of the press in that country. When looking at international indexes such as that of Freedom House, it is obvious that press freedom varies greatly from one country to another and is limited or inexistent in a majority of countries[155]. Diplomats posted in countries where a free press is quasi non-existent and where 'information' is synonym with government propaganda retain their quasi-exclusive information-gathering role[156]. Additionally, many regions of the world are left on the margins of the international system and rarely receive protracted prime-time attention. Western media are clearly biased with regard to the international news on which they report, leaving out many events. A good example is the prolonged civil war in Sri Lanka which, for twenty-six years, received very little international coverage. This does not mean, however, that such developments are not extremely relevant as potential sources of instability. As explained by Daryl Copeland, the lack of coverage of the events unfolding in Rwanda or Bosnia before the genocides, for instance, clearly shows that "the judgment of the international media as to what is worth watching can be highly fallible.[157]" Of course, diplomats are not immune to errors either, but it should be their function, to the best of their ability, to stay carefully attuned to events, especially those at the margin, and to identify for their foreign ministry those which could potentially influence their home country's interests.

Second, even in the most liberal countries, it is still true that "a good deal of what matters takes place *behind* the headlines, sometimes in the little-known habitat of diplomats.[158]" Media reports rarely tell the whole story, and "there is still highly relevant information that can only be obtained through the traditional diplomatic information-

[155] See Freedom House's Map of Press Freedom 2010 at http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2010.
[156] Archetti, *op cit.*, p. 9.
[157] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 32-33.
[158] Ibid., p. 1.

gathering procedures, based mainly on human contact.[159]" Diplomatic practitioners in general are well-aware that much privileged material essential to advancing their country's national interests can still be acquired only through the long cultivation of political and government contacts and through face-to-face interactions[160]. These moreover help the envoy to add depth to his political reporting, and even, in some cases, to gain access to information before it hits the media, allowing for a timely response from his home government. Thus, there is still an important function for the traditional channels and methods of diplomatic communication, and the human input which can be gained from the diplomats' tactical and strategic gathering of information should not be underestimated.

Finally, it should be obvious that new information and communication technologies, as useful as they may be for fact-reporting, cannot replace the sound assessment and analysis of information which experienced diplomats can provide. In fact, as globalization and the new media have produced an explosion of available information, and as foreign ministries are flooded with raw data, the diplomat is more than ever needed to sort through all the facts and to distinguish between what is simply irrelevant noise from what could potentially affect his country's interests[161]. Of course, in performing this function, diplomats must make choices about what is important and what is not, which confers them a certain power and at the same time leaves the door open for mistakes. But the possibility of errors does not diminish the importance of diplomats' analytical function. The mere availability of information in the media is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for its effective use in the conduct of international relations, which requires interpretation and in-depth analysis[162]. Because of the high-speed pace at which it needs to operate, the media rarely has time to perform this crucial analytical work. Furthermore, even when it does produce a certain analysis, the media usually

[159] Kurbalija, *op cit.*, p. 183.
[160] Robin Higham, personal interview, May 30, 2011.
[161] Ditchley Foundation, *op cit.*
[162] Kurbalija, *op cit.*, p. 183.

cannot tailor it to the interests of a particular country. By relying only on media reports for information, foreign ministries are thus in danger of obtaining a distorted or incomplete version of events. The diplomat is therefore very much needed for proper contextualization and, with his in-depth knowledge of both his home state and his country of accreditation, is the best placed to analyze critical events through the unique prism of his nation's interests, policies and values. The envoy can play a crucial role in connecting the different streams of information to make a coherent whole, interpreting the available material, highlighting the possible repercussions for his country, making predictions on the probable progression of events, and presenting informed recommendations to decision-makers, provided, of course, that these are willing to listen.

In sum, the communication function of diplomats has far from disappeared today, but is being transformed. Classical information, evaluation and warning roles of diplomats are changing in nature, but they are not losing their value. Diplomats may be said to be moving from an information-gathering to an information-assessing role, a situation which is facilitated by new technologies which allow diplomats to leave their reporting function aside and to concentrate on producing sound analysis. Ideally, diplomats assess information in a way that is accurate, reliable and relevant in relation to the objectives and priorities of their home country. They further process and interpret facts for the purpose of allowing for an appropriate action or reaction by the home government. Good assessment should be the result of interpersonal communication and networking, as well as of the careful reading of open and unclassified sources. Information-assessment should be considered as the true value-added of contemporary diplomatic communication, which does not compete with, but rather complete the work done by the press and the media.

2.2.4. Public diplomacy

Traditionally, diplomacy has chiefly consisted in relations between governments, rather than between peoples or societies. This conception of diplomatic activity, however, seems to be no longer sufficient for countries aiming not simply to maintain international relations, but also to positively act in the contemporary international system. Increasingly, this is said to require public diplomacy, which has been defined in 1965 by American diplomat Edmund Gullion as the act of dealing with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies[163]. Contemporary public diplomacy can be described as the "efforts by governments to promote their policies and interests abroad by influencing international public opinion through interaction with other polities, forging partnerships with civil societies, and using the media strategically.[164]"

The growing need for public diplomacy can be traced back to most of the changes described in the first section of this essay, especially the new information and communication technologies and the resulting increased influence of public opinion on government policies. The contemporary media has not only democratized access to information and made citizens more aware of government activity, but has also given global publics the ability to talk back and respond directly or indirectly to decision-makers about the policies with which they may agree or not[165]. Moreover, the breakdown of the separation between the domestic and the foreign, and the realization that international developments may strongly impact their lives, has rendered citizens more preoccupied with following and influencing governments' international activities. The new focus on public diplomacy is further related to the presence of powerful non-governmental actors, who can also have an influence on states' policies, either through direct pressures or the indirect mobilization of popular support.

---

[163] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 121.
[164] Ibid., p. 9.
[165] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 122.

The combining result of these transformations is that publics matter more than before. The information disseminated by all kinds of individuals and groups, whether true or false, has the capacity to quickly spread across the world and to trigger chain reactions which can be detrimental for a country's interests. The public's perception of a foreign country has the power to affect concrete inter-state activities such as the inflow of tourists, foreign investments, and the credibility of a country as a worthy partner in all types of foreign dealings[166]. This is even truer for those middle power countries without substantial military or economic weight, which depend on their images and reputations to achieve vital objectives[167]. The growing influence of popular opinion signifies that governments wishing to advance their policies cannot stay silent and must participate in public debates to shape them, prevent them from going sour on a particular policy or country, or to be a counterweight when they have[168]. Thus today, "governments and other diplomatic actors have come to perceive the importance of communicating to and listening to foreign publics as they form, implement and adjust their foreign policies.[169]"

Public diplomacy is not an entirely new diplomatic function. According to Geoffrey Pigman, it is a type of diplomatic communication which has always been practised, but which has assumed a new significance in the current era[170]. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century diplomats were already well accustomed to using the press to enhance their country's general reputation and to influence political parties, trade unions, churches, universities, businesses, and civil societies. Advocacy and image-building have thus always been part and parcel of daily routines of diplomacy[171]. Historically, however, communication with publics was mainly mono-directional, sometimes being undistinguishable from mere propaganda. Today,

[166] Rana, *op cit.*, p. 87.
[167] Potter, *op cit.*, p. 44.
[168] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 237.
[169] Pigman, *op cit.*, p. 122.
[170] Ibid., p. 7.
[171] Potter, *op cit.*, p. 51.

the concept of public diplomacy is evolving, assuming a more cooperative and collaborative character. It is seen as a bi-directional process of intercultural communication with targeted publics through a variety of means including nation-branding, advocacy, partnership building, media relations, academic relations, cultural relations, etc. Groups and individuals are seen less as the consumers of public diplomacy, and more as the active participants in a back and forth dialogue. Public diplomacy may be used to achieve short-term aims, such as generating support for a specific foreign policy objective, and may also serve long-term goals such as ensuring that the political elite of a country has a generally favourable position towards the proposed policies of another country, or that there may be less friction on those occasions when interests between countries diverge[172].

Public diplomacy contrasts with the more traditional confidential interactions between the official representatives of governments. Some observers argue that, between those divergent activities, the balance today should be tilted towards the first one. Many even contend that the rightful place of public diplomacy is at the center of diplomatic relations, rather than as a servant to the 'real' diplomacy of state-to-state negotiations[173]. These authors maintain that the main business of diplomacy should no longer be discreet and confidential dealings with the foreign ministry of the host country, and that the contemporary 'new diplomacy' should be synonym with public diplomacy, with reaching out to individuals and groups[174]. This seems to be an issue, however, on which some academics and some practitioners disagree. Former Canadian diplomat Michael Molloy, for instance, argues that, no matter how much attention is given to engaging with foreign publics, often this diplomatic function shrivels up and disappears when the need for more quiet diplomacy arises[175]. Likewise, diplomat Daniel Livermore argues that there is still a strong utility to private

[172] Ibid., p. 47.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Copeland, 2009, *op cit*, p. 161.
[175] Michael Molloy, personal interview, June 1, 2011.

diplomacy, to the cultivation of privileged partners with whom one can discuss issues in complete confidence, especially in a situation where countries face difficult negotiations[176]. In such circumstances, diplomatic confidentiality can help protect negotiations from potentially harmful outside interventions, and can also allow the partner who has to make concessions to avoid a public loss of face[177]. It should thus be kept in mind that, despite the importance of new practices, the role of traditional non-public channels of diplomatic communication has not diminished. In fact, as argued by Geoffrey Pigman, "if anything, these non-public lines of communication are more important than ever, as leaders more frequently now need to communicate with one another to correct (and, if necessary, resolve) misunderstandings created by statements made in the public domain and disseminated widely through the media.[178]" In short, while the growing importance of public diplomacy should not be ignored as one of the roles of contemporary diplomats, it should be considered as an additional diplomatic function which complements traditional diplomatic activities, and not the opposite.

2.2.5. Integration and stewardship

The function of integration and stewardship[179] is the newest and, arguably, the most essential role of the twenty-first century diplomat. This function proceeds from all the contemporary factors of change which have been analyzed in the previous pages, namely globalization and the new international agenda, the impact of new technologies, and most importantly the diffusion of domestic authority for the conduct of international relations, as well as the new layer of activity represented by non-governmental actors. The integration and

[176] Daniel Livermore, personal interview, May 31, 2011.
[177] Kleiner, *op cit.,* p. 3-4.
[178] Pigman, *op cit.,* p. 113.
[179] The term 'stewardship' is inspired by a personal interview with former Canadian diplomat Robin Higham, conducted on May 30, 2011. The terms 'coordination' and 'management' were originally considered to describe this diplomatic function. However these words are often associated with narrow administrative tasks, which does not correspond to the broader perspective adopted here.

stewardship role fits the resulting, multi-actor, multi-channel character of contemporary diplomatic interaction[180].

As seen in the first section of this paper, today a host of domestic actors, from government departments to sub-national entities, are involved to different degrees in the conduct of foreign policy. Some of these new players are present in embassies abroad, some maintain networks of contacts through periodic visits to foreign countries, and some operate their own foreign offices. When all these domestic actors cooperate, it can have a very positive effect, reinforcing a country's position abroad. However, the multiplicity of actors and processes increases the risk of having incoherencies, inconsistencies, contradictions and a general lack of steering in dealing with a partner country. This can be extremely detrimental to the advancement of a country's national interests as it allows other players to exploit internal divisions. To avoid this situation, diplomats have a primordial role to play as integrators of their government's presence abroad. As argued by Indian diplomat Kishan Rana, the diplomatic envoy emerges as a country's best resource in terms of the totality of the concerned bilateral relationship[181]. No one else is in a position to develop a strategic overview of the home country's multiple interests in the country of accreditation, to keep track of sectoral activities, of the actions of functional ministries and even of sub-national governments. Using his central position, the diplomat as integrator must ideally be able to gain insights into the interests of all the different domestic players present in a host country, and to assume a leadership role in introducing a sense of common purpose between them[182]. The envoy may not be an expert in all issues that are at play, but he must understand the relationships between each of them, and be able to see the trade-offs possible across issue areas. With his integrated or holistic perspective, the diplomat needs to ensure that the policies and programs of the various domestic players operate coherently and consistently, to

[180] Pigman, *op cit.,* p. 39.
[181] Rana, *op cit.,* p. 34.
[182] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.,* p. 259.

suggest to his national government the areas in which inducements and leverage are available, and to indicate the ways in which these can be used. Integrating the actions of national governments abroad is a unique role for diplomats, for which there is no equivalent or substitute, and which in itself should be considered to amply justify the continued presence of permanent bilateral missions and resident diplomats.

In addition, diplomats also have an indispensable stewardship role to play with regards to non-governmental entities. As has been argued in the first section of this paper, powerful non-state entities, principally civil society organizations and transnational firms, represent a new set of players in the conduct of international relations. Governments must compose with these private actors who increasingly have the capacity to operate on an equal level with them in the international arena and to challenge their authority. At the same time, it has also been suggested that there is a growing symbiosis between the activities of state and non-state actors, a convergence of interests which augments the need for and facilitates collaboration between them. For governments, cooperation with this broad range of actors offers wider democratic legitimacy, access to expertise and to new policy ideas, and potentially an additional source of leverage when negotiating with foreign governments[183]. Most developed liberal democracies have already recognized this situation, and the common trend today is for inclusiveness and dialogue with non-governmental actors. Diplomats, because of their comprehensive and central perspective, are again the best placed to provide discreet stewardship in dealing with these new players on the international stage. Diplomats' stewardship function implies developing flexible relationships outside the traditional confines of the diplomatic system, as well as assembling and managing coalitions of concerned state and non-state actors to tackle the many issues on the foreign policy agenda[184]. Ideally, diplomats as stewards organize, encompass, direct and inform these actors in order to exploit

[183] Wiseman, *op cit.*, p. 51.
[184] Hocking, *op cit.*, p. 34.

all the assets available in the new international environment. This function is extremely important since in the contemporary multi-layered international system, success in conducting foreign policy will increasingly go to those who are able use networking effectively and work with all the new centers of influence.

This discussion on the new integration and stewardship function of diplomats highlights the fact that, despite the undeniable loss of their traditional monopoly over the conduct of foreign affairs, diplomats remain extremely relevant today. In fact, the diffusion of authority, the proliferation of new actors involved in international relations and the dynamics between the respective interests of state and non-state actors reaffirms rather than denies the diplomats' continued significance. In the increasingly complex and crowded international system which results from these factors of change, diplomats' true value-added resides in their ability to develop an overarching view of their country's national interests, to act as vital agents of whole-of-government foreign policy integration[185], to become the central government's principal advisers on the overall diplomatic strategy to adopt towards a foreign country, and to be the catalysts in the building of sustainable multistakeholder-coalitions.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research paper was twofold. The first objective was to determine what are the most significant factors of change affecting the institution of diplomacy in the contemporary era. It was determined that the principal element of change is the current phase of globalization which is not merely economic, but also technological, social and political. Globalization has had an extremely decisive impact in transforming the international system, and hence diplomatic structures. Indeed, all the other factors of change for diplomacy analyzed in this paper can be traced back to this process of global integration. Thus, one of the

[185] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 178.

determinants studied is the information and technology revolution, which is both a result and a driving-force of globalization. The repercussions of new technologies on diplomatic practices are manifold and include the transformation of the traditional diplomatic function of information-gathering and the need for diplomatic actors to contend with the mounting pressure of the media. Additionally, the new accessible and affordable technologies have led to a democratization of information, which in turn has resulted in a growth of the importance of public opinion on the conduct of foreign policy.

Globalization is also closely related to two social and political evolutions which impact on contemporary diplomatic practice. The first, which ensues from the new international agenda and the breakdown of the distinction between foreign and domestic policies, is the rupture of the hermetic seal which traditionally surrounded foreign affairs. Diplomats have lost their exclusive domestic position in the conduct of international relations to new actors, including the many functional departments which are involved in international activities, the transgovernmental networks of ministers and government officials, and even sub-national entities such as provincial and municipal governments defending their own interests abroad. The second social and political evolution is the growing influence in foreign policy of non-governmental actors, principally the many different types of civil society organizations as well as transnational corporations. These entities, which have the power to influence the foreign policies of states, represent a new layer of interaction for diplomatic actors who need to find innovative ways to incorporate them in the international system.

Interestingly, none of the factors of change for diplomacy analyzed in this essay are entirely new. Globalization itself is considered to have begun as early as the nineteenth century in parallel with the industrial revolution in the Western world. This period has also been marked by noteworthy advances in modes of transportation and by the arrival of new telecommunication technologies which have revolutionized diplomatic practices. Moreover,

there have been domestic actors other than the foreign ministry and its foreign service involved in the conduct of foreign policy since at least the Second World War, and influential international non-state entities can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century, with, for instance, the creation of the Red Cross in 1863. Nevertheless, in approximately the past thirty years, there has been a significant evolution of the scale, scope and extent of all these processes, which have modified traditional diplomatic functions.

Does this signify, as a number of observers have contended, that diplomacy has ceased to be relevant in the contemporary international system? Answering this question was the second purpose of the present essay. To begin with, it was argued that the continued relevance of diplomacy is closely interrelated with the destiny of states and the concept of sovereignty, since diplomacy would not exist without the need to maintain relations between autonomous political entities. It was further demonstrated that, despite arguments to the contrary, the nation-state is proving resilient as the main actor on the international stage. Nonetheless, there seems to have been a relative decline in the importance of states and their official representatives as they are being joined in the international system by a host of new influential actors. This does not imply that states and their diplomats have become irrelevant, but rather that they have to contend with the activities of non-traditional ‘paradiplomats’. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that the contemporary complex and multi-level international system creates more, rather than less, need for good diplomacy, as states become more interdependent and vulnerable to the current ‘international disorder’. The increasing need for organized dialogue between nations means that diplomatic representatives are probably more important now than ever before.

To further develop the argument that diplomacy still matters in the twenty-first century, while at the same time keeping in mind the factors of change already presented, this paper continued with a presentation of the different roles which diplomats can and should

play today. Looking at the three traditional diplomatic activities of representation, negotiation and communication, it was determined that these core functions are still as essential as ever. In fact, diplomats' classic representation and negotiation roles have not significantly changed over time, although new developments in the international environment have arguably made them more complex. The function of diplomatic communication, for its part, remains important but has been significantly transformed by the new information and communication technologies as today's diplomats move from an information-gathering to an information-assessing role. Finally, it has been argued that contemporary factors of change have created two newer functions for diplomats. The first is the conduct of public diplomacy, which follows from the increasing need to deal with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and implementation of foreign policies. The second new function, which is considered to be the most essential role of twenty-first century diplomats, is that of providing integration and stewardship within a complex and crowded international system, where multiple actors seek to advance their own interests.

This paper has showed that most of the assumptions on which traditional diplomacy was based have to some extent been modified in the past three decades: international relations are no longer seen as being the monopoly of diplomatic actors, and diplomacy itself is no longer considered as an exclusively intergovernmental and hierarchical activity. Rather, it is recognized that the complexity of the contemporary international system demands that networks comprising governments, the general public, civil society organisations and private actors be created to effect policy outcomes[186]. This paper has also concluded that, despite these changes, there is clearly a future for the institution of diplomacy which is more relevant than ever. Given this conclusion, it seems paradoxical that foreign ministries and their apparatus continue to be increasingly queried within national governments for their *raison*

[186] Hocking and Lee, *op cit.*, p. 25.

d'être, and to be under-resourced and marginalized within state bureaucracies[187]. This may be attributed to the fact that the diplomatic machinery of most developed countries has not yet properly adapted to the factors of change analyzed in this paper and to the new international environment. Canadian writer Daryl Copeland refers to this situation as a 'diplomatic performance gap[188]'. In a similar vein, former British diplomat Shaun Riordan notes that, in light of the evolving international system, "it is remarkable how little changed are the structures of the foreign-policy machines and diplomatic services.[189]" These authors note that, as this situation persists, foreign ministries and foreign services not long ago considered the elite of the public service become orphans – isolated, unloved and ostracized within their own governments[190].

To reverse this trend and stop the further marginalization of diplomatic actors, reforms of diplomatic machineries are dearly needed. In Canada, for instance, this situation has already been recognized by the government and two broad attempts at reform have been undertaken since 2005, with the aim of designing a 'new diplomacy' adapted to the globalized world and reflecting new developments in the international system[191]. As in most countries, changes in the Canadian diplomatic machinery nevertheless remain slow and still too limited. Recommendations for further reforms cannot be discussed here because of limited space, although some of them are presented in Annex I. Let it only be said here that there are reasons for optimism. Diplomacy is one of the oldest state institutions and it has survived many previous paradigmatic changes in the international system through innovation. Scholar Jan Melissen even asserts that "dealing with change imaginatively is what diplomacy has been

[187] Rana, *op cit.,* p. 22.
[188] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.,* p. 2.
[189] Riordan, *op cit.,* p. 1.
[190] Copeland, *op cit.,* p. 177.
[191] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *op cit.,* p. 2. The two reform attempts referred to are the initiative 'Building a Twenty-First Century Foreign Ministry', also known as 'FAC 21' launched in 2005, and the 'Transformation' process launched in 2007 which is still ongoing.

about since the very beginnings of international relations.[192]" As the institution of diplomacy and diplomatic machineries are bound to continue their adaptation, our energy, rather than being spent worrying about possible scenarios for extinction, should be directed to ensuring that this evolution takes a direction that is most appropriate to respond to contemporary challenges.

[192] Melissen, *op cit.*, p. xix.

ANNEX I

Recommendations for the further reform of foreign ministries

This annex presents suggestions for reforming foreign ministries in order to reconfigure them for optimal results in the globalized world and in the twenty-first century international environment. These recommendations are generally well-known within diplomatic circles, and are thus here rather aimed at non-diplomats for information. They are meant to specifically apply to the Canadian system, although many can also be relevant to developed liberal democracies in general.

1) Re-investing in public diplomacy

After taking an early lead in the development and application of public diplomacy in the 1990s, Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has now moved to the back of the pack. In 2003, communications scholar Evan Potter noted that the Canadian investment in public diplomacy instruments could be counted in the tens of millions of dollars annually, whereas the United States, France, Germany and Japan each spent over one billion dollars a year[193]. Interestingly, DFAIT recognized the importance of public diplomacy in 2005, making it one of its strategic priorities[194]. However, the department seems to have been unable to show that its public diplomacy activities were aligned with or helping to advance the government's overall international priorities, which led to further budgetary cuts. Yet, with the growing importance of public opinion and the diffusion of authority in the conduct of foreign policy, public diplomacy matters now more than ever. Indeed, to be effective today, governments must go beyond formal state-to-state relations and connect directly with foreign publics, the media, civil society organizations, the private sector, academic communities, etc. Few foreign policy objectives can be achieved in the absence of initiatives designed to understand, engage with, and influence these actors. Public diplomacy is especially important for a middle power such as Canada which, with its small and open economy, highly depends on its reputation and global image for the advancement of its interests. Without re-investment in public diplomacy activities, Canada risks being drowned out amid a cacophony of competing voices in the international arena, and can expect a dissipation of its international influence, as well as serious economic repercussions[195].

2) Winning domestic support

Since already the 1970s, DFAIT and Canadian diplomats have had to fight a rearguard action to demonstrate their continuing relevance, address negative popular perceptions and maintain their budgets. Since the 1990s, they have had to face succeeding governments which have shown little interest, and at times open hostility for Canadian diplomatic actors. Now facing further budgetary cuts, Canadian diplomatic institutions must more than ever win domestic support by reaching out to government officials and to the Canadian public. In order to do so, DFAIT could:

- Find new innovative ways to measure diplomatic outputs, using performance indicators, and developing ways to track and evaluate short-term and long-term

[193] Potter, *op cit.*, p. 55.
[194] See Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *op cit.*
[195] Potter, *op cit.*, p. 46.

impacts, despite the many caveats which measuring a 'soft' activity such as diplomacy implies;
- Make the foreign ministry and the foreign service cheaper by reviewing the activities of certain oversized missions abroad, intensifying the use of communications technologies and limiting unnecessary travels;
- Reach out to the Canadian public to highlight the relevance of DFAIT and the foreign service to the security and prosperity of those it serves;
- Rehabilitate the professionalism of Canada's foreign service by associating its diplomats with an explicit skill set.

In winning domestic support, diplomats should apply internally the skills that they deploy abroad: winning allies in the government who can support funding proposals and secure more funding in the annual budgets, developing a domestic communications strategy to underline their work's value, deploying their advocacy capacity. Diplomatic actors need to recognize that diplomacy has lost its insulation from domestic politics and keep one eye focused on the home front. If they fail to do so, initiatives will continue to pass to other actors, leadership will wane, and creative international proactiveness will increasingly give way to reaction to external demands[196].

3) Enhancing diplomats' autonomy

To deal with today's fast-paced international environment, diplomats must be able to react quickly and to improvise where needed. Yet currently, all outreach, media contact and publication activities by DFAIT employees are tightly controlled and scrutinized[197]. All public communications by diplomats have to be cleared with higher authorities in advance of delivery. This lack of flexibility renders the tasks of the diplomat much more difficult, especially with regard to public diplomacy. Many thus note that there is a need to empower diplomatic actors, to allow them to operate independently at the local level, and to remove pre-clearance rules so that senior diplomats can engage the media in their host countries without previous permission from Ottawa. If more autonomy for diplomatic actors is indeed desirable, the requirements for accountability which comes from the fact that these are governmental agents cannot be discarded. Therefore, as a general rule, diplomats should not be allowed to pursue anything of importance without home approval. At tactical levels however, and as long as they act within overall policy, envoys should have a certain latitude for initiative, especially if in their judgment there is a narrow window of opportunity to be seized.

4) Getting diplomats out of embassies

By and large, because of burdensome bureaucracies, technologies, and security constraints, today's diplomats are more and more confined to their embassies, dealing with the world by computer and telephone rather than directly[198]. However, in the contemporary international environment, the frontlines of diplomacy are often far from the chancellery. To reach out to foreign publics, especially, diplomats must be able and allowed to work effectively and routinely beyond the embassy compound, free from the bureaucratic practices that emphasize the processing of information over the personal, active and direct engagement that wins friends and supporters[199].

---

[196] Copeland, 2009, *op cit.*, p. 143-144.
[197] Ibid., p. 158.
[198] Ross, 2009, *op cit.*
[199] Argyros, *op cit.*, p. 1.

5) Improving the network of missions abroad

In 2010, Canada had a network of 173 missions abroad. Although impressive, this number needs to be contrasted with Japan's 395 missions, Britain's 342, the United States' 289, Italy's 256 and Germany's 230[200]. Compared to the situation in other similar countries, Canada's foreign ministry has also become disproportionately headquarters-heavy. Indeed, while the G8 average is around 50% of foreign ministry employees posted abroad at any one time, DFAIT has no more than 25% of its employees on posting[201]. As a result of this situation, Canada's overseas resources are spread thin in regions where the country has increasing security, economic and political interests to defend. Granted, because of the explosion in the number of states in the international system since 1945, even the wealthiest of nation-states cannot maintain an ambassador in the capital of each sovereign government. However, Canada needs to be much more present where its international interests are. One way to do so could be to experiment with innovative forms of representation abroad. Ideas for innovation that already exist (and which are already being tested, particularly in the United States) include: collocations with like-minded countries, temporary missions abroad, circuit-riding (diplomats doing the same circuit every month or every couple of months, visiting the same cities), presence posts (small offices outside of the world's capitals to a host country's provincial, trade, and opinion centers), and virtual presence posts (one or two officers at an embassy managing an Internet site explaining Canadian policy, providing news of Canada's relations with the host country, answering questions, providing requested material, etc.)[202]. Independently of the means adopted, there is clearly a need for Canada to develop a more comprehensive and distributed presence around the world to allow for a broader and deeper engagement with governments, opinion leaders, and the global public.

6) Embracing new communication tools

The new information and communication technologies have not only transformed diplomatic functions, they have also opened up new opportunities to foreign ministries and missions to transmit information more easily, to address public concerns more quickly, and to advocate their national interests more extensively[203]. However, foreign ministries have been rather slow in embracing the newly-available communication tools. There is thus a need to raise the profile of technology within diplomatic corps and foreign ministries. As technologies evolve and an increasing number of people use them, embassies cannot afford to be left behind, since by doing so they will miss the opportunity to have a voice in global debates. Embracing the new technologies should include: exploiting the Internet-based media more systematically, including online discussion forums, blogs, and video-sharing services; improving embassies' websites; training diplomatic officers in the strategic use of new communication tools; and developing and distributing more content using these new tools[204].

---

[200] Andrew Cohen, *op cit.*, p. 181.
[201] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *op cit.*, p. 29.
[202] Argyros, *op cit.*, p. 43-44.
[203] Hamilton and Langhorne, *op cit.*, p. 232.
[204] Argyros, *op cit,.* p. 23-24.

Bibliography

Interviews

Interview with Robin Higham, former Canadian diplomat, conducted in Ottawa on May 30, 2011, at 11h.

Interview with Daniel Livermore, former Canadian diplomat, conducted in Ottawa on May 31, 2011, at 17h.

Interview with Michael Molloy, former Canadian diplomat, conducted in Ottawa on June 1, 2011, at 12h.

Interview with Claude Laverdure, former Canadian diplomat, conducted in Ottawa on June 1, 2011, at 15h.

Books and articles

ANDERSON, Kenneth, "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines, the Role of International Non-governmental Organizations and the Idea of International Civil Society", European Journal of International Law, vol. 11, no. 1, 2000, pp. 91-120.

ARCHETTI, Cristina, "What Difference Do Communication Technologies Make to Diplomatic Practice? An Evolutionary Model of Change Based on the Experience of London Foreign Diplomats", Paper prepared for the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Convention, Washington, September 2-5, 2010, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID1729138_code1511861.pdf?abstractid=1642542&mirid=1], (consulted on May 23, 2011).

ARGYROS, George, Marc Grossman and Felix Rohatyn, "The Embassy of the Future", Report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), October 15, 2007, [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/embassy_of_the_future.pdf], (consulted on May 15, 2011).

BLACK, Jeremy, *A History of Diplomacy*, London, United Kingdom, Reaktion Books, 2010, 312 p.

BYMAN, Daniel, "Uncertain Partners: NGOs and the Military," Survival, vol. 43, no. 2, Summer 2001, pp. 97-114.

CAMERON, Maxwell, "Democratization of Foreign Policy: The Ottawa Process as a Model," in Maxwell Cameron, Robert Lawson and Brian Tomlin (eds.), *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines*, Toronto, Oxford Press, 1998, 491 p.

COHEN, Andrew, *While Canada Slept – How we lost our place in the world*, Canada, McClelland & Stewart, 2003, 220 p.

COHEN, Raymond, "Reflections on the New Global Diplomacy: Statecraft 2500 BC to 2000 AD", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. 1-18.

COHEN, Samy, “Introduction : L’art de gérer les turbulences mondiales”, in *Les Diplomates – Négocier dans un monde chaotique*, Paris, Éditions Autrement – Collection Mutations, 2002, pp. 5-20.

COPELAND, Daryl, “New Rabbits, Old Hats: International Policy and Canada’s Foreign Service in an Era of Reduced Diplomatic Resources”, International Journal, Vol. 60, No.3, Summer 2005, pp. 743-762.

COPELAND, Daryl, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: Rethinking international relations*, United States, Boulder : Lynne Rienner, 2009, 311 p.

DAVENPORT, David, “The New Diplomacy,” Policy Review, no. 116, December, 2002 & January 2003, [http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/8102], (consulted on July 26, 2011).

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE, *Canada’s International Policy Statement – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Diplomacy*, Canada, Ottawa, 2005, 34 p.

DITCHLEY FOUNDATION, “The Functions and purposes of modern diplomacy”, Director’s note on the conference held on 4-6 March 2010, [http://www.ditchley.co.uk/page/364/modern-diplomacy.htm], (consulted on May 11, 2011).

DOLAN, Michael and Chris Hunt, “Negotiating in the Ottawa Process: The New Multilateralism,” in Maxwell Cameron, Robert Lawson and Brian Tomlin (eds.), *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines*, Toronto, Oxford Press, 1998, 491 p.
.
HAMILTON, Keith and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy – Its evolution, theory and administration*, Second edition, New York, Routledge, 2011, 317 p.

HENRIKSON, Alan K., “The Future of Diplomacy? Five Projective Visions”, The Hague, Clingendael Institute, Clingendael Discussion Paper in Diplomacy 96, January 2005, [http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2005/20050100_cli_paper_dip_issue96.pdf], (consulted on May 11, 2011)

HOCKING, Brian, “Catalytic Diplomacy: Beyond ‘Newness’ and ‘Decline’”, in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. 21-42.

HOCKING, Brian and Donna Lee, “Change and innovation in Diplomacy: The Canadian and UK Experience”, Report of the Loughborough University and the University of Birmingham, POLSIS (Department of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Birmingham), March 2008, [http://www.polsis.bham.ac.uk/documents/research/change-innovation-diplomacy.pdf], (consulted on May 18, 2011).

KENNAN, George F., “Diplomacy without diplomats?”, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 5, September/October 1997, pp. 198-212.

KISSINGER, Henry, *Diplomacy*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994, 912 p.

KLEINER, Juergen, *Diplomatic Practice – Between Tradition and Innovation*, Singapore and Hackensack, NJ, World Scientific Publishing, 2010, 480 p.

KURBALIJA, Jovan, "Diplomacy in the Age of Information Technology", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. 171-191.

LANGHORNE, Richard, "The Diplomacy of Non-State Actors", Diplomacy and Statecraft, Vol. 16, 2006, pp. 331-339.

MEERTS, Paul W., "The Changing Nature of Diplomatic Negotiation", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. 79-93.

MELISSEN, Jan, "Introduction", in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. xiv-xxiii.

METZL, Jamie Frederic, "Popular Diplomacy", Daedalus, Vol. 128, No. 2, Spring 1999, pp. 177-192.

MORANTZ, Aubrey, "Does Canadian Foreign Policy Need a Foreign Service? Can the Second Oldest Profession Learn New Tricks?", Canadian Institute of International Affairs Occasional Paper, Vol.2, No.8, 2005, [http://www.onlinecic.org/download/resourcece/archives/internatio/ii_vol2_no~9?attachment=1], (consulted on May 9, 2011).

PIGMAN, Geoffrey Allen, *Contemporary Diplomacy – Representation and Communication in a Globalized World*, United Kingdom, Polity Press, 2010, 241 p.

POTTER, Evan, "Canada and the New Public Diplomacy", International Journal, Vol. 58, No. 1, Winter 2002-2003, pp. 43-64.

RANA, Kishan, *The 21st Century Ambassador – Plenipotentiary to Chief Executive*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2005, 258 p.

RIORDAN, Shaun, *The New Diplomacy*, United Kingdom, Polity Press, 2003, 150 p.

ROSS, Carne, *Independent Diplomat – Dispatches from an Unaccountable Elite*, United States, Cornell University Press, 2007, 243 p.

ROSS, Carne, "It's time to scrap ambassadors and their embassies", Europe's World (Europe's ideas community), Spring 2009, [http://www.europesworld.org/NewEnglish/Home/Article/tabid/191/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/21346/language/en-US/Itstimetoscrapambassadorsandtheirembassies.aspx], (consulted on May 23, 2011)

SHARP, Paul, "Who Needs Diplomats? The Problems of Diplomatic Representation", International Journal, Vol. 52, No. 4, Fall 1997, pp. 609-634.

SHARP, Paul, "For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations", International Studies Review, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1999, pp. 33-57.

SHEER, François, "Au temps du monde fini", in *Les Diplomates – Négocier dans un monde chaotique*, Paris, Éditions Autrement – Collection Mutations, 2002, pp. 22-33.

SLAUGHTER, Anne-Marie, *A New World Order*, United States, Princeton University Press, 2004, 341 p.

STEIN, Janice Gross, "New Challenges to Conflict Resolution: Humanitarian Nongovernmental Organizations in Complex Emergencies," in *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War*, Daniel Druckman and Paul Stern (eds.), Washington, D.C., National Academy Press, 2000, pp. 383-419

SUCHARIPA, Ernst, "21st Century Diplomacy", The Asrudian Center for International Politics, International Relations Theory, Economics and Philosophy, 2008, [http://asrudiancenter.wordpress.com/2008/09/23/21st-century-diplomacy/], (consulted on May 11, 2011).

TALBOTT, Strobe, "Globalization and Diplomacy: A Practitioner's Perspective", Foreign policy, No. 108, Fall 1997, pp. 68-83.

UNITED NATIONS, "Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations", [http://untreaty.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf], (consulted on June 10, 2011).

WISEMAN, Geoffrey, "'Polylateralism' and New Modes of Global Dialogue", in Christer Jönsson and Richard Langhorne (eds.), *Diplomacy Vol. III*, London, Sage, 2004, pp. 36-57.