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WEB LINKS

www.state.gov/t/np/c10527.htm Information on the non-proliferation regime.

www.ciesin.org/TG/PI/TRADE/tradhmpg.html Information on trade regimes and the environment.

<http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/entri/index.jsp> Environmental regimes.

www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/site/tradeint.html Trade regimes.

CHAPTER 17



Diplomacy

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READER'S GUIDE

This chapter identifies diplomacy as a key process of communication and negotiation in world politics and as an important foreign policy instrument used by global actors. The first section focuses on problems of definition moving from general to specific meanings of the term. The second section looks historically at different stages in the development of modern diplomacy—from 'traditional' to 'new'; from cold war to post-cold war. Each historical system is compared by reference to their common and divergent structures processes, and agenda. The third section looks at diplomacy as used by global actors as a means of achieving their foreign policy objectives. A final section looks more briefly at some contemporary challenges to a diplomacy traditionally based upon the state and inter-state relations. The chapter concludes by arguing that the context and forms of diplomacy have changed but it remains a highly relevant process in contemporary world politics and a useful instrument for a wide range of global actors.

Introduction: what is diplomacy?

Diplomacy is one of those infuriatingly vague terms that can have different meanings depending upon user and usage. We can begin to make sense of it in relation to two major perspectives on world politics that might be labelled 'macro' (the big picture) and 'micro' (the small picture). The macro perspective tries to make sense of world politics as a whole. What are its constituent parts? How do they all fit together? The micro perspective tries to explain world politics from the different but complementary perspective of the actors involved in world politics. Traditionally, the micro perspective focused on states and the governments that act on their behalf in world politics. But, as we shall see, this conventional state-centred focus is no longer adequate to cover the range of actors involved and the different processes that feature in a globalized system of world politics.

The conscientious reader will be able to find uses of this term elsewhere that are so general that 'diplomacy' appears to be synonymous with 'world politics' or 'foreign policy' as a whole. You will find references to, for example, **great power diplomacy**, **summit diplomacy**, or **development diplomacy** which—particularly in media reports—appear to describe a process that is much wider than a specific discussion of one facet of diplomacy. Links between international relations and international history—often referred to as diplomatic history—help to reinforce this notion of interchangeability of terms. Similarly, references to, for example, 'British diplomacy', 'Russian diplomacy', or 'South African diplomacy' often suggest that the writer is referring not just to diplomacy as such but to British, Russian, or South African foreign policy as a whole.

Uses of the term diplomacy in such general ways are a potentially misleading shorthand, but at least they alert us to the fact that diplomacy is central both to an understanding of a global system of world politics and to the foreign policies of states and other actors on the international stage. From the 'macro' perspective of world politics, diplomacy refers to a **process of communication** that is central

Box 17.1 Diplomacy in world politics

Diplomacy in world politics refers to a communications process between international actors that seeks through negotiation to resolve conflict short of war. This process has been refined, institutionalized, and professionalized over many centuries.

to the workings of the global system. Indeed, if world politics is characterized simply by the tension between conflict and cooperation, diplomacy together with war, can be said to represent its defining institutions (see Box 17.1). If conflict and cooperation are placed at two ends of a spectrum (see Fig. 17.1) diplomacy can be located at the cooperation end representing forms of interaction that focus on the **resolution of conflict by dialogue and negotiation**. Diplomacy therefore is fundamentally related to attempts to create stability and order within a global system, the object being to prevent conflict spilling over into war. This chapter characterizes the essential features of the diplomatic process.

From the 'micro' perspective of international actors like states, an understanding of diplomacy provides revealing insights into the behaviour of the actors themselves in the global system. From this perspective, however, diplomacy can be identified as a **policy instrument rather than a global process** (see Box 17.2). All actors have goals or ends towards which their foreign policy behaviour is directed. In

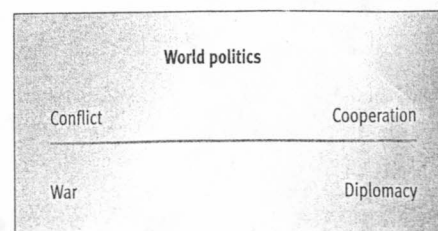


Fig. 17.1 World politics

Box 17.2 Diplomacy and foreign policy

Diplomacy in foreign policy refers to the use of diplomacy as a policy instrument possibly in association with other instruments such as economic or military force to enable an international actor to achieve its policy objectives.

Diplomacy and world politics

Diplomacy as a communications process between political entities has existed for literally thousands of years. The earliest diplomatic document in our possession, discovered in the 1970s, is a letter inscribed on a tablet which has been dated some time around 2500 BC. It was sent from a kingdom called Ebla near the Mediterranean coast in what we would call the Middle East to the kingdom of Hamazi in what is now Northern Iran. It was carried by a messenger who made a round trip of almost 2,000 kilometres. In this one brief message, as Cohen (1995: 3) notes,

we have evidence of a fully-fledged diplomatic system: a working relationship between two distant kingdoms; the use of an emissary to convey a letter over a long distance; protocol, including the concept of equal status, an understood medium of communication, and a conventional form of address; a domestic organization for making and implementing foreign policy; an archive; a set of normative expectations about right and proper behaviour; a sense of ... fellowship or brotherhood; trade or reciprocal gift-giving via envoys.

Traditional diplomacy

While the conventions and machinery of diplomacy have evolved over a long historical period—the city-states in Ancient Greece, for example, introduced a diplomatic system that had many remarkably modern features—our global diplomatic system has its origins in fifteenth-century Italy where permanent embassies were first established (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: chs 1, 2). A 'traditional' diplo-

order to achieve ends, actors clearly need means—often called policy instruments. Diplomacy provides one instrument that international actors use to implement their foreign policy. It may be used directly ('pure' diplomacy) with other parties or as a means of communicating the use or threatened use of other instruments ('mixed' diplomacy). A second major function of this chapter is to characterize the essential features of diplomacy as a policy instrument.

matic system developed thereafter which had some distinctive features. These can be usefully characterized under the headings of **structure**, **process**, and **agenda**—broadly relating to who was involved in diplomacy, how diplomatic activity was organized, and the substance of diplomacy. This framework will help us to compare traditional diplomacy with diplomatic systems that preceded it and those that followed.

Structure

Traditional diplomacy can be distinguished from its predecessors in the ancient and medieval worlds primarily because it constituted a communications process between recognizably modern states rather than between other forms of political organization like, for example, the Catholic Church. As relations between states expanded, political leaders (usually monarchs) found it increasingly necessary to negotiate with each other on a regular basis. But, given the distances involved, negotiations had to be indirect and diplomats were sent abroad for this purpose. If diplomacy as a state-based activity is central to the structure of traditional diplomacy, diplomatic agents acting on behalf of states later became institutionalized and eventually professionalized.

By **institutionalized**, we mean that particular institutions emerged which had diplomacy as their main function and diplomacy ceased to be an irregular activity undertaken by ad hoc representatives. As already noted, the Italian city-states were the first to establish permanent, resident missions or embassies

abroad and other states in Europe soon followed their lead. The advantages of permanent representation abroad included practicality and continuity. Embassies became an important embodiment of state interests and a network of permanent embassies later became linked to specialized foreign departments established within home states. The institutionalization of diplomacy with a dedicated workforce of diplomats at home and abroad was followed by the professionalization of diplomacy as an occupation.

Processes

In the traditional system, diplomacy was organized largely on a bilateral (two-party) basis and usually undertaken in secrecy. When two states developed a relationship of mutual importance, it became normal to exchange permanent embassies and to conduct diplomacy through those embassies on a state-to-state basis. Unless one state forced the other to accept a position, mutual agreement was the only means of achieving a settlement of any disputes. Limiting the relationship to two parties, of course, made it easier to keep negotiations secret, although there were other good reasons in terms of the negotiating process itself for maintaining as much secrecy as possible. No good card or chess player reveals his or her 'hand' in advance, and diplomatic negotiations are similar to these games in important respects.

The traditional process of diplomacy also drew upon rules and procedures for behaviour from earlier diplomatic systems. From the fifteenth century onwards, diplomacy became not just a regular process but also a regularized process. Procedural rules known as diplomatic protocol were developed which included rather ostentatious ceremonies and also more practical procedures relating to such things as the order in which a treaty is signed by the parties involved in a negotiation. A series of rights, privileges, and immunities became attached both to diplomats and to diplomatic activities.

These derived from two principles. The first essentially practical consideration was that diplomats should be able to conduct their business without fear or hindrance. The popular phrase 'don't shoot the messenger!' not only suggests the need to safeguard the messenger who does not deserve to be blamed for

the content of the message carried, but also indicates the importance of safeguarding the whole system of communications between international actors. The second principle was derived from the idea that the ambassador in particular is the direct representative of a sovereign monarch and, therefore, should be treated with the same consideration that a monarch would receive. This idea of representation was expanded to include the controversial idea of **extra-territoriality** which in this context simply means that the resident embassy abroad is regarded as part of the territory of the home state and subject to the laws of that state and, likewise, that the resident diplomatic staff are subject only to the laws of the home state.

Agenda

Traditional diplomacy can be characterized finally by its agenda—what issues did diplomats negotiate about? The important point to note here is that the agenda of traditional diplomacy was narrow certainly by comparison with later periods. Not only was the agenda set by the relatively underdeveloped state of bilateral relations but, more importantly, the preoccupations of diplomacy reflected the preoccupations of political leaders themselves.

For hundreds of years, foreign policy was seen as the exclusive province of monarchs and their advisers and, not surprisingly, personal ambitions—the acquisition of territory perhaps, or another throne—together with more general issues of war and peace constituted the most important issues on the diplomatic agenda. In a highly personalized structure, diplomats in essence were sent abroad by one monarch to win over another. Less desirable aspects of diplomacy occasionally surfaced as diplomats came under pressure to 'get a result' whatever the means employed. This prompted at least one cynical definition of a diplomat as 'an honest man sent abroad to lie on behalf of his country' (a remark usually credited to Sir Henry Wotton, an Elizabethan diplomat). In general, however, it was quickly discovered that honesty rather than deceit is more likely to be effective in achieving objectives, whatever short-term gains might be made by more duplicitous behaviour. Traditional diplomacy reached its most developed form and was arguably most effective as a system for ordering international relations in

nineteenth-century Europe. This is the period known, in a classic piece of historical overstatement, as the 'century of peace' in Europe.

New diplomacy

However successful traditional diplomacy may have been in promoting stability, order, and peace in nineteenth-century Europe, its failure to prevent the First World War and, for some indeed, its role in actually causing that war, led to a widespread belief that a new form of diplomacy was needed. Though this was commonly referred to after the First World War as the 'new' diplomacy, elements of this allegedly new form of diplomacy were already in evidence in the nineteenth century if not before, and there was a long transition period between traditional forms and the new system of diplomacy that evolved in the first half of the twentieth century. What was identifiably new about the 'new' diplomacy emerged from two important ideas (see Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: 137).

First, there was a demand that diplomacy should be more open to **public scrutiny and control**. This demand related less to a public involvement in the process than to the provision of information to the public about agreements reached. This focused attention on two interlinked elements of traditional diplomacy that were now seen to be problematic: excessive secrecy and the fact that diplomats were normally members of a closed social elite—the aristocracy. The second idea related to the importance of establishing an **international organization**—which initially took the form of the League of Nations after the First World War—that would act both as an international forum for the peaceful settlement of disputes and as a deterrent against another world war by the threat of collective action against potential aggressors. Historically then the new diplomacy represented the widespread hope for a new start after 1918.

Structure

The structure of the new diplomacy remained similar in form to traditional diplomacy to the extent that states and governments remained the major actors in this system and were represented internationally

by what was now a well-established network of permanent embassies abroad attached to foreign departments at home. There are two important changes to note, however, that have implications not only for the structure but also for the processes and the issues that characterized the new diplomacy. First, **states were no longer the only actors** involved. Increasingly, they had to share the international stage with other actors such as international organizations which were also engaged in diplomacy. These organizations were of two types, intergovernmental (with governments only as members) and non-governmental (with private individuals and groups as members).

The second important change to note is that governments themselves were beginning to change in terms of the scope of their activities and the extent to which they sought to regulate the lives of their citizens. Where once they had simply provided for the physical security of their citizens they now had broader concern with their social and economic well-being. Thus, the twentieth century saw an important change from the so-called '**night-watchman state**' to the '**welfare state**'. This has implications for the range of issues that states needed to negotiate about in their international activity.

Processes

The changing interests of states as international actors and the growing number of non-state actors involved changed the nature of the new diplomacy as a process of negotiation. Most obviously, it made diplomacy a more complex activity involving more and different actors. States continued to negotiate bilaterally with each other on a state-to-state basis, but groups of states typically negotiated multilaterally through the auspices of intergovernmental organizations like the League of Nations and its successor the United Nations and, increasingly, with the growing range of non-governmental organizations which sought to influence inter-state behaviour to achieve their own objectives. Again, it must be stressed that multilateral diplomacy was not strictly new in the sense that what had been called conference diplomacy between the Great Powers had been an important feature of nineteenth-century European diplomacy. Nor did multilateral diplomacy

replace bilateral diplomacy. But, to the extent that it was more difficult to keep secret a process involving so many different actors, it is fair to say that the new diplomacy was a more open process than its predecessor.

Agenda

The agenda of the new diplomacy contained a number of new issues as well as a reinforced emphasis on military security. The avoidance of war now became a priority as the 'new' diplomats sought to make the First World War 'the war to end all wars', but diplomatic activity also began to focus more on economic, social, and welfare issues relating to material well-being. These became known as 'low politics' issues in contrast to the 'high politics' issues associated with the traditional diplomatic agenda. These new issues reflected not only the wider interests and responsibilities of governments but also the often narrowly focused interests of non-state actors.

The other distinctive feature of the new agenda is that it increasingly featured **highly specialized** issues that raised questions about the adequacy of the training given to diplomats. If the specialization required of new diplomats challenged their competence, their distinctive role was also challenged by two other trends: the direct role political leaders themselves often played in diplomacy and the growing tendency of political leaders in the inter-war period to appoint personal envoys to represent them. Clearly, professional diplomats were no longer the only 'players' involved in the new diplomatic 'game' and they enjoyed far less autonomy than traditional diplomats had enjoyed in earlier periods.

Cold war diplomacy

Many of the characteristics of the new diplomacy continued to evolve in the period after the Second World War, indeed **multilateralism** and an increasingly specialized agenda now contained issues like the environment, technology, and arms control. In terms of changing structures and processes, a host of new states joined an already complex array of state and non-state actors as the former colonies of the

European powers gained their independence. The fact that these new states were unfamiliar with the established rules and principles of diplomacy led to the first important attempt to give them the status of **international law**, notably in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (see Berridge 1995: 20–31).

The term '**cold war diplomacy**' refers to some very specific aspects of diplomacy that emerged after the Second World War. From the late 1940s until the end of the 1980s, world politics was dominated by the ideological confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each **superpower** supported by a network of allies sought to undermine and 'defeat' the other by all means short of a real or a 'hot war'—hence the 'cold war' description of this confrontational system. The diplomatic activity associated with 'East–West' confrontation had a single dramatic focus—the **absolute necessity of avoiding a global, nuclear conflict** that could destroy the international system. The most important types of cold war diplomacy, nuclear, crisis, and summit diplomacy are defined in Box 17.3.

There was nothing new about **nuclear diplomacy** to the extent that states have always hoped that the size of their military forces would help to persuade or dissuade potential adversaries. The distinctiveness of nuclear diplomacy, however, is the extent to which both sides of the East–West divide relied upon their

Box 17.3 Types of cold war diplomacy

Nuclear diplomacy: refers to the interactions between nuclear-armed states where one or more of them threatens to use nuclear weapons either to dissuade an opponent from undertaking an action or to persuade them to call a halt to some action that has begun. The former is also known as **deterrence** and the latter as **compellence**.

Crisis diplomacy: refers to the delicate communications and negotiations involved in a crisis. A **crisis** may be defined as a short, intensive period in which the possibility of (nuclear) war is perceived to increase dramatically.

Summit diplomacy: refers to a direct meeting between heads of government (of the superpowers in particular) to resolve major problems. The 'summit' became a regular mode of contact during the cold war.

nuclear weapons in political and psychological terms to achieve their objectives, but also sought to avoid triggering a nuclear war. Given the destructive nature of nuclear weapons, however, there were unprecedented risks attached to this type of diplomacy and crises frequently emerged as a result, which in turn required a particular diplomatic response. The successful resolution of the most serious nuclear crisis in October 1962 over Soviet missiles in Cuba led political leaders and analysts to look for clues about behaviour in that crisis that might provide principles of crisis management (see Richardson 1994: ch.3).

But there are problems with the notion of 'crisis management'—as Richardson's extended comment explains (see Box 17.4)—and many analysts including Richardson prefer the more traditional term 'crisis diplomacy'. From this perspective, the most important outcome of the Cuban missile crisis was not a checklist of guidelines for future crisis management but the agreement to set up a 'hot line'—a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington—that would maximize the chances of negotiating a direct settlement between the principal parties. Another form of direct communication was the summit meeting between the superpowers pioneered by the Geneva summit in 1955. Initially, summit meetings had symbolic value only but, by the 1970s, they had become a useful forum for negotiating tangible agreements which contributed to a reduction of East–West tensions. By the mid-

Box 17.4 Crisis management

'The term [crisis management] is often taken to mean the exercise of restraint in order to reduce the risk of war. However, this usage obscures the central problem confronting decision-makers in nuclear-age crises—that each party seeks to pursue simultaneously two potentially incompatible goals: to prevail over the adversary, while at the same time avoiding nuclear war. "Crisis management" must address the tension between the two goals, but this brings out the questionable character of the concept itself. The dilemmas of choice are glossed over by the use of the term "management", with its overtones of technical rationality and efficiency.'

(Richardson 1994: 25)

1980s, a series of superpower summits played a significant role in bringing the cold war to an end.

Diplomacy after the cold war

The end of the cold war represented a dramatic change in the international context within which diplomacy is conducted. The end of the ideological East–West conflict and the demise of the Soviet Union raised popular expectations about what might now be achieved by diplomacy and negotiation. The successful ousting of the invading Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991 by a US-led military coalition sanctioned by a UN resolution appeared to provide a model for the future. But optimism was soon replaced by a realization that the end of the cold war may have resolved some problems but other problems had merely been hidden from view during the cold war period. The failure of diplomacy to resolve the breakdown of order in the former Yugoslavia (see Box 17.5) illustrates the intractable nature of many post-cold war problems on the international agenda.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, diplomacy at the level of world politics could be characterized in two ways. First, diplomacy is now genuinely global in scope. Gone are the East–West ideological divisions that excluded a large number of states from 'normal' diplomatic intercourse during the cold war period. A good illustration of this is the extent to which 'North–South' dimensions of international diplomacy were obscured by the East–West focus. From a cold war perspective, developing states were the object of superpower attention only in so far as they might be tempted to side with one or the other. Problems of poverty and development were effectively sidelined. Since the end of the cold war, however, the specific concerns of development diplomacy (see Box 17.6) have occupied a much higher-profile position in global diplomacy. Second, contemporary diplomacy can also be characterized as complex and fragmented. In terms of the analytical categories used here, there are multiple actors involved, complex multilateral as well as bilateral processes at work, and the substance of global diplomacy covers a wider agenda of issues than ever before.

Box 17.5 Diplomacy in the Balkans

The breakdown of order in the Balkan region followed the disintegration of the federal state of Yugoslavia. The problems began in 1991 when Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence and Serbia used military force in an attempt to maintain the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Problems quickly spread to other members of the federation, to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and by 1998–9 to Kosovo. Instability in the region also sparked a crisis in Albania in 1997. Conflict took a conventional military form but was also complicated by inter-ethnic violence between different groups, Serbians, Croats, and Muslims in particular. Huge displacements of population occurred with widespread evidence of attempts at 'ethnic cleansing'. The international community has struggled to use various forms of diplomacy to stabilize the region. The forms have included bilateral and multilateral (conference) diplomacy, peacekeeping with military observers, the use of economic and humanitarian aid to assist civilian reconstruction, and (particularly in Kosovo) peacemaking—the use of overt military force in an attempt to enforce a peace. A variety of different combinations of state and non-state actors have been involved, including the European Union, the United Nations, NATO, and the 'Contact Group' (the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain, and France). Diplomacy has had one qualified success—the 1995 Dayton Agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina—and thereafter it has made a significant contribution to some semblance of stability and order in the region. However, complex problems remain unresolved.

Box 17.6 Developmental diplomacy

Developmental diplomacy: refers to 'the process whereby Third World countries attempt to negotiate improvements in their position in the international political economy. These negotiations largely take the form of bargaining with Western industrialized countries.'

(Williams 1994: 46)

Diplomacy and the 'war against terrorism'

If the end of the cold war spawned an optimistic mood about what might be achieved by diplomacy, the sudden and devastating attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001 produced the very opposite mood of deep pessimism. What became known as 9/11 symbolized a new phase of globalization in which the contribution that diplomacy might make to the resolution of terror-related conflict was unclear to say the least. This was partly because the perpetrating actor, Al Qaeda, is not a state or even a conventional non-state actor, but rather an amorphous transnational network with whom communication and negotiation would be inherently difficult even if the precise causes of 9/11 and subsequent attacks could be established. A second key reason for a sense of pessimism about diplomacy was the decision of the George W. Bush Administration to frame the response to 9/11 in terms of a 'war against terrorism' which suggested that military force and other coercive measures would be the instruments of choice.

Nevertheless, in the first few months after 11 September 2001 intense negotiations did produce a broad coalition which rallied to the side of the United States and supported a range of counter-measures which included the military invasion of Afghanistan, the main base of Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden. The subsequent invasion of Iraq in March 2003, however, split that coalition and, in particular, created an unprecedented rift in the transatlantic alliance. From a European perspective, there were three interrelated concerns that relate to diplomacy. First, unilateralism. It was apparent that the US Government was determined to invade Iraq, ostensibly in the cause of counter-terrorism, whether or not its allies were in support and whether or not a legitimizing resolution could be obtained at the United Nations. The 'diplomacy window' was opened largely as a result of the concerns of the Blair Government but it quickly became clear that this was merely a cover to distract attention from the extensive military build-up in the Persian Gulf that preceded the invasion of Iraq (see Box 17.7). Second, there was concern

Box 17.7 Iraq: shutting the diplomacy window

The long build-up to war in Iraq was punctuated on two occasions by attempts to use diplomacy to avert war or at least to provide international support for it, through the auspices of the United Nations. On both occasions the role of British Prime Minister Blair was significant. The first came in September 2002 at a meeting at Camp David when Blair backed Bush on Iraq but said that he needed to show that they had tried UN diplomacy. With the issue presented in terms of the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction in Iraq rather than the need for 'regime change', the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441 in November 2002. The second occasion resulted from Bush's apparent concern that the Blair Government might be in danger of falling because of its overt support for the hard US line on Iraq. He, therefore, acceded to Blair's request for a follow-up resolution that would spell out the 'serious consequences'

that Resolution 1441 had stated would follow Iraqi non-compliance with the UN arms inspectors. A second resolution declaring Iraq in material breach of its obligation to disarm was withdrawn on 17 March by its backers, the United States, Britain, and Spain, when it became clear that it would not attract sufficient support from other Security Council members. These attempts to reach a diplomatic solution need to be set against the US domestic process of deciding upon and implementing the decision to go to war in Iraq. This process began as early as December 2001, with intensive military and intelligence planning through 2002 creating its own momentum. The final decision by the president to go to war was taken in January 2003 with the planned attack delayed only to accommodate the forlorn attempt to get the second UN resolution passed.

(See Woodward 2004)

about the new US military doctrine of pre-emption which implied at least a rejection of both containment and deterrence, the twin pillars of US diplomacy in the cold war. The fear in Europe was that the invasion of Iraq would be followed by the use of military force against other 'rogue' states.

The third related concern refers more broadly to the relationship between what are called 'hard' and 'soft' instruments of power. As defined by Christopher Hill, 'hard' power refers to 'that which is targeted, coercive, often immediate and physical', whereas 'soft' power refers to 'that which is indirect, long term and works more through persuasion than force' (Hill 2003: 135; see also Nye 2004). This is not a new debate, of course, but the 'war against terror-

ism' has provided a dramatic new focus for it. Without denying that hard power has a place in an integrated counter-terrorist strategy, the Europeans have argued that excessive reliance on 'sticks' rather than 'carrots' is likely to be counterproductive. Twelve months after the military intervention in Iraq, the absence of a stable, secure post-Saddam Hussein state was posing major questions about the efficacy of military force and strong arguments were being made in favour of a soft power approach to the global problem of terror. These arguments were strengthened by some evidence of success for this approach in Iran and Libya. The role of diplomacy as a policy instrument and its relationship to other instruments is taken up in more detail in the next section.

Key points

- Diplomacy is a key concept in world politics. It refers to a process of communication and negotiation between states and other international actors.
- Diplomacy began in the ancient world but took on a recognizably modern form from the fifteenth century onwards with the establishment of the permanent embassy.
- By the end of the nineteenth century all states had a network of embassies abroad linked to foreign departments at home. Diplomacy had also become an established profession.
- The First World War was a 'watershed' in the history of diplomacy. The perceived failure of diplomacy to prevent this war led to a demand for a 'new' diplomacy

that would be less secretive and more subject to democratic control. The outbreak of the Second World War revealed the limits of the 'new' diplomacy.

- Cold war diplomacy relates to the period after the Second World War when international relations were dominated by a global confrontation between the superpowers and their allies. The imperative need to avoid a nuclear war, but also to 'win' the cold war produced a very delicate, dangerous form of diplomacy.

- The end of the cold war produced a new mood of optimism that diplomacy could resolve all major international problems. Such optimism quickly dissipated when a host of new problems and old problems in a new guise emerged.
- The war against terrorism after 11 September 2001 has posed a major challenge to the role of diplomacy in global politics. This challenge has been framed within a debate about the appropriate relationship between hard and soft instruments of power.

Diplomacy and foreign policy

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, diplomacy not only helps us to understand the nature of world politics as a whole but, from a different perspective, also reveals much about the behaviour of the actors in a global system of world politics. The focus of this second major section of this chapter is the relationship between diplomacy and the foreign policies of states. While this section will generalize from the experience of developed states, it should be apparent from the discussion so far in this chapter that developed states are not the only state actors in the system. The role of diplomacy in the behaviour of developing states and other non-state actors will also be discussed.

The making and the implementation of foreign policy

We need first to locate diplomacy within the foreign policy process of states. There are two major stages in that process—the making and the implementation (or the carrying out) of policy. A simple view suggests that the making of foreign policy is the exclusive business of government. So important is foreign policy to the achievement of the 'national interests' of the state that the most senior members of government will oversee and control the policy process. Having made the key decisions, they then

hand them over to their foreign departments for implementation. Diplomacy is one of a set of instruments through which decisions are implemented, policy activated, and policy objectives—also established by the political leadership—achieved.

This is a reassuring picture in that, while the difficulties of successful implementation are underplayed, it does suggest that it is the politicians who establish the policy objectives and make the important decisions. If they are elected, this suggests the possibility of democratic control of foreign policy—in principle at least. The foreign policy bureaucracy, not elected of course, plays a subordinate, non-political, essentially instrumental role. This picture, however, is an idealized one, unlikely to match the realities of the process, particularly in developed states with their highly bureaucratized systems of government. As we shall see in the next section, the making and the implementation of foreign policy cannot be so easily split. The two stages can be separated for analysis but in practice they are parts of a continuous and interactive process.

Diplomacy as policy instrument

There is a specialized section of every government devoted to foreign policy. This usually takes the

institutionalized form of a foreign department with a dedicated staff. In Britain, for example, the relevant department is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and, in the United States, the Department of State performs the same function. The specialized staff are known respectively as the Diplomatic Service and Foreign Service Officers. **Every foreign department is linked to a network of embassies abroad and this constitutes the diplomatic machinery of government.** If we identify the main functions performed by this 'machine', it will become apparent that they relate not only to the implementation but also to the actual making of foreign policy. **Diplomacy as a governmental activity then refers not only to a particular policy instrument but also to the whole process of policymaking and implementation.**

As listed in Box 17.8, there are five major functions performed by the diplomatic machine. The first two of these functions are essential to the making of foreign policy. Information and data are the raw materials of foreign policy and it is part of the job of diplomats abroad to gather information and report back to the political leadership via the foreign department at home. Information relevant to policymaking can be gathered from both formal and informal sources. The formal sources include the local media and government reports. Informal sources include personal contacts among the local political elite and the rest of the diplomatic corps—other states' diplomatic representatives based in that location. Given the expanded agenda of modern foreign policy, the scope and range of information required by government for policymaking purposes has increased dramatically. As much of this information is specialized, it is normal for trained representatives called attachés to be attached (as their name

Box 17.8 Functions of the diplomatic machine

- Information gathering
- Policy advice
- Representation
- Negotiation
- Consular services

suggests) to the larger embassies. These may include commercial, military, scientific, or cultural attachés, or some relevant mix of experts depending upon the precise nature of the relationship between the parties.

It is difficult in practice to separate the function of information gathering and political reporting from the expectation that diplomats will offer policy advice to government. Part of the purpose of having permanent representatives abroad is that they develop a familiarity with the country in which they are based and are able to use this together with other skills and experience to interpret data and to 'put a gloss' on their reports. They make assessments about likely developments and also make reports on the reception home government policies have received or are likely to receive. The distinction between giving advice and making policy is often blurred. The information and advice given by diplomats will certainly limit the perceived options available and may effectively structure the choices of the political leadership.

If diplomats contribute to policymaking by providing information and advice, the diplomatic machinery provides an important policy instrument relevant to policy implementation through the functions of representation, negotiation, and consular services. Embassies not only represent the government abroad but also represent the wider interests of the home state which go beyond the narrowly political realm. The ambassador and his/her staff will attempt to maintain good relations with the host state, to network with local elites, to be present at relevant ceremonial occasions and events where home interests need to be promoted—at trade fairs, for example. The status and size of the embassy provides a symbolic representation of the importance attached to relations with the host country. Increasing or decreasing the number of diplomats can be used politically to signal the current state of a relationship, or to indicate problems, as the cases in Box 17.9 illustrate.

Negotiation is perhaps the single most important function of the diplomatic machine. This covers a variety of activities from simple consultation—known as an 'exchange of views'—to detailed negotiations on a specific issue. Professional diplomats may take the lead on negotiations or they may play a

Box 17.9 Diplomacy by expulsion

In May 1996, the British Government both initiated and was on the receiving end of diplomatic actions designed to signal displeasure. In the first case, the Russian Government required the removal of four British diplomats in the Moscow embassy who had allegedly been involved in espionage. In a 'tit for tat' response, preserving honour on both sides, the British Government then required four Russian diplomats in London to be sent home. In a second, unrelated case, the British Government expelled three Sudanese diplomats in response to a United Nations Security Council resolution to impose diplomatic and travel sanctions on Sudan because of concerns over complicity by the Sudanese military regime in acts of terrorism. In addition to the expulsions, the remaining Sudanese diplomats were required to give prior notice of UK travel outside London and entry visas were denied to members of the Sudanese Government and military.

supportive role if political leaders themselves or other envoys are involved. Whenever states require the agreement of other states or third parties, diplomacy is the technique used to secure that agreement. The ability to persuade other parties is central to the art of diplomacy. On some issues, persuasion itself may suffice. But, not infrequently, some pressure may be required and the parties involved may then agree to compromise and to adjust their original positions. Pressure may take various forms including the imposition of time limits on the negotiation, seeking to isolate the other party diplomatically, or, in extreme circumstances, threatening to break off diplomatic relations.

The final function of the machine, the provision of consular services, has two elements of which the second is more directly related to diplomacy as a policy instrument. The first type of consular activity involves action to support and protect home citizens abroad. This work, together with the processing of immigration applications from host country citizens may be handled separately from embassy work. The second type of consular work is dedicated to commercial work, supporting trade relations with the host state. This type of work has increased dramatically in recent years and embassies are often evaluated in part at least in terms of their ability to boost home export promotion and trade activity generally.

The relationship between diplomacy and other policy instruments

It is clear that that diplomacy is an important policy instrument in its own right. Persuasion or 'pure diplomacy' may indeed be sufficient to achieve a state's policy objectives abroad. Typically, however, diplomacy is linked to other policy instruments to produce what is called 'mixed diplomacy'. Here, diplomacy becomes a communications channel through which the use or threatened use of other instruments is transmitted to other parties. States learned long ago that persuasion is often more successful if 'sticks' and/or 'carrots' are attached (a point made earlier in the context of the war against terrorism). There are three other types of policy instrument that may be used in various ways either as potential rewards or as punishments in the attempt to secure compliant behaviour in another party.

First, military force may be threatened or deployed to give 'muscle' to a negotiation. Diplomacy and military force, often in combination, have been used by states for so many centuries that they may be regarded as the traditional instruments of foreign policy. The growing costs of warfare, however, have led developed states at least to look for alternative instruments to strengthen their hand in negotiations. A second instrument, economic measures, is not new—trade diplomacy also has a long history. But trade and aid have been used increasingly since the Second World War to influence the outcome of negotiations. Both trade and aid can be threatened or used as a stick or as a carrot in the sense that either can be offered or withheld. The third instrument is the most recent in terms of regular usage and can be labelled subversion. Where the other instruments are used to target governments directly, subversion is rather different in that it is focused on particular groups within other states with the object of undermining or overthrowing the government of that state. Subversion may include a variety of techniques including propaganda, intelligence activities, and assisting rebel groups (see Box 17.10).

The effectiveness of mixed diplomacy in achieving policy objectives depends upon a variety of factors including the nature of the objective sought, the availability of relevant instruments, the nature of the

Box 17.10 Diplomacy by subversion

In September 1970, Salvador Allende was elected President of Chile, the first democratically elected Marxist leader. The United States Government decided thereafter to use all means short of military invasion to bring down the Allende Government. A combination of diplomatic, economic, and subversion instruments were used to support a policy of destabilization. Chile was isolated diplomatically from the international community. US influence with international banks was used to withhold economic loans and the Chilean economy was thrown into chaos. Trade in its principal export, copper, was effectively paralysed. Some \$8 million was made available to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for clandestine interference in Chile which was used to fund the activities of opposition political parties and paramilitary groups hostile to Allende. The Allende Government was finally ousted by a coup in September 1973 and Allende himself was killed.

(See Hersh 1983: chs 21, 22)

'mix' used, the costs attached to the use of particular instruments, and so on. In terms of selection, diplomacy continues to occupy a favoured position because it has certain comparative advantages—even though it may need to be supplemented by other instruments to be effective. First, diplomatic resources are readily available. All states and other actors have at least some capacity to communicate with other parties. Second, diplomacy has relatively few costs directly associated with it. While the use of other instruments may be regarded as politically unacceptable in certain circumstances—military force in particular—diplomacy, as Hocking and Smith suggest, is widely regarded as legitimate 'because of its association with negotiation and conciliation, which are valued as norms of international behaviour' (Hocking and Smith 1990: 205).

Diplomacy and developing states

The discussion in the previous sections has assumed that all states are similar with respect to diplomacy and foreign policy. There are however, important differences between developed and developing states which must qualify some of the generalizations we

have made about 'states'. In particular, developing states are handicapped as effective international actors by having relatively underdeveloped diplomatic machines and by a restricted range of policy instruments. They tend to have a patchy system of representation abroad and limited resources available for policy analysis. They also have a limited range of policy instruments for bargaining with other actors and for implementing decisions made. For many developing states, the use of international organizations at both regional and global levels is crucial to compensate for weaknesses in national capabilities. We should note here the special role of the United Nations as a forum in which all developing states are represented and where they can attempt to coordinate their common interests and maximize their impact on world politics.

Key points

- Diplomacy plays a key role in the foreign policies of states and other international actors.
- A diplomatic 'machinery' (minimally a foreign department and overseas representation) performs important functions in the making and the implementation of foreign policy.
- Diplomacy involves persuading other actors to do (or not to do) what you want (do not want) them to do. To be effective, ('pure') diplomacy may need to be supplemented by other instruments, but negotiating skills are central to the traditional art of diplomacy.
- Diplomacy combined with other instruments (military, economic, subversion) is called mixed diplomacy. Here, diplomacy becomes a communications channel through which the use or threatened use of other instruments is transmitted to other parties.
- Diplomacy usually has comparative advantages over other instruments in terms of availability and cost.
- Developing states are handicapped as effective international actors by having a relatively underdeveloped diplomatic machinery and by a restricted range of policy instruments.

Challenges to a state-based diplomacy

The last section of this chapter focused on diplomacy as an instrument of state behaviour, whether we are talking about developed or developing states. Indeed, diplomacy used to be called 'statecraft' to emphasize the traditional dominance of states as international actors. However, even the most powerful states are no longer the only significant international actors in a global diplomatic system. Bilateral state-to-state diplomacy remains an important structural feature of that system but it has been increasingly supplemented by multilateral forms of diplomacy with a mixture of state and non-state actors involved. What forms does multilateral diplomacy take and how do actors seek to manage these complex relationships?

International organizations tend to act diplomatically in very much the same way as states. They may not have the extensive diplomatic apparatus performing a wide range of functions that is characteristic of developed states, but all have at least a rudimentary diplomatic machinery—whether they are intergovernmental organizations like the UN or non-governmental organizations like the major multinational corporations. They can communicate their interests and deploy their resources to influence the outcome of negotiations. Indeed, many of these actors have a greater ability to influence the diplomatic process at a global level than smaller states. At a regional level, complex multilateral types of diplomacy have evolved which have reached their most developed form in Europe and can be illustrated by looking at foreign or external policy making in the European Union (see Box 17.11).

These developments raise important questions about the extent to which the state and the state system remain, or indeed should remain, the main vehicles for a global diplomacy. At least one scholar has argued that diplomacy's linkage to the state is 'paradoxical and problematic' and that diplomacy should be transformed into a 'concept that embodies social relationships which are ordered without the state' (Hoffman 2003: 526). This may be a radical position but other scholars have stressed the challenges that new developments pose to a

Box 17.11 External diplomacy of the European Union

The European Union (EU) is arguably a unique multilateral actor in world politics to the extent that state and non-state actors within the Union combine in different ways to act diplomatically on the international stage. The precise combination of actors and associated policy processes depend largely upon the nature of the issue. There are three major types of European foreign policy. Foreign policy 'proper', referred to in Euro-jargon as the 'Common Foreign and Security Policy', can be characterized as an intergovernmental process, largely though not exclusively controlled by the member states. Foreign economic policy or 'external relations', on the other hand, can be characterized as more of a transnational process, with EU institutions like the European Commission playing major role. In trade diplomacy, for example, the Commission acts on behalf of the member states though agreements with third parties need to be agreed by the Council of Ministers representing the member states. Finally, all 25 member states continue to pursue their own diplomatic activities though, over time, national foreign policies have been increasingly 'Europeanized'—adapted to a greater or lesser extent to conform to a common EU policy.

(See White 2001)

state-centred view of diplomacy. Hocking, for example, notes that the traditional 'identification of diplomacy as a means of securing the state from its international environment is being modified by diplomacy conceived of as a "boundary-spanning" activity. Here, diplomats are operating not so much within the well-defined "shell" of the state, but within shifting and reconstituting boundaries as state sovereignty is redefined in the face of globalising and regionalising pressures' (Hocking 2004: 92). It is worth noting that these pressures can in certain circumstances put diplomats and embassies in a dangerously exposed position, as illustrated in Box 17.12. Hocking goes on to conclude that 'there is an increasing recognition that the execution of international policy demands the construction of

Box 17.12 Diplomats in danger

The importance of safeguarding diplomats and securing the whole system of communications between international actors was underlined in an earlier section of this chapter. One unfortunate consequence of terrorism has been the targeting of embassies by suicide bombers. Following the Al Qaeda attacks on United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the British consulate (and a British bank) in Istanbul were attacked in November 2003. As a result, millions of dollars and pounds are being spent on moving embassies to safer sites and improving security. Britain has 230 overseas missions and those in the Middle East and North Africa are regarded as being most at risk. While the safety of embassy staff is an obvious priority, diplomats themselves are concerned about losing contact with the local population and remain opposed to the building of fortress-style embassies located outside capitals. This is bound to make the crucial information-gathering task of diplomats that much more difficult.

networks of interaction based on the exchange of resources which are no longer the sole preserve of government'. This recognizes the challenge posed to inter-state diplomacy by the growth of civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in particular (Hocking 2004: 94. See also Cooper and Hocking 2000).

But it is far too soon to conclude that state-based diplomacy does not remain highly significant. As Hill notes, 'most diplomatic agency is still the preserve of states' and intergovernmental relations as a whole remain important (Hill 2003: 138). Given the changing nature of foreign policy, many parts of the state machinery, apart from ministries of foreign affairs, now engage in international diplomacy. This may challenge the traditional 'gatekeeper' role of

foreign ministries and professional diplomats but it increases the volume of governmental agents involved in diplomacy broadly conceived. One interesting new area of diplomatic activity in which states have taken a lead is known as 'public diplomacy'. This has some similarities to the policy instrument described earlier as subversion, in that it seeks to influence foreign societies as much as other governments. But, often linked to older notions of commercial and cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy is less concerned to destabilize those societies by clandestine operations and more concerned openly to project a positive image of the state to the outside world in order to influence the policy of others towards it. As Hill comments, public diplomacy constitutes 'a curious revival of statism in this age of globalization. A state has become something to sell through an image which effectively promotes its strengths and downplays its weaknesses' (Hill 2003: 280. See also International Studies Perspectives 2004).

The demands of multilateral diplomacy today, however, impose constraints upon the ability of all actors to control outcomes. This is not only because it is a diverse and complex process with multiple actors negotiating about a wider range of issues than ever before. The international context within which those negotiations take place has also been radically transformed by levels of interconnectedness or interdependence between societies and the effect of the revolution in communications technology which has transformed diplomacy as process and as instrument. The result is that diplomacy has become less of a traditional art form with a premium on negotiating skills and 'winning' and more of a management process with actors seeking to reach agreements through a process of adjustment.

Key points

- Even the most powerful states are no longer the only significant international actors. Bilateral state-to-state diplomacy has been increasingly supplemented by multilateral forms of diplomacy.
- International organizations, both inter-governmental and non-governmental, have become significant diplomatic actors. With at least a rudimentary diplomatic machinery, they can communicate their interests and

deploy their resources to influence the outcome of negotiations.

- Complex multilateral types of diplomacy have evolved at the regional level and have reached their most developed form in Europe.
- In complex, multilateral negotiations, diplomacy has become less an art form and more a management process reflecting high levels of interdependence between societies.

- There is now a lively debate about the extent to which states and the state system remain, or should remain, the major vehicles for global diplomacy. Globalization challenges a traditional state-based diplomacy but there are indications that states are adapting to these changes. It is certainly too soon to conclude that state-based diplomacy does not remain highly significant in global diplomacy.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to demonstrate that diplomacy is neither a vague concept nor an international activity that is of interest only to diplomatic historians. As an international process and a policy instrument, diplomacy preceded the modern states-system. It then played a central role in the operation of that system for hundreds of years. Today, adapted to the demands of the contemporary global system, diplomacy continues to make an important contribution to cooperation and order in that system. But diplomacy is no panacea. It cannot guarantee inter-

national cooperation but, given goodwill on all sides, it can provide the means to make it happen through dialogue and negotiation. The problem now is that diplomatic systems have become so complex that a range of management skills beyond those deployed by the traditional diplomat is essential.

For further resources, please visit the Online Resource Centre at

www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/baylis_smith3e/

QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the difference between diplomacy as a 'process' and diplomacy as an 'instrument'?
- 2 What are the essential elements of 'traditional' diplomacy?
- 3 What was 'new' about the 'new diplomacy'?
- 4 What is the difference between the 'nightwatchman state' and the 'welfare state' and why is this difference important to the diplomatic agenda?
- 5 What was distinctive about 'cold war diplomacy'?
- 6 What is 'development diplomacy'?
- 7 What is the difference between 'crisis management' and 'crisis diplomacy'?
- 8 What is the foreign policy 'machine'? What functions does it perform?

- 9 What is the difference between 'pure' and 'mixed' diplomacy?
- 10 What factors contribute to the successful use of diplomacy?
- 11 What are the characteristics of multilateral diplomacy in a global system of world politics in terms of actors, processes, and issues?
- 12 To what extent do states and the state system remain the main vehicles for diplomatic activity in a globalized world?

GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

- Barston, R. P. (1997), *Modern Diplomacy* (London: Longman, 2nd edn). A useful summary of diplomacy as a policy instrument of states. It is an updated textbook aimed specifically at undergraduates with little prior knowledge of diplomacy.
- Berridge, G. R. (1995), *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf). This textbook is aimed at graduate students but it contains digestible material for undergraduates on forms of diplomacy and the negotiating process.
- Berridge, G. R., and James, A. (2001), *A Dictionary of Diplomacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave). A useful relatively recent reference source.
- Hamilton, K., and Langhorne, R. (1995), *The Practice of Diplomacy* (London: Routledge). This scholarly book analyses the evolution and development of the modern diplomatic system. It is excellent on historical detail and the changing context of diplomacy.
- Hocking, B. (ed.) (1999), *Foreign Ministries: Change and Adaptation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan). This is a useful, up-to-date, comparative study which analyses how effectively foreign ministries and the diplomatic machinery of states have adapted to the challenges of operating in a fragmented, multilateral policy environment.
- Richardson, J. L. (1994), *Crisis Diplomacy: The Great Powers Since the Mid-nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). The most comprehensive book on crisis diplomacy published to date. It considers a wide range of case studies from the pre-nuclear as well as the nuclear era and contains an important critique of 'crisis management'.
- Watson, A. (1982), *Diplomacy: The Dialogue Between States* (London: Methuen). A 'classic' book on diplomacy written by a former practitioner. It makes a strong case for the continuing relevance of diplomacy to solving the problems of world politics. It still offers important insights into the world of the diplomat.