Chapter Two: Understanding Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

2.1 Defining National Interest

- National interest refers to set of values, orientation, goals and objectives a given country would like to achieve in its international relations.
- It has been the main driving force that determines the contents of foreign policy.
- national interest is something related to the ambition of governments, viz., what governments aspire to fulfill in its future interaction with others
- Power to influence the behaviors of other state is the primary instrument to implement national interest.

- However, there is no universally accepted definition of national interest among scholars
- there is a major division of opinion in the field of IR regarding whether national interest can be defined objectively or whether it is a subjective enterprise, whether national interest is a science or an art

- For Plato, the good of the polis (that is the public good) could best be arrived at by a philosopher king who is to be aided by a few highly learned, detached and fair-minded advisors.
- These individuals could make wise and well informed decisions regarding the common good

- The basic assumptions of this thought include three major points.
  - Firstly, wise and well informed decisions can be made by a few carefully selected individuals who have been expressly trained to think in terms of the collective good of the state.
  - Secondly, these few individuals, who possess awesome and unchecked power, will not be corrupted by this power.
  - thirdly, once socially optimal decisions have been made, they can be implemented effectively by loyal, well-trained, and obedient bureaucracies.

- Defenders of such views believe that one person with strength, wisdom, knowledge, and, above all, power can make good decisions than participatory decision making
- To further complicate the problem of identifying national interest, foreign policy decision is not necessarily a clear-cut and rational process.
- Policies are often generated through great internal political and bureaucratic debates.

- Multiple conflicting criteria are used in defining national interest, including, but are not limited to, operational philosophy, morality and law, pragmatism, ideology,professionalism, partisanship, bureaucratic interest, ethnicity/race, social class and status, and foreign dependency.

2.2. Understanding Foreign Policy and Foreign Policy Behaviors

- Foreign policy refers to the sets of objectives and instruments that a state adopts to guide its relation with the outside world.
- It also encompasses specific strategies and instruments, economic and diplomatic tools that states employ to achieve their objectives.
- The objectives of foreign policy which a state wants to achieve are related to national interest.
- So, national interest is often considered as the objectives of foreign policy of a state.
- And these objectives can be classified as long range, middle range and short range.

- These objectives, visions and goals state aspire to achieve is commonly referred as national interest.
- Morgenthau suggests that the minimum goal a state would like to achieve is survival.
- Every state should protect their physical identity(maintenance of the territorial integrity of a state), political identity(the preservation of existing politico-economic systems), and cultural identity (ethnic, religious, and linguistic and historical norms of the peoples residing in the state) against any encroachment by other states.

- Foreign policy also involves specific instruments and tactics that must be employed to realize those objectives and goals.
- The most widely employed instruments include, diplomatic bargaining, economic instruments, propaganda, terrorism (sabotage), and use of force (war).
- Security and survival of a state, as explained above, has always been considered as the first priority, among various foreign policy objectives, which a state aspires to achieve in the short run.

- In this regard, K. J. Holisti categorizes the foreign policy objectives of states into three, namely

A. the short range,

B. middle ranges and

C. long range objectives.

Let us, then, take up the foreign policy objectives in the following section.

Foreign Policy Objectives

- the foreign policy objectives can be classified as: (1) core values and interests (2) middle range goals, and (3) universal long range goals-which seldom have definite time limits.

1. Core Interests and Values (Short Range Objectives

- Are basic principles and goals of foreign policy that society accepts without any question and willing to make ultimate sacrifices.
- the most essential core interests and values include the following:

A. is to ensure the sovereignty and independence of the home territory

B. conquering the of neighboring countries to control their natural and human resources

- countries such as Israel and the United States pursue such policies called extra-territoriality

C. protecting the interests of nationals living abroad might be considered as part of core national interest.

2. Middle Range Objectives

- the bottom point that a state would like to achieve in its medium term is to take a course of actions that have the highest impact on the domestic economic and welfare needs and expectation
- to satisfy domestic needs and aspirations, states would have to interact with others.
- Trade, foreign aid, access to communication facilities, sources of supply, and foreign market are for most states necessary for increasing social welfare.

3. Long- Range Objectives

- such long range visions and dreams may have international consequences as far as they are complemented by the capabilities and powers
- This, however, doesn’t necessarily imply that states that are less capable, often those middle powers and less developing countries, does not formulate long range objective.
- Every country has its own visions and ambition proportional to its relative strength and capabilities to be realized in the long run.

Foreign Policy Behavior: Patterns and Trends

- Foreign policy behavior refers to the actions states take towards each other.
- patterns of foreign policy behavior can be identified.
- Arnold Wolfers, a famous specialist in the field of IR, suggested that all foreign policy behavior ultimately boils down to three possible patterns:

(1) self-preservation (maintaining the status quo);

(2) self-extension (revising the status quo in one's own favor);

3. self-abnegation (revising the status quo in some else's favor).

- the foreign policy patterns of countries such as United States can be categorized as self-preservation.
- the international institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO) that were established following WWII have been strongly shaped by United States.
- the decision making procedures of such institutions including the UN are all shaped to serve the global interests of this country.

- On the other hand newly emerging powers such as China, India, Brazil, Germany, South Africa(BRICS) and others are competing to restructure the international institutions and different regimes to promote their national interest.
- Such policy trend is self-extension.
- The third model, i.e. self-abnegation reflects the foreign policy trends that are being displayed in Less Developing Countries.
- these countries usually fail to defend and promote their national interests in their external relations since they are dependent on foreign aid
- Such countries may compromise its long lasting national interest for temporary and immediate benefits

Foreign Policy Dimensions

- The analysis of foreign policy behavior can also be done along a number of specific dimensions, keeping in mind that behavior can change over time and with different styles of leadership and circumstances.
- These dimensions include alignment, scope and modus operandi

A. alignment, B. scope and C. modus operandi.

A. Alignment

- one can identify the alignment tendencies such as alliance, neutrality and non-alignment.
- Alliances are formal agreements to provide mutual military assistance

- Neutrality is a stance of formal non partisanship in world affairs.
- Nonalignment has been the foreign policy pattern of most developing state during cold war.
- Most developing countries had a movement-Non Alignment Movement (NAM) in which they called for a new foreign policy path/choice/ to be followed disregarding the both the West and East bloc politics and alliances.
- NAM had noble agenda that called for the South-south cooperation

B. Scope

- A second foreign policy dimension is the scope of a country's activities and interests.
- Some countries have extensive, far-reaching international contacts, while other countries have more limited activities abroad.
- A country's scope of contact can affect the outcome of disputes and crises.
- With regards to the scope of activities a state has in international relations, one can identify at least three patterns of foreign policy behaviors, Some actors act in Global terms, others as Regional terms, and those that follow policy of Isolationism.

- Most countries in the world are essentially regional actors, interacting primarily with neighboring states in the same geographical area except for contacts, frequently concerning economic issues such as trade; with major actors like United States and China outside their region.
- For example, South Africa is a regional actor in Africa in general and in Southern Africa in Particular.
- India can also be considered as the most important actor in South Asian region, so is China in entire Asia.

- isolationism becomes an increasingly less viable foreign policy orientation.
- Some of the known global actors such as United States of America, China, and the ex-USSR all have passed through period of relative isolationism and of mainly regional interests, finally branching out in to global concerns

C. Mode of Operation/ “Modus Opernadi’

- Some countries often rely on multilateral institutions to address different issues, Still others rely on unilateral means.
- They may choose to solve the problems by themselves.
- Some countries with strong economic and military muscles opt to rely on unilateral means of settling different issues with other countries.
- In this case, they play with the carrot and stick diplomacy to affect the outcomes of events. Intervention, threat of the use of force and,
- sometimes, the use of force are some of the tactics that are employed to influence the behavior of other states.

- The more unilateral a state is the more it is likely to initiate actions in international relations or to resist initiatives taken by others
- The more multilateralist a state is, the greater its tendency to seek solutions to problems through diplomatic forums in which several states participate, such as the United Nations, rather than utilizing purely bilateral, country to country approaches.
- Most developing countries used the multilateral approaches to address many issues of concern.

Instruments of Foreign Policy

- These instruments are divided into three: political(diplomacy and alliance formation), economic and military instruments

1. Diplomacy

- Diplomacy is an art of conducting IR between actors
- Diplomacy is a peaceful means of managing foreign policy
- the goal is to influence the behavior of other states
- Diplomacy is not foreign policy and must be distinguished from it.

- In the past time, diplomacy was practiced in formalistic and somewhat rigid manner that was limited to bilateral relations of countries represented by ambassadors
- The bargaining process and other diplomatic processes were carried out secretly and behind closed-doors.
- But, the nature of modern day diplomacy and its strategies are radically different from old style diplomatic practices.
- Old style diplomacy became obsolete/outdated basically with the formation of the League of Nations.
- There arose multilateral diplomacy, public diplomacy, leader-to-leader diplomacy (summitry diplomacy) in sharp contrast to secret diplomacy and bilateral diplomacy

- Regardless of whether diplomacy is conducted openly or secretly, multilaterally or bilaterally, implicitly or formally, by ambassadors or leader-to-leader, the essence of diplomacy remains bargaining.
- Bargaining can be defined as a means of settling differences over priorities between contestants through an exchange of proposals to reach agreements, compromises, and settlements where governments objectives conflict.

- It involves the attempt to change the policies, actions, attitudes and objectives of other government and their diplomats by persuasion, offering rewards, exchange concessions, or making threats.
- The international law that governs diplomacy is the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961
- It indicates that only states are diplomatic actors.
- Yet, the modern international system also involves powerful actors that are not states such as INGOs and IGOs

Rules of Effective Diplomacy

The following are some of the basic rules that diplomats have employed with greater effectiveness over the years:

A. Be realistic: It is important to have goals that much your ability to achieve them
B. Be careful about what you say: use words carefully.
C. Understand the other side: There are several aspects to understanding the other side. One is to appreciate an opponent's perspective even if you do not agree with it.
D. Be patient: it is also important to bide your time. Being overly anxious can lead to concessions that are unwise and may convey weakness to an opponent.

2. Economic Instruments of Foreign Policy

- states often tend to use their economic muscles to influence the behavior (action, perception, and role) of their counterparts.

Holisti states that economic instruments are used for three purposes, namely:

1 to achieve any foreign policy objective by exploiting need and dependence and offering economic rewards, or threat, ending or imposing economic punishments;

2 to increase a state's capability or deprive a potential enemy's capabilities ;and

3 to create economic satellites (guaranteed markets and resources of supply)

- To serve the above objectives, states often employ different techniques of economic reward and punishment.

- The specific techniques that can be used to reward or punish constitute various control over the flow of goods between countries which include the followings,

A. Tariff: foreign made products coming into a country are taxed for the purpose of raising revenue, protecting domestic producers from foreign competition

- The tariff structure can be used effectively as an incentive or punishment when a country stands to gain or lose important markets for its products by increasing or decreasing the amount of tarrif.

B. Quota: the supplier is allowed to sell only a certain amount of goods in a given time period.

C. Boycott: A trade boycott organized by a government eliminates the import of either a specific commodity or the total range of export products sold by the country against which the boycott is organized.

D. Loans, Credits and Currency Manipulations:

- This include granting loans (favorable reward offered by the major powers to developing countries) or extending credits.
- The manipulation of currency rates is also used to create more or less favorable terms of trade between countries

E. Embargo:

- A government that seeks to deprive another country of goods prohibits its own business men from concluding its transactions with commercial organization in the country against which the embargo is organized.
- An embargo may be enforced either on specific category of goods, such as strategic materials, or on the total range of goods that private businessmen normally send to the country being punished

F. Foreign Aid:

- The transfer of money, goods, or technical advice from donor to recipient-is an instrument of foreign policy

G. Military Aid:

- rich countries spend millions of dollars to strengthen their continental friend ship/ alliance.
- In this aid scheme, the donors supply money and material, while the recipient provide most of the man power.
- the objective is to safeguard own security by strengthening the military capabilities of allies.
- By helping recipients build up modern forces, the donors hope to obtain some immediate political or security objective.

- Most aid programs are obviously not undertaken solely for humanitarian purpose
- in the long run, it is designed to help secure certain of the donors` political objectives, which it cannot achieve solely through diplomacy, propaganda, or military policies.
- The aim is to change the domestic or foreign policies of the recipient countries.
- A government can be rewarded through increased aid allotments if it promises, for example, political and economic reforms (like adopting liberal democracy and deregulations of public enterprises); or it can be threatened with the reduction in aid if the reforms are not carried out.

2.3. Overview of Foreign Policy of Ethiopia

2.3.1. Foreign Policy during Tewodros II(1855-1868)

- The process of modern state was began in 1855 by Tewodros.
- Tewodros wanted to create a united Ethiopia
- he introduced the idea of modernity and modern army
- Throughout his reign Tewodros tried to develop a dynamic foreign policy that reached out beyond the Horn Region.
- He sought the Western Christian world to recognize his country and help him to modernize his country.
- he appealed specifically to Britain, France and Russia as Christian nations to assist him in whatever ways possible in his fight against the Turks, Egyptians and Islam.

- The emperor attempted to establish his diplomatic relations to fight his immediate enemies claiming Christianity as instrument of foreign policy.
- However, the emperor demand modern technology and skilled man power, Britain sent religious missionaries.
- Despite his demand to be recognized as the emperor of Ethiopia and treated with respect and equal footing with the British Queen that was not reciprocated by Queen Victoria.
- Consequently Tewodros took desperate measures by taking hostage of several British missionaries which was responded with the British Military Expedition.
- Tewodros’s Troops were easily defeated and the King did not surrender but tragically committed suicide

2.3.2. Foreign Policy during Yohannes IV (1872-1889)

- Like his predecessor, Yohannes considered Islam as a threat to the territorial integrity of the polity.
- Indeed Egypt tried to put a serious security threat in its continued attempt to invade the country under many pretexts, yet its motive was to control the source of Blue Nile.
- These, however, were not successful as Egypt faced subsequent defeat both in 1875 and 1876 at the Battle of Gundet and Gura respectively.

- In addition to Muslim threat, the emperor saw European expansionism as threat to the survival of the country.
- the emperor died fighting with the “Mahadists”. The Sudanese resistance groups against British rule happened to invade Western Ethiopia because of their presumption that Yohannes IV was collaborating with the British.

2.3.3. Foreign Policy during Menelik II (1889-93)

- Menelik was the King of Shoa region before his coronation as the King of Kings of Ethiopia.
- He had expanded his sphere of influence towards the far South and East incorporating new areas and communities peacefully or otherwise.
- the southward expansionism policy of the King was mainly targeted to have access to Sea Port, Zeila.

- Before the death of Yohannes Italy had good diplomatic relation with Menelik with the objective of weakening its immediate enemy in the North, Yohannes.
- Following the death of Yohannes, however, Italy continued to be the main challenge in the North.
- Moreover, the King saw the other colonial powers surrounding all four corners of the country as the scramble of Africa was heightened.
- Italy expanded towards the hinterland of Ethiopia from its first hold of Bogess, later named Eritrea, and Missawa port crossing Tekeze river.

- The emperor entered many treaties and agreements to solve the challenge amicably.
- One of the remarkable treaties was the ‘Wuchalle’ friendship and peace treaty where the parties agreed to avoid war and solve the problem peacefully.
- On the other hand the emperor was preparing himself by accumulating military ammunitions to defend the aggression from any side of colonial powers, British, French and of course Italy.
- However, the emperor’s diplomatic endeavor with Italy failed to result in peace due to Italy’s misinterpretation of the controversial article 17 of the ‘Wuchalle treaty

- The treaty was signed between Menilik and Pietro Antonelli, in 1889
- In Amharic version of the treaty, the government of Ethiopia can use the government of Italy to have business relations with other European governments.
- The Italian version ,however, stated that Ethiopia was obligated to conduct all its foreign relations through Italian authorities, which then led to the abrogation of the ‘Wuchale’ treaty by Ethiopia in 1893.
- As a result, Italy prepared for war and started its systematic penetration of the country from the north

- In 1896, the emperor declared nation-wide war against Italy
- After a severe battle, Ethiopian forces defeated Italy at the battle of Adowa.
- The significance of the Adowa victory is loud and clear as many European powers recognized Ethiopia as an independent African state on similar footing with the Europeans.
- Britain, France, Russia and Italy came to Menelik’s Palace to arrange formal exchange of Ambassadors after the Battle of Adowa

2.3.4. Foreign Policy during Emperor Haile Selassie I (1916-1974)

- Haile Selassie I, assumed the throne in 1930
- He was dedicated to the creation of a stronger, and centralized empire
- Ethiopia’s membership in the League of Nations in 1923
- When the Italian Fascists finally invade Ethiopia between 1936 and 1941, the Emperor fled to London and established a government in exile.
- he appealed to the League of Nations for aid in defense to the country but the League failed to take any substantive measure against Italy

- His diplomatic skills and Britain’s own strategic necessities in the area enabled him to elicit the aid of the British in securing the liberation of Ethiopia.
- In the immediate post-war period, Ethiopia was extremely dependent on British military, economic and technical aid.
- British Military Aid was withdrawn in 1952, and the King moved quickly to firm up relations with the United States

- agreements were concluded in 1953 to formulize this new relationship.
- As a result, the United States guaranteed Ethiopia’s security
- Ethiopia received military aid and military training from the United States over the next 23 years
- The military aid was decisive for the Emperor to ensure his survival at home and maintain the territorial integrity of the country.
- He effectively used military action against those riots and rebellions both in rural and urban places

- On more consistent basis, the United States contributed to the expansion of Ethiopian military as a hedge a against the Somalia threats and to suppress Eritrean Nationalism.
- The establishment of the organization of African Unity in the capital of Ethiopia witnessed the prominent role of the emperor in African affairs
- Ethiopia also played a significant role in maintaining international peace and security by committing its troops for peacekeeping operations in Korea in 1951 and the Congo in 1961.

2.3.5. Foreign Policy during the Military Government (1974—1991)

- The military regime adopted a foreign policy oriented to socialist ideology.
- The primary objectives of the foreign policy were survival of the regime and maintaining the territorial integrity of the country.
- The major strategy to achieve the stated objectives focused on building the military capability of the country.
- And force had been employed as the best strategy to silence dissent at home and deter the perceived external enemies of the country.

- the country was heavily dependent on military aid on the Soviet Union which prevented it from securing any kind of military and technical assistance from the US and other European countries.
- The regime was condemned by the west for its human rights record, especially its treatment of former government officials.
- This resulted in declining Ethio-US relations marking its lowest point with the closure of the US military base and operation of military assistance.
- Following such problems, internal and external enemies began to take action to hasten the demise of the regime.

- Internally Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) launched military attack on the Ethiopian Army.
- Many external actors were involved in sponsoring the rebel group, including; Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and later USA itself.
- Moreover, Somalia’s invasion of the Ethiopian region of Ogaden was one of the serious external challenges of the Ethiopian Government at the time.
- the regime managed to reverse the Somali aggression with the help of the new powerful patron, USSR.
- The Soviet Union and its allies were thus able to exert immense influence in both domestic and foreign affairs of Ethiopia

- Apart from socialism, Ethiopia’s strategic locations and other questions, such as; Eritrea, Somalia, and the issue of the Nile, had also shaped the foreign policy orientation and behavior of military government.
- Ethiopia being located in the Horn of Africa is at the cross roads to the oil rich middle East region and Indian Ocean.
- As a result of this the U.S.S.R was keen to have stronghold over the area, replacing the United States.

2.3.6. The Foreign Policy of Ethiopia in the Post 1991

- In the post 1991, one of the goals of the foreign policy is to ensure the survival of the multi- national state.
- National interest of the country is understood in terms of realizing democracy and development.
- In this regard, foreign policy has been considered as an instrument to solve the domestic problems of the country, including; lack of good governance, instability and lack of economic development.
- So democracy and development are the foreign policy visions of the country

- The primary strategy in realization of these goals is to put the focus on domestic issues first.
- Addressing domestic political and economic problems requires forging national consensus about the problems and exit strategies.
- emphasizing on external issues such as; seeking financial aid, loans or technical issues would subject the country to dependency and vulnerability.
- This strategy is called an “inside-out” approach.
- If we solve our domestic problems the country would not be vulnerable and its peace and survival can be ensured.

- At diplomatic level, economic diplomacy is adopted to strengthen the domestic efforts in fighting poverty and backwardness
- Economic diplomacy involves attracting foreign investments, seeking markets for Ethiopian exportable commodities, seeking aid and concessional loans too.
- The Security and Foreign Policy of the country also indicated that Ethiopia would adopt a kind of East-look policy.
- Ethiopia appreciates the East Asian countries economic successes and development paths.

- The other foreign policy strategy is building up the military capability of the country.
- Peaceful dialogues and negotiations will be employed to peacefully coexist with others.
- Diplomatic solutions can always be taken prior attention when dealing even disputes.
- But above all building up military capability would have a deterrence effect.

- Though strategies may sometimes differ the primary foreign policy objective of all the three regimes remained the maintenance of the territorial integrity and independence of the country.
- To this end the three regimes used a combination of both military force and diplomacy to address both internal and external challenges depending on the circumstances.
- In this manner, while the imperial and the military regime’s foreign policy strategy is largely an out-inside approach the current regime followed “in-side out” approach