

Connectivity between Diplomacy, Foreign Policy and Global Politics

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Abstract

Studies in international relations offer a mix of subjects tackling global politics, diplomacy and foreign policy. Diplomacy and foreign policy are central features of global politics. They capture our imagination and their conduct affects our lives through their impact on war, peace, the global economy, human rights, international law, global institutions and the norms that govern relationships between states. Foreign policy and diplomacy provide an opportunity to examine and critically evaluate issues of contemporary global politics with a particular emphasis on the political, economic and decisional dynamics underpinning foreign policy and diplomacy. Diplomacy is the medium for the achievement of the specific foreign policy objectives of nation-states. Diplomacy is the central technique of foreign policy because other techniques of foreign policy revolve around it. The use of tactics plays a major role in this regard so as not to jeopardize the interests of these states and maintaining diplomatic relations in order for nations to achieve their foreign policies. In international relations, one cannot talk of one concept without mentioning the other two concepts. The paper thus interrogates how these three concepts are interrelated in the field of international relations.

Keywords: Connectivity, Foreign Policy, Diplomacy, Global, Global politics, International Relations

1. Introduction

Diplomacy refers to the art or practice of conducting international relations, as in negotiating alliances, treaties and agreements. It is also defined as an instrument of foreign policy used to achieve certain goals considered to be vital to the state. It is a peaceful means of achieving goals through established diplomatic routes through the use of certain accredited agents (Voskopoulos, 2010). Watson (1982) defined diplomacy as a negotiation of political entities which acknowledge each other's independence. He further argued that contemporary diplomacy had four primary tasks. These were information gathering abroad; the analysis of such information by foreign ministries at home; developing policy based on that information and communicating such a policy. Diplomacy is generally a complex and often challenging practice of fostering relationships around the world in order to resolve issues and advance interests. It thus involves meetings between political leaders, sending diplomatic messages and making public statements about the relationship between countries. States generally pursue diplomacy either unilaterally, bilaterally or multilaterally.

Foreign policy on the other hand is the policy of a sovereign state in its interaction with other states. Effective foreign policy rests upon a shared sense of national identity, of a nation-state's place in the world (Hill and Wallace, 1996). Foreign policy is central to people's sense of national identity and to an understanding of their nation's purpose, role and values (Howell, 1997). Foreign policy as defined by Watson (1982) is the content of foreign relations, comprising the aspirations and aims a country wants to achieve in its relations with other states and international governmental organizations. A developmental foreign policy is pro-engagement; it is not isolationist. It is fundamentally concerned with addressing domestic, continental, and global disparities and inequalities. According to Odeen Ishmael (2013), today, foreign policy is an expression of the complex organization that operates within each state: the purpose and quality of its leaders, the level of its economy and social stability it has, its social and political pluralism and its firmness in the expression of public opinion

The foreign policy of a country is active, voluntary and reflexive at different periods. A coherent foreign policy involves a body of doctrine which imposes a discipline on the wills, orders and operations suited to a purpose consistent with enabling the peaceful coexistence of nations. The foreign policy of a state also reflects the pattern of foreign relations of that state with others. It is also reflected by state actors, notably the head of state and the foreign minister, whose actions and public statements impact on the international political situations.

Global politics is the discipline that studies the political and economic patterns of the world. It studies relationships between cities, nation-states, shell states, multinational corporations, Nongovernmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations (Hill and Wallace, 1996). One important area of global politics is contestation in the global political sphere over legitimacy. It is a field that generally examines people and issues around the globe. It analyses major concerns in the world today, including economic relations, and the gap between the rich and the poor, democracy and its economic and political benefits, human rights and the different emphasis placed on rights by different societies, war and peace, ethnic conflict the environment and power.

The foundations of diplomacy were established long before 1948 in times when states did not yet exist and cities pioneered as foreign policy entities. Diplomacy and foreign policy thus existed before the existence of states. The terms foreign policy and diplomacy have been used almost interchangeably. In international relations discourse the link between these two terms has traditionally been conceptualized as a rather simple objective versus tool relationship, in which diplomacy represents merely a lesser tool of foreign policy in the world (James 1993). These two concepts were shaped by major political transformations. They can affect the constitution and transformation of notions of political subjectivity, sovereignty, national identity, mediation and international order.

2. Relationship between Foreign Policy, Diplomacy and Global Politics

The three concepts are greatly intertwined. This is evident from the manner in which they relate to each other, and one cannot discuss any one concept without mentioning the others. This has been illustrated in this section and empirical evidence has been provided in order to clearly show this relationship.

Diplomacy is an instrument of foreign policy. Through this instrument, negotiations and peace treaties have been signed among states in order to enhance state-state relations. Governments of one country engage governments of another country. This is accomplished by diplomats in order to improve the foreign policy of a country. For example, the US used public diplomacy to improve her foreign policy towards other countries abroad especially in the Middle East. This was affected after the September 11th terror attack. Increased globalization has caused public diplomacy to grow in importance in modern foreign policy (Mellisan, 2012).

Social media diplomatic tools like twitter and face book now allow global interconnectivity that goes beyond countries' borders, political systems and ideologies. This has thus changed foreign policies of countries. For instance, in China despite severe media censorship, the democracy movement in Tiananmen Square spread its messages around the world in 1989 via fax machines. This changed China's interactions with the rest of the world (Nye, 1990) since new state actors were brought in. This form of diplomacy is contributing to changes in the economic infrastructure, trade relations as well as internal and external politics of state. This diplomacy is redefining power in world politics therefore changing the foreign policy of countries (Nye, Owens, Cohen, 1996). In addition, this diplomacy working through NGOs and interactive technologies such as the internet are creating a global civil society and pressure groups such as Amnesty International or green peace serve as new actors in the making of foreign policy of states (Nye, 1996).

Foreign policy enables the setting of the agenda of world politics and renewal of interest in foreign policy through diplomacy. For example, the events of 11th September 2001 focused attention on the centrality of decisions taken by states and other independent actors such as Bush's strategy to eliminate terrorism danger to the whole world (Holmes, 2009). Diplomacy is a tool of foreign policy and war, alliances and international trade may all be

manifestations of it. For example, the US has long used its diplomatic relations with other nations and international organizations to formulate and implement her foreign policy. As binding agreements among nations, treaties remain a central tool among representatives of the world's nations to uphold shared interests and obligations. Specific treaties including those that created international organizations like NATO continue to be a mainstay of foreign policy (Sampson, 1994).

Military force is a diplomatic tool that countries use to achieve their foreign policies (Vladimir, 1978). During the Cold War, the US used the policy of containment, which employed military and economic pressure to hold Soviet Union power in check. This enabled the US to sell her ideologies to the rest of the world (Waltz, 2005). The end of the Cold War brought new challenges and the use of US military power as a tool of foreign policy and on several occasions, military was committed to diplomatic activities such as peacekeeping and nation building activities.

International trade is an important tool of foreign policy in which nations participate in a market system of imports and exports with other nations. For example, for most of our history, nations erected high tariffs or taxes to lessen the effects of foreign products on domestic economies. Trade policies remain critical to foreign policies of countries. The US for example seeks ways to reduce trade barriers through regional and international agreements such as GATT and NAFTA (Rosati, 2001).

Diplomacy enhances state to state relations among nations and this provides an essential framework for the conduct of foreign policy. For example, many American officials regarded withholding diplomatic relations as a way to punish countries for actions ranging from human rights abuses, to failure to abide by the international law to specific treaty violations and acts of war. Having no relations and the resulting prolonged absence of a diplomatic presence in a country, seriously handicaps America's ability to achieve major foreign policy and national security goals. Diplomatic relations should therefore be maintained, unless security requires closing the embassy (Vladimir, 1978)..

Global health diplomacy is the relationship between health and foreign policy. Even if what affects health today is transnational in nature, countries remain core actors that must reorient their health and foreign policies in ways that align their national interests with the diplomatic, epidemiological and ethical realities of a globalized world (Zucker, 2000). Nevertheless, the cutting edge of global health diplomacy raises certain cautious regarding health role in foreign policies. Competition among countries' national interests sometimes impedes foreign policy coherence, which makes attainment of health goals more difficult. After September 11th incident in America, their attitude changed. President Obama acknowledges that America's new foreign policy must include assistance to troubled nations as a key diplomatic tool in re engaging as a leader on the international stage. Improving global health is America's cornerstone to their foreign policy footing (Zucker, 2000). In the recent years, global health issues have risen to the highest levels of international politics and have become accepted as legitimate issues in foreign policy. It is an instrument of statecraft. Foreign policy can endanger health when diplomacy breaks down or when trade

considerations trump health. Health can be used as an instrument of foreign policy in order to achieve other goals. Health can be an integral part of diplomacy and besides foreign policy can be used to promote health goals. Generally, health is an integral part of the global agenda in terms of security, economic and social justice.

The conduct of foreign policy has been enhanced by information and communication resources available to non state actors. The emergence of a global civil society in the form of over 30,000 NGOs alongside nearly some 200 state actors as well as IGOs, Trans National Corporations (TNCs) and Trans Media Corporations (TNCs) , has added to the complexity of foreign policy (Commission on Global Governance, 1995). In addition, telecommunications as a diplomatic tool is contributing to changes in the economic infrastructures, competitiveness, trade relations, as well as internal and external politics of states. It also affects national security, including the conduct and deterrence against wars, terrorism, civil war, the emergence of new weapons systems, command and control and intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination. For instance, the Persian Gulf War provided a glimpse of what future wars might look like (Commission on Global Governance, 1995). The emergence of an international politics of cultural identity organized around religious, ethnic or racial fetishisms suggests what the future issues in foreign policy might be.

Global communication as a tool of diplomacy is redefining power in world politics (Nye and Owens, 1996). Major changes seem to be taking place in both hard and soft power conceptions and calculations. In addition, global television communication networks such as CNN, BBC and Star TV have added image politics and public diplomacy (Commission on Global Governance, 1995).

Headline diplomacy refers to how news coverage affects foreign policy (Seib, 1997). The news coverage shapes the design and implementation of foreign policy. By influencing the political attitudes of opinion-shaping elites and the public at large, the news media can profoundly affect the conduct of foreign policy (Seib, 1997), examples of press influence on foreign policies of states include the news media's definition of success and failure, as in reporting the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam. News reports can lead to public impatience, which can pressure presidents as happened during the Iran hostage crisis of 1979-81. In addition, presidents can anticipate and control news media coverage, as was done by the Bush administration during the 1991 Gulf War. Press revelation or suppression of secret information affects foreign policy, as in the cases of the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis and various intelligence operations. Coverage of humanitarian crises affects public opinion (Seib, 1997).

Through cultural diplomacy, countries recognize their cultural heritage which provides them with an opportunity of showing what they are, creating a positive image, thus helping to achieve their political aims (Marta, 1993). Tacit diplomacy has also contributed to foreign policy behavior between states. Tacit diplomacy involves scientific issues such as genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or synthetic biology. Scientific cooperation between states can help to change a diplomatic relationship or enhance the economic trade and/ or security of countries. Science also informs the processes related to for example, securing arms control,

mitigating climate change, improving food security or reducing illegal trade in endangered species (Benson and Kielgren, 2014). This form of diplomacy governs how the global community of scientists interacts via understood, but generally unstated, behavioral norms. This interaction has positive implications on the foreign policies of countries (Benson and Kielgren, 2014).

Commercial diplomacy involves the use of international business as a tool of a country's foreign policy (Donna and Hubbs, 2004). International business has always been intimately linked to the politics of the global economy, thus affecting the foreign policy of countries. Nations use commercial diplomacy to expand trade and investment in the context of declining economic policy sovereignty. The creation of the WTO in 1995 led to an extension of the rules and regulations of international trade and trade related matters (Donna and Hubbs, 2004). Major nations in the South and East are now key players and the driving force behind the continuing and increasing economic integration of nations through age-old processes of international trade and foreign direct investment (Donna and Hubbs, 2004).

3. Conclusion

Generally, the three concepts are so much interconnected that when one mentions a given concept, the other two automatically come into play. Globalization has further enhanced this interconnectivity partly because of the increased number of players on the international arena and also partly because of the increased number of issues that have to be addressed globally.

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