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## Overview of the Diplomatic Landscape

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This essay outlines a so-called paradigm shift that is occurring in regard to diplomacy and global politics in general. This is a paradigm shift away from the nation-state towards both non-state actors and individuals, and towards regional and global movements and organizations. In terms of diplomacy, this is seen as moving away from the images of old men in striped pants at formal summits to social movements uniting through social media, sometimes called “citizen diplomacy” or “digital diplomacy”. This inaugural issue, with contributions from AGS students and faculty, will explore and problematize many of these issues. To put the issues in context, I will give an overview of the perceived contrast between what I term “old” and “new diplomacy.”

### *Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, and Power*

Before we look at diplomacy, it is important to set up some definitions. The foreign policy of an actor is different to its diplomacy. Foreign policy is the set of goals that an actor wants to achieve and maintain in the international sphere. Diplomacy is one of the means to achieve those goals through the activity of diplomats and other actors through negotiation, mediation and other diplomatic tools. Actors often have many means to pursue their foreign policy goals beyond diplomacy including economic and military tools. To give a simple example, country X’s foreign policy includes the goal of being the dominant power in its region. It uses diplomacy to help achieve those goals through both bilateral and multilateral forums.

Generally, power in international affairs is divided into hard and soft power. Hard power is the power to force others to do what they do not want to do. Hard power most obviously includes the use of military force, but it is important to remember that it can also include economic and diplomatic forms. Actors can coerce others through economic sanctions and even diplomatic ones (e.g., suspending visits and meetings, restricting visas, using institutions to levy penalties or suspend membership, etc.).

Soft power is the ability to attract other actors so that they also want what you want. This has more to do with persuasion or attraction than any real coercion. Soft power is similar to Albert Camus’s description of charm being the art of getting an answer without having asked a question. Actors draw closer to each other and they find they have mutual interests and that both can benefit. This often takes the form of showcasing attractive aspects of the actors like culture, successful economic practices, strong university systems, etc. Beyond diplomacy and economic relations, however, soft power can be also exercised through military means, such as joint exercises, professional military educational exchanges, humanitarian relief and disaster response efforts.

### **"Old Diplomacy": Traditional Actors and Processes**

Modern diplomacy comes from the development of the European state system in the early modern period. In the early days, this was achieved through an informal structure comprising an advisor or minister for foreign affairs, as well as important notables sent out as temporary representatives or ambassadors. However, as states developed to be able to more efficiently collect

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<sup>1</sup> I would also like to thank Carlos Juarez for feedback on an earlier draft of this essay; any remaining short-comings are my own.

revenue and use force they also built up bureaucratic structures to administer various governmental functions, including foreign affairs.<sup>2</sup> Cardinal Richelieu in the seventeenth century established the first Ministry of Foreign Affairs for France and other nations followed the example. Throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the size and scope of diplomatic activity increased, foreign ministries developed into large, formalized bureaucracies, and diplomacy became more institutionalized.<sup>3</sup> International norms regarding the treatment of diplomats and the process of diplomacy were also developed from the eighteenth to early twentieth centuries.

International institutions and technological developments dramatically altered the structure and size of diplomatic bodies. One of the most important pushes for expanding the role and size of the diplomatic corps in the twentieth century was the development of important international organizations like the League of Nations, the United Nations, NATO and others. Many of the world's leading university programs in international relations and diplomacy were created to staff representatives to these bodies. These include the Edmund E. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University and the Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, among others.

Even more important were changes within the technology of diplomacy. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries communication and transportation was slow and rather expensive. Ambassadors played a critical role as the sole representatives of their home countries. Mail and personal transportation would take weeks or even months if it involved maritime travel, so ambassadors were given flexibility and discretion in negotiations. To give an example of the importance of distance and communication, one only need recall the War of 1812 between Britain and the United States. The Treaty of Ghent – the agreement that ended the war – was signed and ratified by the British government more than two weeks before the famous Battle of New Orleans. It would take almost two months for the signed Treaty to arrive on the other side of the Atlantic, officially bringing the war to a close.

### *Negotiation and Mediation*

Diplomacy, in its most traditional form, is implemented through negotiation and mediation. Negotiation is the continual dialogue with other states and actors to reach understanding and agreement; in other words, “maintaining relations, doing business, and preventing and handling conflicts as they may arise.”<sup>4</sup> While the idea of negotiations implies high-profile summits to stop conflicts and resolve diplomatic crises, diplomatic corps are constantly involved in low- and medium-level negotiations at all times to deal with day-to-day visa issues, supporting their citizens overseas, cultural visits, regulatory or legal frameworks for trade, transportation, tourism, etc. Ideally, managing the day-to-day negotiations with other countries keeps conflicts to a minimum and facilitates trade, tourism and overall positive relations between countries and organizations.

Mediation is negotiation through a third party. It is normally used when the parties in question doubt their own ability to achieve an acceptable agreement, and therefore seek a mediator to facilitate the reaching of a settlement. An early example was the role of the US in the negotiations between

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview of this period see Charles Tilly, *Coercion Capital and European States, 990-1992* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), in particular Chapter 3 “How War Makes States, and Vice Versa,”: 67-95.

<sup>3</sup> Raymond Cohen, “Diplomacy through the Ages,” in *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*, ed. Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013): 15-30.

<sup>4</sup> I. William Zartman, “Diplomacy as Negotiation and Mediation,” in *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World*, 105.

Japan and Russia to end the Russo-Japanese War with the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905. There have since been many other successful and unsuccessful mediation attempts, including by the U.S. in the Camp David Accords (both the successful ones in 1978 and the unsuccessful ones of 2000), and Norway in the both the Oslo Accords and the Sri Lankan Civil War. These cases indicate that both major and small powers can be mediators. Some countries, like Canada and Norway, have in part defined their international roles as being successful mediators and this adds to their soft power.

While mediation is often seen as one of the most important forms of diplomacy, its effectiveness is hotly debated. Is it better for the mediator to have influence over the parties in question (such as the US in the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian negotiations) even if this means the mediator might be both biased and themselves involved in the conflict? Or is it better to have a non-involved party that is perceived as neutral but may not have any real ability to leverage the participants (Norway in the Israeli-Palestinian or Sri Lankan conflicts?).<sup>5</sup>

#### *Bilateralism vs. Multilateralism*

Diplomacy was traditionally practiced bilaterally between two states. The states had a particular issue (a treaty, conflict, etc.) and their diplomats attempted to resolve it through negotiation. Since the mid-twentieth century, however, there has been an exponential growth in the importance of multilateral diplomacy due to the growth in both the number of independent nations and the number of international organizations and regimes. It is commonly thought that the only difference between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy is a quantitative one. However, it can be argued that the difference is also qualitative: that beyond the number of states, multilateral diplomacy also involves a shared set of principles and expectations of behavior beyond any specific issue or event.<sup>6</sup>

To take an example, a multilateral collective security organization like NATO is fundamentally different than a bilateral alliance like the Anglo-Japanese alliance before the First World War. The Anglo-Japanese alliance only set up an arrangement between the two countries to assist each other in times of war, with no formal, dedicated peacetime bureaucratic structures or obligations. In contrast, NATO membership sets forth norms of conduct and requirements for membership such as civilian control of the military, transparent defense budgets, and a large peacetime institutionalized bureaucracy (including the North Atlantic Council and structures covering the building of multilateral bases and facilities, NATO military exercises, the joint development and standardization of weapons and equipment, etc.).

This qualitative or normative difference between bilateralism and multilateralism can be seen in the arguments over the Bush Administration's "Coalition of the Willing" in the lead up to the 2003 Iraq War. In order to gain legitimacy, supporters of the war denied that the US was acting unilaterally by pointing to the more than twenty countries that supported the war and the dozen or so that participated militarily (including the UK, Australia, Poland, Spain, etc.). However, critics of the administration maintained that the US was acting unilaterally even though it had support from several nations, as evidenced by the decision not to push for a new resolution in early 2003 that would authorize the use of force. The Bush Administration assumed it would lose the vote and argued that the US could use force given previous resolutions. Thus, because the action did not go to the UN, it

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<sup>5</sup> I. William Zartman and Saadia Touval, "International Mediation," in *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*, ed. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aali (Washington: USIP Press, 2007): 437-54.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Wright, "Bilateral and Multilateral Diplomacy in Normal Times and Crisis," in *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World*, 177-78.

was not considered qualitatively multilateral, even though the US had gained support from several nations.

Generally speaking, larger states prefer to deal bilaterally with smaller states since it is easier for them to leverage their power and use linkage strategies. For example, a stronger state might leverage the security it provides to a smaller ally in return for favorable trade deals or support on an issue with another state. Smaller states tend to prefer to engage with larger states in a multilateral framework to help negate the larger states' leverage and to gain strength through numbers and procedures. One can see this in the contrasting ways China and various Southeast Asian states want to deal with conflicting claims in the South China Sea: China prefers to deal bilaterally with individual countries, whereas many of the smaller countries want to deal with China multilaterally through ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

### *Economic Diplomacy*

Economic diplomacy, while a traditional form of diplomacy, is somewhat hard to define. It involves the negotiation and mediation of economic issues like trade, finance and investment. Some broaden the definition to include the “strategic use” of economic statecraft like the use of economic awards and sanctions to achieve goals. One of the problems with conceptualizing economic diplomacy is that it normally involves actors other than diplomats and foreign ministries. It is conducted by a mixture of governmental officials from trade, finance and other ministries along with the private sector and often IGOs and NGOs.<sup>7</sup>

### *Cultural Diplomacy*

Cultural diplomacy is the use of a nation-state's cultural heritage as a form of soft power. Typically this takes the form of sharing the work of writers, painters, or musicians with the population of another state. Ideally, appreciation by the population of the "receiver" state of the culture of the "sender" state can give the population a more favorable image of the sender country. In the long run, this could be useful in sponsoring tourism, trade and even support for costly policies like treaties, alliances, trade pacts and favorable voting in international organizations. France and Japan are two countries that have long used the attractiveness of their cultures in order to leverage their international position through both their governments and organizations like the *Alliance Française* and the Japan Foundation.

Both music and sports have been viewed as forms of cultural diplomacy. At the height of the Cold War, American jazz musicians like Benny Goodman and Dizzy Gillespie toured the world and engaged in "jazz diplomacy."<sup>8</sup> This has continued in other forms with groups like the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, which includes members from both Israel and Palestine, as well as other Arab nations. Sports have also been used in both a competitive sense (like the great East-West clashes during the Cold War-era Olympics Games) or swaggering sense (showcasing a country's successful political-economic model, such as Berlin in 1936, Tokyo in 1964, Seoul in 1988 and Beijing in 2008). They may be used in a cooperative sense to bring adversaries together to foster peace and good will, like ping pong diplomacy between the US and China, cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan, and US-North Korean basketball diplomacy.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Woolcock has an excellent overview in “Economic Diplomacy,” in *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World*, 209-225.

<sup>8</sup> For an excellent overview see, Danielle Fosler-Lussier, "Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization and Imperialism," *Diplomatic History*, 36, no. 1 (Jan. 2012): 53-64.

<sup>9</sup> Victor Cha's *Beyond the Final Score: The Politics of Sport in Asia* (Columbia University Press: New York 2011) is an excellent primer on this subject.

### *Coercive Diplomacy*

Though the term "coercive diplomacy" may seem oxymoronic at first glance, it is one of the oldest and most traditional forms of diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy is the threatening or limited use of force in order to leverage a diplomatic action. This can be done in a deterrent manner or in a compellent one – a deterrent threat is intended to keep something from happening, while a compellent one is to either to make someone do something or undo a recently taken action.

If in response to a threat by and aggressor to an ally or friendly state, a coercer can back up diplomatic warning with reiteration of alliance obligations. This deterrent strategy could then be bolstered with high-level visits of political, diplomatic and military leadership, and deployments of military forces to the region, both temporarily in terms of port calls or exercises, or more permanently through a long-term deployment to the region. One of the more famous examples was US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's January 1950 "Defensive Perimeter" speech, in which he laid out the areas in Asia the US would defend in case of attack.

A compellent use would be if, in response to an action to which the coercing state objects, the coercer threatens that unless this action is reversed or a different action is taken, there will be consequences. Like deterrent threats, these will be backed up first by the demonstrative use of military forces, deployment of naval vessels, large-scale mobilization and deployment of forces, etc. If these are not successful, then the limited use of force will be threatened and used, such as the establishment of a no-fly zone, limited air strikes of key targets, or the establishment of humanitarian safe zones. If these limited uses of force fail, then coercive diplomacy itself fails, and things move toward limited warfare or the retreat of the coercing actor. What is often forgotten by policymakers is that coercive diplomacy, particularly in its compellent form, is very difficult to execute successfully. It is hard to convince a target that the coercer cares more about the issue in question, and it is difficult to demonstrate this commitment by coordinating diplomatic and military signals.<sup>10</sup>

### **New Diplomacy**

By the 1970s, and particularly during the 1990s, it seemed that interdependence and globalization had changed or even challenged the traditional actors and role of diplomacy. Changes in technology and societies called into question the dominant roles of diplomats and foreign ministries in the practice of diplomacy and even the role of "old diplomacy" in the conduct of foreign affairs. Complex interdependence, or what is more commonly called globalization, has changed the ways states and other actors interact in the international system, as Joe Nye and Robert Keohane made the case for back in the 1970s in their classic *Power and Interdependence*.<sup>11</sup> I will divide these new forms of diplomacy into state-based and non-state-based forms.

### **State Based New Diplomacy**

#### *Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*

Public diplomacy and strategic communication are two related forms of diplomacy that aim to shape the international community. Public diplomacy is the effort to explain and make a positive case for a country, like a diplomatic equivalent of public relations. It is executed by the diplomats stationed abroad in the countries in question and aims to disarm criticism, dispel misconceptions and promote a positive image for the country in question. Strategic communication comes from top policy leaders of

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<sup>10</sup> Patrick Bratton, "Coming to Terms: When Does Coercion Lead to Positive Long-Term Outcomes?" *Naval War College Review*, 58, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 99-120.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (New York: Longman, 2001): 20-32.

the state itself and is the overall strategy that is then implemented in part by diplomats and other officials as "public diplomacy". Together, the two forms aim to set up a narrative or counter-narrative of how a country is perceived by the outside world.

After the 9-11 attacks the US became concerned that the high levels of anti-Americanism in the world was both fueling terrorist recruitment and making it difficult for the US to pursue its goals. The solution was rather crudely seen as a "sell America" campaign similar to an advertising campaign to sell a commercial product. In fact, the first Under Secretary of Public Affairs was a former advertising executive. As was widely commented upon, American efforts at both public diplomacy and strategic communication were a mixed bag and had a steep learning curve. Moreover, questions were raised about how effective this kind of messaging could actually be in changing people's views, especially if what they truly objected to was the policies of the US and not its image. Lastly, as is the case with coercive diplomacy, coordinating all of the various officials and branches of government to "stay on message" and deliver a rational strategic narrative that is not misinterpreted by the outside world is far more difficult to achieve than is generally thought. Governments tend to have multiple foreign policy interests and multiple constituencies to which they have to speak. As a result they often are "doing things in twos" and sending mixed messages.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Military or Security Diplomacy*

Military or security diplomacy is the use of the armed forces for diplomatic engagement. In the early 2000s, Dana Priest's book *The Mission* brought the concept to the attention of the American public. While reporting on US military actions in the Balkans and other places, Priest was surprised at how the Department of Defense had seemingly taken over roles that outsiders would have traditionally thought belonged to the diplomatic corps. In particular, she pointed to the role and great resources the US Combatant Commanders, such as CENTCOM and PACOM, were given to construct region-wide US policy beyond the narrow bilateral roles to which embassies were limited. She went so far as to compare them to "Proconsuls of Empire." Much had to do with the post-Cold War draw down of some US government agencies (like the US Information Agency, the USIA), and the expansion of Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) the US military found itself in during the 1990s (Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, etc.).<sup>13</sup> This role grew rapidly with the US War on Terror and subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Even as these wars draw to a close, its new emphasis on security engagement and "capacity building" will ensure that military diplomacy is here to stay for the foreseeable future.<sup>14</sup> However, this "militarization" of foreign policy has not gone unquestioned. Critics were not limited to those usually critical of military action or US foreign policy, but came to include US Secretaries of State and Defense such as Robert Gates and Hillary Clinton.<sup>15</sup>

It is important to see this as a phenomenon that is changing diplomacy beyond the US. Rising powers and regional organizations have all expanded their security diplomacy in the past 10-20

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Jervis, "Complexity and the Analysis of Political and Social Life," *Political Science Quarterly*, 112, no. 4 (1997-98): 589-90; David Edelstein and Ronald Krebs, "Washington's Troubling Obsession with Public Diplomacy," *Survival*, 47, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 89-104; and Risa Brooks, "Confessions of a Strategic Communicator: Tales from Inside the Pentagon's Message Machine," *Foreign Policy*, 6 Dec. 2012 ([http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/06/confessions\\_of\\_a\\_strategic\\_communicator](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/06/confessions_of_a_strategic_communicator)).

<sup>13</sup> Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military* (New York & London: W.W. Norton, 2004). For critiques, see Howard Belote, "Proconsuls, Pretenders, or Professionals," *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition, 2004*: 1-20; and Mitchell Thompson, "Breaking the Proconsulate: A New Design for National Power," *Parameters*, 35, no. 4 (winter 2005-06): 62-75.

<sup>14</sup> Derek Reveron, *Exporting Security: International Security Cooperation and the Changing Face of the US Military* (Georgetown University Press: Washington, 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Robert Gates, "A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age," *Foreign Affairs*, 88, no. 1 (2009): 28-40; and Hillary Clinton, "Leading Through Civilian Power: Redefining American Diplomacy and Development," *Foreign Affairs*, 89, (Nov/Dec. 2010: 13-24).

years.<sup>16</sup> First, as more countries interact with each other on security issues and want to cooperate with the militaries of other countries, they have followed the US example and correspondingly developed their own agencies and personnel for military diplomacy. Second, many of the more complex diplomatic and security issues call for contributions from the military or other security services. Much of the security community in the past twenty years has focused on "governance" and state capacity issues and how these are at the heart of problems as diverse as state failure, civil-wars, and many soft security issues (arms and drug trafficking, organized crime, piracy, etc.). In response to these complex non-traditional security issues, most countries are trying to implement a "whole of government" response that brings together diplomats, military, law enforcement, customs, environmental, medical and health, and other public and private actors to work together to deal with these issues. So it is likely that, for better or for worse, most militaries around the world will become more and more involved in international affairs.

### *Secret Diplomacy*

Secret diplomacy is the unannounced and concealed use of both official and unofficial negotiators and mediators to conduct diplomacy behind closed doors. If successful, the result may or may not be released to the public. Often secret agreements will lead to the establishment of an official dialogue so we may not know the role that secret diplomacy played for years or even decades after the events in question. This has several advantages. It can be done when open negotiations would not be possible because of non-recognition of some of the actors, or because of public statements that there would be no negotiations. Also, it can be used on sensitive issues that might be difficult to negotiate over due to domestic or international opposition. When leaders publicly place their political capital on succeeding on certain issues or negotiations, failing can be detrimental to their political careers and their ability to pursue other policy initiatives. So making an initial, secret attempt can be useful. Most famously, during the Vietnam War the US had several strands of secret diplomacy in the 1960s to engage with the North Vietnamese government to discuss ending the conflict. Eventually, this led to formal peace negotiations – the Paris Peace talks – which continued until the end of the war in 1973.<sup>17</sup>

Often secret diplomacy is combined with mediation, where a third party mediator works as a go-between, given the sensitive nature of the negotiations. When the US and China started their *rapprochement* in the early 1970s, it was facilitated by Pakistan, a friend and ally of both countries. Similarly, while the French governments of de Gaulle and Pompidou were critical of the US role in the Vietnam War, the French government and individual French citizens played an important role in setting up the secret negotiations and eventually formal talks between the US and Vietnam to end the conflict.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, secret diplomacy can fail as well. President Kennedy relied upon back-channel diplomacy with the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, but it seems that this channel was also used to mislead Kennedy about the deployment of Soviet missiles in Cuba.<sup>19</sup> When secret diplomacy is revealed, it can also make the government in question look hypocritical or deceitful, as was seen when many US diplomatic cables were released by Wikileaks in 2010, sparking a range of public reactions from hectoring in the press to arguably contributing to the outbreak of the Tunisian Revolution and the Arab Spring.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see K. A. Muthanna, *Enabling Military-to-Military Cooperation as a Foreign Policy Tool: Options for India* (Delhi: Knowledge World, 2006); and Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Brookings Institute Press: Washington, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> See Pierre Asselin, *A Bitter Peace: Washington, Hanoi and the Making of the Paris Agreement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> For the exciting story of this see Pierre Journoud, *De Gaulle et le Vietnam: La réconciliation, 1945-1969* (Paris: Taillandier, 2011).

<sup>19</sup> William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: WW Norton, 2003), 555.

### ***Non-State Based New Diplomacy***

#### **Track-Two Diplomacy**

Track-two diplomacy is the engagement of private individuals (or public officials in a non-official function) in unofficial diplomacy. It brings together journalists, academics, NGOs, local and national figures, and cultural and religious leaders in an unofficial setting, often hosted under the auspices of a private organization, such as a think-tank, NGO or university, to discuss new approaches to existing problems. This has several advantages. People can discuss new ideas and see things from a different perspective, away from a formal setting where governmental officials have strict official positions and policies they are required to articulate and maintain. The emphasis on including non-official participants such as activists, journalists, or academics allows for different views from the official "party line." It is hoped that these sessions will assist in coming up with new and innovative solutions to problems and also help build confidence and cooperation between cultures and nationalities.

There has also been a growth in a state version, track-1.5 diplomacy, where governmental organizations and officials participate in forums in a non-official capacity to discuss new approaches to common problems. In the Asia-Pacific region government-sponsored research centers such as the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (US), and the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (India) sponsor many such forums each year. Again, as with track-two diplomacy the participants are not there to decide issues or make policy, but rather to exchange views and engage in creative solutions. This of course has some overlap with public diplomacy and military diplomacy.

The criticism is often made that, while intellectually stimulating, these groups end up being mere talking shops and nothing comes from their forums, and that because they are unofficial and do not involve policymakers, they will have little effect on events. Moreover, it is often argued that they bring together "like-minded people" who already interact in other forums and would likely agree anyway: journalists with journalists, activists with activists, etc. These critics believe that more effort should be done to bring in the more militant or hard-line actors who truly need the interaction with those of opposing views. Regardless of the criticism, track-two and track-1.5 diplomacy have been among the fastest growing areas of diplomacy in the past twenty years.<sup>20</sup>

#### ***Digital Diplomacy***

Of all the forms of new diplomacy, perhaps digital diplomacy has received the most attention, coming to people's attention with the 2009 Iranian Twitter Revolution, many of the Wikileaks revelations of 2010 and 2011, and particularly the 2011 Arab Spring. Commentators drew attention to the role of social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and others in spreading information contrary to government or corporate official positions, and in organizing people in a way that the closed nature of society in the region didn't previously allow. Somewhat belatedly, even established political actors like states have begun to use social media to supplement traditional diplomacy.

Detailed studies of the events after the fact have revealed that, in many cases, the role of social media was overstated. In the case of Twitter in Iran, much of the attention was misplaced due to the fact that very few Iranians actually used Twitter for organizational purposes. The Iranian diaspora community, however, was using social media to discuss events, and as a result, many outside

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<sup>20</sup> Jurgen Ruland, "The Contribution of Track Two Dialogue towards Crisis Prevention," *ASIEN*, 85 (Oct. 2002): 84-96; and Pauline Kerr and Brenden Taylor, "Track Two Diplomacy in Asia," in *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World*, 226-43.

commentators with links to the diaspora community exaggerated the role that it played. In the case of the Arab Spring, the role of social media was directly connected to the relative level of internet and communication technology in each country. In Tunisia and Egypt, where internet and media access was greater, social media played a larger role; in Libya and Syria, where social media was more heavily restricted, it naturally played a lesser role.<sup>21</sup>

### *Global Civil Society Activism and TANs*

The spreading and deepening of globalization since the 1990s has facilitated the development of non-state actors and transnational activist networks (TANs). TANs are playing an increasing role in influencing and even challenging the dominant role of states in diplomatic affairs, because they are able to communicate and organize globally very quickly, due to technological developments and the speed of modern transportation. As Sidney Tarrow argued, large scale transformational social movements became possible in the late 18th Century due to a combination of higher literacy rates, less expensive printing and improved transportation. Through this, various geographically separated organizations were able to form "communities of print." Similarly, globalization and the social media revolutions of today seem to have created "virtual communities" of TANs.<sup>22</sup>

TANs can employ various methods to try to shape or even change international norms over time. They can serve as alternative sources of information to either states, corporations or the media, a role called *informational politics*. They can also publish information that keeps track of the actual actions (in contrast to the verbal claims) that politicians or business leaders make. They can then hold these public figures accountable for their actions and ensure citizens are better-informed, referred to as *accountability politics*. Some TANs even organize mass demonstrations to protest international summits or decisions and stances taken by particular countries, leaders and organizations.<sup>23</sup>

The global campaign against land mines is often cited as an example in which a coalition of various networks and leaders were able to change the prevailing norm amongst some leaders, states and IGOs that landmines were an acceptable weapon for conflict. While this campaign has not been universally successful, it has indeed caused a shift in these norms to some degree.

With all of the hype related to anything involving "globalization," however, perhaps TANs and NGOs have been "oversold," or at least over-romanticized. First of all, some have argued that the influence of these kinds of non-state actors has been blown out of proportion, and that although these groups capture attention with massive demonstrations or slick social media campaigns like Kony 2012, their actual ability to influence policy is less than it appears. Daniel Drezner argues, for example, that while these non-state actors have been able to influence governance processes, in the end states have continued to dominate regulatory outcomes.<sup>24</sup>

Secondly, some have started to question the assumption long held by neo-liberal institutionalists that the rise of non-state actors is always an unqualified good. Back in the 1970s, Keohane and Nye saw the rise of non-state actors as part of the multiple chains of communication that were an indicator of complex interdependence between states. This would be a positive development,

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<sup>21</sup> IISS, "Strategic Policy Issues: The Digital Activism and the Arab Spring Awakening," *Strategic Survey* 2011 (IISS: London, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movement and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 2011), 57-70.

<sup>23</sup> See Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Daniel Drezner, *All Politics is Global: Explaining International Regulators Regimes* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2007), 3-31.

the authors argued, because it would lessen the utility of force between states.<sup>25</sup> While there is general consensus on the positives with the growth in TANs, however, there are also potential causes of concern. Many NGOs and TANs are not exactly transparent about their actual goals, governing structures, composition, who they represent and where their funding comes from. Better-organized groups with more funding can capture public attention at the expense of other groups, even if they do not truly represent the interests of the public or put the funds they raise into practice.<sup>26</sup>

Two colorful examples perfectly illustrate this process in action. In March 2001, when US Congressional Committees were seeking expert testimony about the ramifications of human cloning, they brought in the leader of the Raelians movement, a religious cult very active in the promotion of human cloning through an organization called Clonaid. And so, amongst testimony from research scientists and medical practitioners, the Committee heard from the movement's leader, Raël, who was dressed in a space-man jumpsuit and testified that, as the human race descended from clones of aliens, cloning was vital for humanity to create better people. The incident left many congressional leaders wondering just who they had invited.<sup>27</sup>

A less lighthearted example was Invisible Children and their viral campaign to bring Ugandan warlord Joseph Kony to justice through a campaign called *Kony 2012*. The organization did receive praise for raising awareness about the issue of child soldiers and the crimes committed by Kony's group. But a lot of criticism was also leveled at the group: from complaints they were simplifying a complex civil war and placing all the blame on Kony and his group, to accusations that they were acting as a front to justify US military intervention in Uganda, to questions about how they actually used the funds that they raised.<sup>28</sup> Of course, this is not to say that that these extreme examples take anything away from all of the great work done by other TANs, but just as people have become more skeptical when listening to official state explanations, people are now looking more carefully at the statements and actions of TANs themselves.

### *Citizen and Non-State Diplomacy*

One of the more interesting but hard-to-categorize types of diplomacy is the wide variety of "stateless" diplomacy conducted by small organizations and individuals. This has some overlap with some of the other forms of new diplomacy mentioned earlier – in particular the track 1.5 and 2 diplomacy and also the role of TANs. It can often take place along traditional channels: through government-funded semi-public programs like the Fulbright Program; as part of various International Visitor Programs; or through the sponsorship of individuals visit or study in other countries and stay with host families. The goal of these types of programs is that, through greater interaction and dialogue, individuals will take a personal interest in reducing conflict and increasing cooperation.

This kind of diplomacy can also occur in less traditional ways, however. An interesting example is an organization like the Independent Diplomat, where former diplomats serve as "diplomats for hire" for peoples and organizations that do not have formal diplomatic representation. Independent Diplomat has assisted several aspiring countries, including South Sudan before independence and Western Sahara.

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<sup>25</sup> Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 20-32.

<sup>26</sup> Sebastian Millaby, "NGOs Fighting Poverty, Hurting the Poor," *Foreign Policy* (Sept/October 2004).

<sup>27</sup> *PBS Newshour*, "Human Reproductive Cloning," 29 March 2001 ([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/jan-june01/cloning\\_3-29.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/jan-june01/cloning_3-29.html))

<sup>28</sup> For example, see David Rieff, "The Road to Hell is Paved with Viral Videos," *Foreign Policy*, 14 March 2012; and Elizabeth Flock, "Invisible Children Responds to Criticism about 'Stop Kony' Campaign," *The Washington Post: World Views*, 8 March 2012 ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/invisible-childrens-stop-kony-campaign/2012/03/07/g1QA7B31wR\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/invisible-childrens-stop-kony-campaign/2012/03/07/g1QA7B31wR_blog.html)).

### ***Old and New Diplomacy or Old Wine in New Bottles?***

So what can we make out of this so-called "new diplomacy"? While some of it may seem quite new, other aspects are more familiar. One problem with categorizing new diplomacy is that ends and means are sometimes confused. Cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and strategic communication are not "new". States have used various methods to increase their soft power since ancient times. Both sides during the Cold War vigorously engaged in soft power contests to showcase their ideological system and promote the idea that it offered a better model for the developing world. Similarly, while military diplomacy has drastically expanded in recent years, militaries have always had a diplomatic role, from naval port visits and gunboat diplomacy to military attachés and observers. One could add that much of the "new diplomacy" is actually "old diplomacy," and that pundits and commentators are just now taking notice of things that have been done for centuries, but which did not fit in well with the traditional conceptions of diplomacy.

Of course, some new forms of diplomacy do seem to be having new effects in the international system – particularly track-two diplomacy, TANs, and digital diplomacy. The greater ability of non-state groups to communicate, distribute information, organize, and potentially influence traditional state processes seems to indicate a partial power shift. The question remains whether there will be a true paradigm shift in which the dominant actors and processes of diplomacy change. This would mean an adjustment as fundamental as the emergence of communities of print, when expansive and organized social movements became possible that could challenge and even overthrow governments. It could also mean something more drastic – perhaps like what occurred in the early modern period, when states became the dominant international actors and the city-states, trading leagues and multi-ethnic empires that came before were driven completely out of the game.